An agronomic crops Field Day for local growers was held at Desert Research and Extension Center (DREC) on April 17. Participants were given a tour of the Center. In addition to seeing the alfalfa, sudangrass and desert winter row crops currently in the ground, participants heard from many researchers, including Khaled Bali about the water use efficiency research that is being carried out at the REC. The research has found that it is possible to save up to 15% of water through irrigation timing, subsurface drip irrigation and more precise delivery of water.
DREC FIELD DAY CONTINUED

“Every drop of Colorado River water has been used three times before it arrives in the Imperial Valley”

Dr. Khaled Bali

Given that “every drop of Colorado River water has been used three times before it arrives in the Imperial Valley,” according to Bali, and that those drops of water bring lots of salt in them, applying 6.5 to 7 acre-feet of water to an alfalfa field also puts about 7 to 8 tons of salt into the ground. Researchers at DREC are looking into alfalfa varieties with a higher tolerance for salt, but also into olive cultivation. Olives have a high tolerance for salinity, and this has the potential to transform the Imperial Valley agricultural landscape in the future.
WHAT’S GROWIN’ ON?

Today’s Temperature: 109° Fahrenheit 

Current Crops: Sudangrass, alfalfa, melons, corn, sorghum, sugarbeets 

In our “What’s Growin’ On” section, our hope is that you can see the progression of crops throughout the year to become more familiar with local growing practices. Many fields currently have plastic covers in order to “solarize” – or kill weed seed.

4. Alfalfa is harvested with a specialized research harvester.

5. Sudangrass is cut, dried, raked, and baled.

FARM SMART is an educational outreach program of the Desert Research and Extension Center in Holtville, CA. It began in 2001 and continues to grow and educate through the Winter Visitor and K-12 programs. Contact FARM SMART at 760-356-3067, surie@ucanr.edu, or 1004 E Holton Rd Holtville, CA.
K-12 Insect Program

FARM SMART recently wrapped up our season with our last K-12 program, titled “Insects: The Good, The Bad, and the Buggly”. Students learned about pheromones, beekeeping, insect anatomy, pesticides and chemical safety, in addition to harvesting zucchini, cucumbers, onions, and sweet corn as it became available.

6. Students taste various types of honey and learn where it comes from!
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**FARM SMART News**

**MAY/JUNE 2014**

**BY THE NUMBERS**

5,555 - Number of local students and parents reached through FARM SMART K-12 programs

2,206 - Number of winter visitors to the farm during January and February

4,000 - Volunteer hours worked from Nov. 2013 – May 2014

104,031 – Total FARM SMART reach since its inception in 2001

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**FARM SMART RECIPES**

## Fresh Cucumber Salad

**Ingredients:**

- 4 cucumbers, thinly sliced
- 1 small white onion, thinly sliced
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 1/2 cup water
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon dried dill

**Directions:**

Toss together the cucumbers and onion in a large bowl. Combine the vinegar, water and sugar in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil, and pour over the cucumber and onions. Stir in dill, cover, and refrigerate until cold. This can also be eaten at room temperature, but be sure to allow the cucumbers to marinate for at least 1 hour.

*11. Source - allrecipes.com*

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University of California Cooperative Extension Celebrates 100 Years!

12. Water conservation booth designed by Stephanie Collins.

13. CalFresh booth. The UCCE staff did a great job!

14. Horse rides and hayrides were available for the kids.

Please check out this video of the celebration: VIDEO

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FARM SMART would like to thank our many supporters, including ANR and DREC administration, staff, and volunteers. We would also like to thank our sponsors and donors. FARM SMART wouldn’t be possible without you. To our amazing winter visitors, thank you for your support. To our wonderful teachers, parents, and students, we express our heartfelt appreciation.

15. Volunteers Larry and Shirley Durrans returned home in mid-May. We love you volunteers!

16. Nubia Machado, longtime DREC employee and FARM SMART employee, was recently recognized for her years of service. Thanks Nubia!

17. DREC staff who provide amazing support to FARM SMART.