



New Irrigation GPS Valley Irrigation Introduces GPS Guidance For Linear Irrigation Equipment

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Source: Valley news release

Valley Irrigation, a technology leader in precision irrigation, introduces GPS Guidance for linear irrigation equipment. GPS Guidance will increase accuracy and precision of linear irrigation equipment when compared with conventional irrigation guidance. It also will help eliminate some maintenance issues associated with existing guidance options.

"GPS has become standard for precision farming, from field mapping to the operation of tractors and farm implements," said Jake LaRue, Valley Irrigation linear product manager. "Producers deserve the same type of precision when it comes to irrigation, and Valley Irrigation is dedicated to helping them achieve such accuracy."

In fact, while producers always have taken pride in planting straight rows, GPS Guidance has enabled them to plant even straighter. The precision of GPS Guidance technology is very evident when the grower compares the "straight line" guidance of GPS to the conventional linear guidance options -- producers can now irrigate in the same straight lines they planted. This minimizes variances in water application, which in turn maximizes yields.

Linear irrigation equipment traditionally moves through a field by following one of several types of guidance options: below-ground cable, above-ground cable or furrow. While any of these is good, each has limitations. Below-ground cables can be damaged by lightning or tillage equipment, farm equipment can run into above-ground cables and furrow guidance can have its furrow damaged by rain or farm equipment.

Leonard Water Services, the local Valley dealer serving the Abilene, Texas, area, had firsthand experience with Valley GPS Guidance on linear irrigation equipment last summer, as part of Valley Irrigation field trials. Jim Leonard, partner, Leonard Water Services, liked what he saw during the trial and agreed with LaRue that GPS Guidance reduces overwatering.

"When you reverse linears at the end of the field, there's a tendency for non-GPS guidance options to overcompensate the steering of the linear machine during the repositioning, and that can lead to overwatering some parts of the field," Leonard said. "But GPS Guidance from Valley held the linear to a much more accurate position. We didn't see any overwatering. Everything about the operation was positive. We haven't seen a drawback yet and will likely install GPS Guidance on more linear irrigation equipment that our dealership sells in the future."

Valley GPS Guidance works with virtually all linear irrigation equipment and is compatible with John Deere Starfire RTK.

That compatibility was important to Steve Coester, farm manager of Ak-Chin Farm in Maricopa, Ariz., who also participated in the GPS Guidance field trials. In addition to eliminating the need for above-ground cable, he liked how Valley GPS Guidance worked with the farm's current setup.

"We use GPS in all our equipment," said Coester. "So it was easy to integrate GPS Guidance with our operation, and the programming was simple."

GPS Guidance for linear irrigation equipment is the latest GPS product innovation from Valley

Irrigation. In 2008, Valley introduced GPS Ready control panels for center pivot and linear irrigation equipment that provide growers with another choice to determine field position by utilizing the accuracy of GPS technology. LaRue said Valley is currently field testing GPS Guidance for use with corner pivot irrigation. Pending trial results, the company anticipates GPS Guidance for corner pivots will be available in 2010.