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**WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT DISSEMINATING WATER
MANAGEMENT INFORMATION TO VARIOUS STAKEHOLDERS**

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ABSTRACT: The desired outcome of our technology transfer efforts is to achieve a change in behavior including the adoption of new techniques or technologies that save water and/or the cessation of negative behaviors that waste water resources. A summary of more than 20 different research studies has revealed differences between and within stakeholder groups relevant to agriculture in West Texas. The research findings illustrated that there is an immense amount of information available to farmers through various communications channels. For example, the majority of farmers still rely heavily on face-to-face interactions and word-of-mouth with farm magazines being the dominant form of print media used. However, farmers will use multiple channels (as many as 10) in their agriculture information seeking behaviors and will seemingly vary their choice by the different type of information they are seeking. Print and face-to-face are preferred for information that influences long-range planning while broadcast or Web-based channels are for more dynamic information such as market reports, breaking news, or updates. Farmers also vary in their level of trust for a variety of agriculture information sources. Local sources or those clearly advancing agriculture (i.e. Extension, universities) were rated as the most trustworthy while those that were commercial (selling something) or regulatory were least trustworthy. Research also revealed the variability of farmers as reflected by their attitudes toward sustainable agriculture with three sub-groups emerging: Forward Thinking Pragmatics (feel that all decisions need to be sustained economically); Optimistic Integrators (heavily concerned with sustainability of natural resources but economics are also important); and Traditionalists (not at all concerned with finding sustainable alternatives and preferred no changes). The studies revealed how stakeholders access information, how perceptions of bias and feelings of trust impact information utilization, and how the type of information being sought will influence the channel used by stakeholders to access that information. Findings also indicate there is diversity within stakeholder groups and how dissemination strategies cannot be based on the assumption of a homogenous audience composition. Additional studies illustrate that media relations efforts and teacher workshop effectiveness can be improved with closer attention to factors that limit effectiveness.

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