



## News release

**April 6, 2010 – for immediate release**

***Irrigation NZ Conference and Expo – April 26-28 ‘Irrigated Agriculture – NZ’s economic future and more’ will look to the future of irrigation and its role in food and fibre production and in its interaction with the environment as the irrigation industry undergoes a transformation in policy and practice.***

### **Optimal water management stems from community responsibility**

Real life experiences of leading national and international keynote speakers are proving a key attraction to New Zealand’s largest irrigation industry event to be held later this month.

Conference registrations are pouring in as Irrigation NZ (INZ) prepares to present three days of ‘fresh thinking’ for optimal water management and New Zealand’s economic future.

Inspirational presentations address face to face practical experiences covering the latest successful developments in irrigation and water resource management in particular based on cooperation and local responsibility inspiring people to go beyond what regulation can deliver.

Washington-based Edward Chvatal Jr will feature in the conference programme networked to provide valuable fresh thinking and provoke thought processes for the future direction of optimal water management while at the same time mixing farmers, researchers, consultants, policy makers and industry suppliers.

The vice chairman of the Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership (WMP) in the USA, Chvatal is heading to the INZ conference to share a few success stories about water management in practice, an address that will relate closely to the future of water in Canterbury and the ongoing development of the Canterbury Water Management Strategy (CWMS)

The Walla Walla WMP is a recently formed organisation at the centre of a unique effort to partner with farmers, governments, Native American tribes, environmental interests and citizens to implement a new way of managing water in the Wall Walla Basin.

The Walla Walla River Watershed (Washington State, USA) poses unique water management challenges with very limited water resources and an over allocation of water rights among the agricultural and municipal users.

There also exists a need to improve stream flows for fish species identified as nearing extinction under federal recovery mandates and Native American tribal treaty rights which call for restoration of salmon.

In the face of these challenges the Walla Walla community came together and showed their collective commitment to enhance flows for fish and provide improved water management practices for farms.

Innovative methods are now being used to manage water sustainably and a new policy for flexible, local management of water has been approved for a pilot in the Walla Walla Watershed.

This approach is not based on regulatory control but rather on cooperation, local responsibility, and inspiring people to go beyond what regulation can deliver.

This industry event, aimed at providing a forum where current national and international research can be presented, in addition to opening discussion and planning for the future direction of optimal water management, is a must for everyone serious about the future of irrigated agriculture and New Zealand's economic future.

This biennial conference, one of the key vehicles used by Irrigation NZ to bring together interest groups and farmers to debate relevant industry issues, is this year being held at the Christchurch Convention Centre from April 26-28, 2010.

The event will bring the entire irrigation industry together – Treat yourself to the conference for optimal water management – New Zealand's only irrigation trade exhibition will also run alongside the conference. Check out the full conference programme, more information and register now at [www.irrigationnz.co.nz/events/inz-conference](http://www.irrigationnz.co.nz/events/inz-conference)

**For further information:**

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**Irrigation NZ – is a national body representing all irrigation interests in a unified voice to promote excellence in irrigation development and efficient water management based on the principles of responsible and sustainable water management throughout New Zealand.**