

A suite of water-saving strategies is projected to save Rice Canyon Ranch more than 38 million gallons per year.

IMPACT

10-year projected water savings:

381
million gallons



Tree Grafting Process



Irrigation System Upgrades

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Rice Canyon Ranch is a family owned avocado farm located in the agricultural hub of San Diego County. As California's water supplies were severely impaired during the 2014 drought, Rice Canyon began experiencing major disruptions in farm production and day-to-day operations. The owners' outside the box thinking helped to save their farm and keep up with the demands of their water-stressed groves.

The overall strategy at Rice Canyon was to switch to high-density spacing of the avocado trees: replanting 400 trees per acre versus the traditional 100 allows for increased water use efficiency. Intermediate actions included tree stumping, temporarily reducing irrigation needs and spurring increased production from the newer growth. Older trees are being replaced in phases with new trees grafted onto drought tolerant root stocks, yielding a higher quality production. Lastly, new irrigation equipment improved the farm's overall water efficiency and reduced water costs.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- Water and cost savings
- Efficient use of land and resources
- Better overall production rates
- Healthier trees
- Operational excellence
- WSIP incentives and device rebates reduced initial investment costs

