

# Growing concern: Crops raised with oil field water

By Julie Cart, Los Angeles Times

Here in California's thirsty farm belt, where pumpjacks nod amid neat rows of crops, it's a proposition that seems to make sense: using treated oil field wastewater to irrigate crops.

Oil giant Chevron recycles 21 million gallons of that water each day and sells it to farmers who use it on about 45,000 acres of crops, about 10 percent of Kern County's farmland.

State and local officials praise the 2-decade-old program as a national model for coping with the region's water shortages. As California's four-year drought lingers and authorities scramble to conserve every drop, agricultural officials have said that more companies are seeking permits to begin similar programs. The heightened interest in recycling oil field wastewater has raised concern over the adequacy of safety measures in place to prevent contamination from toxic oil production chemicals.

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