Providing a tool to improve irrigation efficiency in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties
CIMIS, the California Irrigation Management Information System, is a network of over 125 computerized weather stations, located at key agricultural and urban sites throughout California. Ten of these CIMIS stations are located in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties. CIMIS provides local weather data daily.

Weather data is collected from each CIMIS station, fed into a centralized computer data base, and converted into reference evapotranspiration (ETo). ETo is the combined value of estimated daily turf grass water use and soil evaporation.

Using crop coefficients and ETo, the water needs for a particular crop or turf grass can be estimated. Crop coefficients have been developed for many vegetables, field crops, trees, vines, turf grasses, and landscape plants. Known crop coefficients are available in UC Cooperative Extension publications.

With this information, irrigators can establish an irrigation schedule. In many cases, proper scheduling can reduce the amount of water applied during a season, and at the same time improve growth.

Knowing when and how much to irrigate can be difficult to determine. CIMIS data can assist irrigation managers increase irrigation efficiency. This can reduce water, energy, labor, and fertilizer costs, as well as improve the health of the crop or landscape.

There are two ways to access CIMIS ETo data for scheduling irrigation in Santa Barbara County.

**Hotline:**
You may access ETo data for the last seven days for Santa Barbara County CIMIS stations by calling the toll-free CIMIS Hotline.

**From anywhere:** 1-888-CIMIS2U (1-888-246-4728)
**From Santa Maria:** (805) 928-9344

The Hotline is updated each weekday by 9:00 am.

**Internet:**
Log on to [www.cimis.water.ca.gov](http://www.cimis.water.ca.gov) to access ETo data for the last seven days, or monthly averages for the last eleven months at any station statewide.