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REPORT PRESENTS GROUND WATER QUALITY RESULTS FOR JEROME, GOODING, AND LINCOLN COUNTIES

Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) water program staff recently finalized a regional agricultural ground water quality technical results summary. The summary presents ISDA monitoring results from monitoring 77 randomly selected domestic wells located in portions of Gooding, Jerome, and, Lincoln Counties from 1997 through 2006. The summary will be available on the ISDA website at <http://www.agri.idaho.gov/Categories/Environment/water/gwReports.php>.

Ground water quality testing of these 77 domestic wells suggests good regional ground water with some local impacts due to agrichemicals. Testing for nitrate from 1997 to 2006 indicates unchanged or slightly decreasing levels overall with mean nitrate levels ranging from 1.8 to 2.9 milligrams per liter (mg/L). However, nitrate concentrations tested near or above the Environmental Protection Agency Maximum Contaminant Level for nitrate of 10 mg/L in some wells east of Hagerman and north of Shoshone. Additionally, low-level pesticide detections have been found at well locations north and west of Shoshone and east of Twin Falls.

ISDA will work further to determine agrichemical sources and reduce ground water quality impacts in the area. These efforts will include increased and focused monitoring near Hagerman and Shoshone by ISDA Water Quality staff. ISDA further recommends that residents in these areas use proper nutrient, irrigation, and pesticide management techniques to help protect the underlying aquifer.