



METROGRO update

News for neighbors and customers

A PUBLICATION OF METRO WATER RECOVERY

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Weather, sawfly challenges limit harvest at METROGRO Farm in 2024

This harvest year was another challenging one at the METROGRO Farm due to a mix of variables and some extreme weather.

Two hail events damaged 3,000 acres across the north and south portions of the farm. Drought and hot temperatures throughout the summer also limited the harvest.

In addition, there was an infestation of wheat stem sawflies for the fourth year in a row. The sawfly's larvae feed on the crops, often causing the upper stem of the wheat to break.

This year's harvest started July 12 and finished July 29. Metro harvested hard red winter wheat

and six-row winter barley, with the farm averaging just more than 18 bushels per acre. This compared to last year, an unusually wet year at the farm, when the yield reached more than 36.5 bushels per acre.

The milo crop also endured hot temperatures and drought, which affected its yields. Metro harvested approximately 1,500 acres compared to the 3,000 acres planted.

The 52,000-acre dryland farm is operated by Metro Water Recovery. Class B Biosolids, known as METROGRO® Cake, are beneficially reused there because it is a nutrient rich fertilizer. 🌱



Riding waves of grain at the METROGRO Farm.

Celebrating 50 years of Resource Recovery and Reuse

This year marked the 50th anniversary of Metro Water Recovery's Resource Recovery and Reuse (RR&R) Department, which has played a pivotal role in our mission to protect the region's health and environment by cleaning water and recovering resources.

RR&R was established in 1974 by William "Bill" Martin, who served as the department's director from 1974 until his retirement in 1999. One of the department's major roles is to transport and spread biosolids at the METROGRO Farm, which was purchased by Metro in 1993 and expanded in 1997.

Today, the department has a fleet of 20 tractor trailers, with 22 operators who load 31,000 dry tons of product per year to area farms



Historic photo of land-applied biosolids.

six days a week. Each load usually weighs at least 40,000 pounds. RR&R also services Metro's vehicle fleet.

Drivers hauling METROGRO® Cake make three to four trips a day, averaging 450 miles. Last year, the team hauled 7,726 loads of biosolids and drove a combined 956,520 accident-free miles.

Whether it is transporting biosolids to farms with Metro's fleet or fixing a sluggish cart, the RR&R team has been a vital department for the past 50 years at Metro. 🌱

Metro receives additional flows

Metro Water Recovery's Northern Treatment Plant began receiving flows from the Second Creek Pipeline this year.

After years of preparation that included a complex permitting process, design and construction, the new pipeline connects to the existing South Platte Pipeline and conveys wastewater flows to the Northern Treatment Plant in Brighton.


This collaborative effort has been planned since 1982, when the

Denver Regional Council of Governments identified the need for clean water facilities in the northern metropolitan region. The Second Creek Pipeline is the largest transmission project in Metro's 60-year history.

This new pipeline will enable portions of Adams County, Aurora, Brighton, Commerce City, Denver and Denver International Airport to be served by Metro's Northern Treatment Plant. 🌱



Biosolids staging at METROGRO Farm.



Questions or comments? The METROGRO Update is a publication of Metro Water Recovery.

If you have questions or comments, please contact: Patrick Stanley, Metro Water Recovery, 6450 York Street. Denver, CO 80229, 1-800-237-6603, MetroWaterRecovery.com

Biosolids Distribution for 2024

The chart below summarizes the breakdown of biosolids distributed to the METROGRO Farm, private farms and a private composter for the first eight months of 2024. All biosolids produced during that period at the Robert W. Hite Treatment Facility and the Northern Treatment Plant were beneficially reused.

Distribution from RWHTF ... Dry Tons	Distribution from NTP... Dry Tons
METROGRO Farm..... 2,673	METROGRO Farm..... 1,024
Private farms 19,370	Private composter 0

A total of 23,067 dry tons (113,308 wet tons) of biosolids were beneficially reused from January through August.

Dry weight is the solids from biological treatment of wastewater after all water is removed. The average METROGRO® Cake solids content for the first eight months of 2024 is 20.38% for RWHTF and 18.63% for NTP. 🌱

