

CLASS NOTES

Season 2, Episode 3 - Reclaimed Water Reservations: Unpacking the "Yuck" Factor

Featured Guests: Dr. Olesya Savchenko, UF/IFAS Food & Resource Economics Assistant Professor and Don Rainey, UF/IFAS Extension Regional Specialized Water Agent



Key Takeaways

- Reclaimed water, also known as recycled or reused water, is treated wastewater that has been purified to remove harmful organisms and substances. It's not intended for drinking, but is safe for many non-potable uses, primarily irrigation.
- This practice helps conserve potable water supplies by providing an alternative source for uses like landscape irrigation, industrial cooling, and groundwater recharge.
- Public perception of this water varies by region.
- Water recycling and reuse is of increasing importance, not only in arid regions but also in cities and contaminated environments.
- Full-scale implementation and operation of water reuse schemes still face regulatory, economic, social and institutional challenges.

Additional Resources

- EPA Summary of Florida's Water Reuse Guideline or Regulation for Potable Water Reuse: <https://www.epa.gov/waterreuse/summary-floridas-water-reuse-guideline-or-regulation-potable-water-reuse>
- Don Rainey askIFAS articles: <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/experts/drainey>
- Olesya Savchenko Directory Page: <https://fred.ifas.ufl.edu/about/fred-directory/olesya-savchenko/>

Discussion Questions

- What activities should reclaimed water be used for?
- Why do you think many people feel uneasy about using reclaimed water, even though it is treated and safe?
- Should local governments offer incentives for businesses and homeowners to switch to reclaimed water for irrigation? Why or why not?
- What would it take for reclaimed water to become a major source of potable (drinking) water in the U.S.?
- What do you think goes into the decision process of deciding to use or not use reclaimed water? Are there different considerations for business owners compared to the general public or to policy makers?
- How do media, terminology (e.g., "toilet-to-tap"), and cultural narratives shape public attitudes toward reclaimed water?

This Season of F.R.E. Lunch is Produced by
UF/IFAS Food & Resource Economics
and
The UF Water Institute
for more info, visit go.ufl.edu/FRE-Lunch