



## Bert De Winkle's Story

After successfully retrofitting his irrigation equipment, a Melba dairyman now enjoys the benefits of a better harvest and lower energy bills—something he thought he'd never see.



Bert De Winkle

*By Bert De Winkle  
Melba, ID, Dairyman*

My family and I run a dairy operation near Melba, including 350 acres of irrigated crops we use as feed for our cows. The market for dairy products has been down the past 18 months, so I constantly look for ideas to reduce costs and make my operation more efficient.

About a year ago, I upgraded the irrigation system with the assistance of Idaho Power Agricultural Representative Mike Liechty. I wasn't getting enough water on my main crops. When I explained this to Mike, he told me about the Irrigation Efficiency

Rewards program and suggested an upgraded sprinkler package to irrigate more evenly and successfully.

We resized the main lines and installed new nozzles, rotating sprinkler heads and low-pressure regulators. We replaced a diesel generator with power from the grid. This lets me water my main ground better, and I'm able to place water on 40 acres of rocky ground that never produced before. The Idaho Power incentive payment helped cover part of the upgrade cost.

Today, my corn and grain crops produce better than ever. My winter grain crop is the largest I've ever had. The upgraded system uses less electricity and saves me a lot of money.

From this experience, I regard Idaho Power as a dependable partner. They always bend over backward to help. That, to me, is really good service. Everyone I've worked with from Idaho Power has been professional and knowledgeable. I appreciate that.

► *"I'm now growing decent crops on ground that, before, didn't grow a thing."*



Bert De Winkle (left) discussing his crops with Idaho Power Agricultural Representative Mike Liechty