

Texas Citrus Growers Report Ongoing Water Shortages as 1944 Treaty Cycle Concludes

Texas growers highlight water delivery shortfalls under the 1944 Treaty and the impact on Rio Grande Valley agriculture.

MISSION, TX, UNITED STATES, October 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- October 24, 2025, marks the end of the most recent five-year cycle for water deliveries from Mexico to the United States under the 1944 Water Treaty. The conclusion of this cycle carries significant implications for agricultural producers in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV), where irrigation water remains essential to sustaining local crops.

Under the terms of the Treaty, Mexico is required to deliver an average of 350,000 acre-feet of water annually to the United States, supporting irrigation-dependent communities in South Texas. Over the past three decades, deliveries have varied in timing and consistency, creating challenges for growers who rely on predictable access to water for planting and harvest schedules.

"The Texas citrus industry, like every other grower in the Valley, is dying without water," said Dale Murden, President of Texas Citrus Mutual. "We've already watched the state's only sugar mill close and sugarcane production disappear. Citrus is hanging on by a thread. Without dependable water, our groves and livelihoods are at risk."

As of January 2025, approximately 400,000 acre-feet of water had been delivered during this Treaty cycle, below the average required level. Reports indicate that in 2022, Mexico had more than 3 million acre-feet of available water that could have been used to fulfill its Treaty obligations. Earlier this year, following renewed diplomatic discussions, Mexico agreed to a six-month delivery plan and provided an additional 320,000 acre-feet, leaving more than 900,000 acre-feet still outstanding.

The Treaty also requires Mexico, in coordination with the United States, to develop a plan for future annual deliveries and for addressing any existing water debt. That plan has not yet been finalized or released publicly.

"For too long, Mexico has been allowed to make excuses while Valley agriculture withers," Murden said. "We are thankful for the attention this Administration has given to the issue, but now is the time for decisive action. President Trump has the opportunity to do what no

administration has done before, hold Mexico accountable, ensure compliance, and secure a permanent plan for annual deliveries that lasts well beyond any one presidency.”

Murden noted that water availability affects not only farmers but also related sectors across the region. “When our crops don’t get planted or irrigated, it affects every link in the food supply chain—from packing sheds and processors to the grocery store shelves,” he said. “The economic and human toll of continued inaction is too great to ignore.”

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