



## Vivek Sharma

**Vivek Sharma** is the 2023 recipient of the Larry W. Turner Young Extension Professional Award for his work developing a research-based extension program in precision irrigation management, best management practices, and soil moisture sensing.

Sharma is an assistant professor, precision water management specialist in the agricultural and biological engineering department at the University of Florida. In this role, he conducts research and extension work in the development and application of agricultural water management technologies and strategies to meet a number of goals including enhancing water and nutrient use efficiency, reducing agricultural water use, and the impacts of agricultural management practices on water quality. His extension program aims to provide leadership, encourage innovation, and work very closely with students, post-docs, research, extension agents, regional specialized agents, producers, and other water managers.

Sharma leads two extension programs designed to foster the peer-to-peer interaction and to promote the adoption of agricultural best management practices and technologies including the Florida Agricultural Soil Moisture Sensors Network and the Florida Stakeholder Engagement Program (STEP). The Florida Agricultural Soil Moisture Sensors Network is aimed at educating producers and extension agents and collaborating with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to increase producer adoption of irrigation best management practices throughout the state to conserve water. The network is bringing cultural

and behavioral changes in technology implementation resulting in water conservation, nutrients, and energy savings. The Florida STEP is aimed at generating important production, efficiency, economic, and social datasets to enhance the adoption of BMPs and technologies. The project is also providing a better understanding of knowledge gaps around technology use so that appropriate educational and incentive programs can be developed.

A 13-year member of ASABE, Sharma has served on several ASABE committees as a leader and member. He is currently an associate editor for the Natural Resources and Environmental Systems (NRES) Technical Community and is vice-chair of the NRES irrigation group. Sharma is an active member and leader of the ASABE Florida Section.

Sharma is author or coauthor of 60 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and extension publications. Throughout his career, Sharma has received a number of extension awards including the ASABE superior paper award in 2014, ASABE Educational Aids Blue Ribbon Awards in 2016 and 2019 and was a 2018 New Face of ASABE. In 2022, he received the Florida Art Hornsby Extension Faculty Fellowship award and the ASABE Florida Section Outstanding Extension Worker award.