Saleh Taghvaeian is the recipient of the 2019 Larry W. Turner Young Extension Professional award for exemplary leadership, vision, and stakeholder involvement in Oklahoma’s irrigation extension program and integrating sensor-based technologies to conserve water resources.

Taghvaeian is an assistant professor and state extension specialist in water resources in the department of biosystems and agricultural engineering at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater. He is responsible for assisting Oklahoma producers with improving agricultural water management, reducing irrigation inefficiencies, and addressing current and emerging water quality and quality changes.

Taghvaeian has developed a well-established extension program impacting irrigated agriculture in the state and region. He organized the first Oklahoma Irrigation Conference in collaboration with county extension educators. This conference has been held at different locations across the state, educating over 450 producers on aspects of conserving the quantity of agricultural water resources. Taghvaeian has continued his close collaboration with county educators, engaging them in research and extension grants and relying on them to convey the latest needs and concerns of producers. Taghvaeian collaborated with an extension energy management engineer to develop a comprehensive energy and water audit of irrigation pumping systems. Participating producers receive a detailed report with information on current energy consumption efficiency, irrigation efficiency, and application uniformity. The report also provides estimates of current energy costs and potential savings if the efficiencies are improved to practical achievable levels. Reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants are also estimated through life cycle assessments.

Taghvaeian is a 6-year member of ASABE. Currently, he is the chair of the ASABE Oklahoma section and is also a member of the ASABE Natural Resources and Environmental Systems Irrigation Group. Taghvaeian is a member of the United States Committee on Irrigation and Drainage and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Taghvaeian has authored or coauthored 55 research and extension publications. He has also presented at 68 extension events in Oklahoma and across the nation. Throughout his career, Taghvaeian has received numerous awards, most recently he received the 2019 Early Career Award for Extension/Outreach/Engagement from the Universities Council on Water Resources. He has also received the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service 2018 Team award for the Outstanding Educational Program “Oklahoma Irrigation Energy and Water Audit” and numerous ASABE Educational Aids Blue Ribbon awards.