Nearly half the water discharged from Lake Okeechobee is sent south, filtered and cleaned before reaching the Everglades

**Water Facts:**
Scientists test water quality by measuring parts per billion (PPB) of phosphorus levels. Cleaner water will have a lower parts per billion (PPB) and dirtier water will have a higher parts per billion (PPB).

According to the South Florida Water Management District, 48% of water from Lake Okeechobee is sent south...and over the past five year period, lake water measured 138 PPB.

Billions of gallons of lake water and rainfall are used to irrigate sugarcane, sweet corn and citrus. Over the past 20 years, after Best Management Practices (BMPs) were implemented, water leaves our farms far cleaner than when it left Lake O. Last year, the water leaving our farms was twice as clean as Lake Okeechobee’s water.

Farm and lake water is then sent south into Stormwater Treatment Areas (STAs) where it is cleaned even further.

**What is an STA?**
Highlighted in yellow, the Stormwater Treatment Areas are 57,000 acres of man-made wetlands that naturally clean the water before it enters the Everglades.

U.S. Sugar and neighboring farmers have paid over $400 million in special taxes to help build and operate these STAs.

Before water leaves the Stormwater Treatment Areas and enters the Everglades it must be cleaned to 10 parts per billion (PPB), which is cleaner than a bottle of natural Florida spring water.

For more information on STAs and water that is being sent south from the lake, visit http://my.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xrepository/sfwmd-repository_pdf/bis_sta.pdf

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**Who we are:**
We’re American farmers – 2,500 strong. For nearly 100 years, U.S. Sugar has been farming in Florida. Our farms are located in and around Clewiston approximately 60 miles southwest of Stuart. A lot of our 2,500 hardworking employees own the company and many of them live in Martin County.

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**What we do:**
We are American farmers who grow sugarcane, sweet corn and citrus. We are scientists and biologists who manage water quality on our farms. We are your neighbors who care about our local waterways, because many of us live right here.

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Learn more about U.S. Sugar at www.ussugar.com