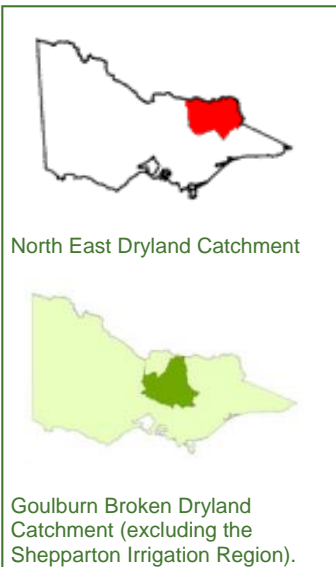


IrriGate

Sustainable Irrigated Landscapes (SIL) - North East - Mid and Upper Goulburn Broken Dryland

Welcome to IrriGate Issue 4. Thank you to those who contacted me on address corrections, and please check your envelope details and contact me with any changes or if you wish to unsubscribe. SIL team member, John Hunter, is now working on other DPI projects and we thank John for his assistance in the past twelve months in the SIL team.
Editor - Wendy Paglia



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Monitoring your irrigation over the season

Irrigators know the importance of applying the right amount of water at the right time in order to maximise crop production, but how do you really know if it is right. In the coming irrigation season, DPI will be conducting a program to help irrigators record when and how irrigation water is applied and compare this to theoretical crop water-use.

Throughout the irrigation season, irrigators will be able to gauge if they are applying too much or too little water for the conditions at the time. This is particularly important for spray irrigation where insufficient irrigation applications can lead to compounding moisture stress.

In the example shown in Figure 1, irrigation occurred too late and was too little at the start of the season. It was not until mid-October when moisture levels were sufficient to avoid plant stress, through to January, where the irrigation was unable to keep up with plant use. The crop has spent 40 per cent of its time under moisture stress (above the dotted red line). However, it would have only taken one more irrigation of 25 mm at the start of the year to reduce this figure to 10 per cent.

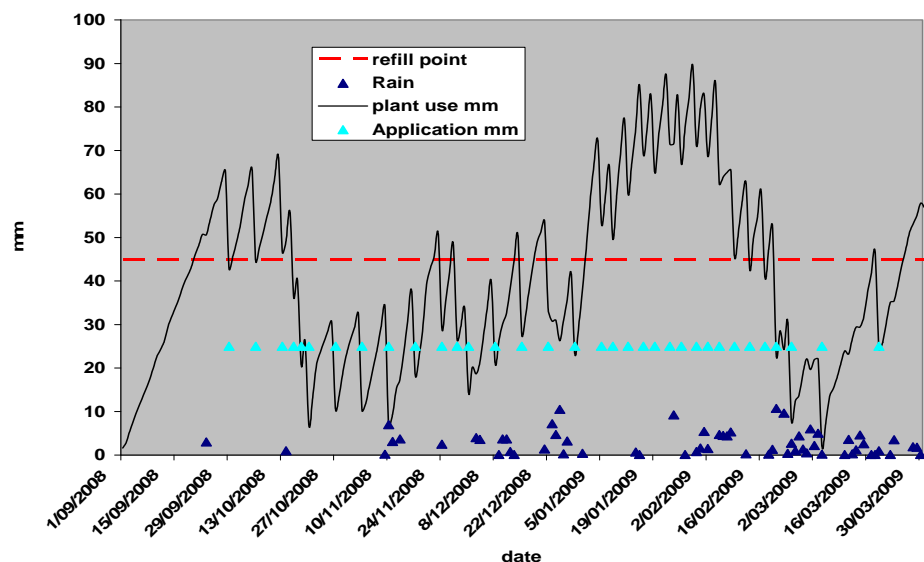


Figure 1: An example of irrigation and rainfall compared to plant use. When plant use is above the red line, plants are stressed.

Participants in this program will gain a better understanding of irrigation scheduling and avoiding the risk of lost production by not applying enough water or the added cost of wasting water and pumping by applying too much. If irrigators are interested in monitoring their irrigation practise over the coming season please contact Dennis Watson at DPI Rutherglen on (02) 6030 4567.

SIL Incentives 2010/2011

Rebates are available to landholders for the purchase of:

- Irrigation farm plans for improved irrigation management.
- Soil moisture monitoring equipment and similar tools. Help is also available for equipment selection installation and data interpretation.

Both provide a 50 per cent return on costs up to a maximum of \$4,000.

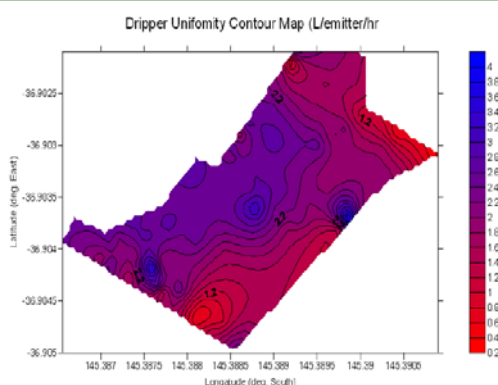
Irrigation System Performance Checks

The irrigation team are available to help check your system to determine if it is operating at the industry standard.

These system checks can include measuring the following:

- The average application rate.
- Distribution uniformity (evenness of the water being applied).
- Pressure and flow variations at different locations across the paddock.

These checks will help determine if your system is applying the amount of water it is designed to, and if it is applying this evenly across the paddock.



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