

Water Use And Irrigation

These watering guidelines are only for *dry* periods. Use less water if it rains during the week. Measure rain amounts with a rain gauge.

One inch of rain is equal to four to five hours of watering with drip irrigation.

Water Required for Drip Irrigation

Immediately After Planting	When Growing	Before and During Harvest
2 – 3 hours immediately after planting	One inch per week	2 – 3 inches per week

Always check the soil moisture before and after watering.

Irrigation Schedule

You will work out watering schedules together with NESFP before **May 1** each year. You may water only during your scheduled time. You should keep the irrigation system working properly. You are responsible for making any repairs due damage which you cause. You should notify NESFP of major irrigation problems or failures, especially involving a wellhead or pump. It is important for you to fix any leaks as soon as you notice them in order to avoid waste of water, time, and money. Turn off pumps and watering systems at night and before you leave the farm.

Conserve Water:

- Avoid watering between the hours of 10 AM and 4 PM because the water is wasted — 65% can evaporate, and the sun can burn the wet leaves.
- Plant crops with same root depth close together to save time irrigating.
- Check the soil 6 to 8 inches below the ground (root zone), before and after irrigating to see how much water to apply and whether you watered the root zone.
- Watch the weather. Irrigate less on cool, cloudy, or foggy days. Use a rain gauge.
- Use mulch, compost, hay or plastic to keep soil moist.
- Watering too much causes weak roots and unhealthy plants. It also washes away fertilizers.