

Irrigation

Updated May 2021

Objective - The amount and timing of irrigation is managed to meet plant demands, minimise risk of leaching and runoff and ensure efficient water use.

Target 1 - New irrigation systems are designed and installed in accordance with industry codes of practice and standards.

Things that you can do:

- Make sure you use an [accredited irrigation designer](#) when you build or upgrade your irrigation system.
- Make sure your new irrigation is commissioned properly and include this as a requirement in your contract with the irrigation installer.

Records/Evidence you can keep:

- Code of practice certificate, irrigation system evaluation, commissioning reports, maps, system design (rates and pressures) and nozzle charts.**

Target 2 - The performance of irrigation systems is assessed annually, and irrigation systems are maintained and operated to apply irrigation water at their optimal efficiency.

Things that you can do:

- Complete a [bucket test](#) every year, or check the pressure and flow rates of your system regularly
- Regularly check your irrigators such as a winter service, unblocking and replacing nozzles and pressure regulators, cleaning out sand traps and re-aligning your pivot to make sure the gun turns on and off when it needs to.
- Make sure you are irrigating the land and not the road or tracks, watering the road is not only a waste of water but can create safety risks for motorists.

Records/Evidence you can keep:

- Bucket/uniformity test results.**
- DIY Maintenance records (e.g. [Irrigation NZ Checklist](#))**
- Keep records and invoices of maintenance you do on your system.**
- Winter servicing invoice.**
- Events log (e.g. noted water irrigating road/leaky seal and what you did to fix it). If a complaint has been received, prove the issue has been addressed.**

Target 3 - The timing and depth of irrigation water applied takes account of crop requirements and is justified through soil moisture monitoring or soil water budgets and climatic information.

Things that you can do:

- Install and use an objective tool to monitor soil moisture deficit, such as an Aquaflex tape, soil moisture probe, a scheduling service or a soil water budget.
- Monitor the rainfall and PET. Take crop requirements into consideration.

Records/Evidence you can keep:

- Soil moisture (measurements or budgeting).**
- Soil temperature, rainfall, PET.**
- Irrigation application depths/timing.**
- Keep records of when you irrigate for some other reason, such as to wash in fertiliser or to activate herbicide.**

Target 4 - Staff are trained in the operation, maintenance and use of irrigation systems.

Things that you can do:

- Make sure staff are trained up in the working of your system and have the information they need to keep everything working as it should.

Records/Evidence you can keep:

- Staff training/induction records.**
- Standard operating procedures.**