

Irrigation Through The Cloud: Using Wireless Irrigation Systems to Schedule and Control Irrigation for Container Crops

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Leaching Fraction (LF) =

$$\left(\frac{\text{amt of water leached with plant}}{\text{amt without plant}} \right) * 100$$

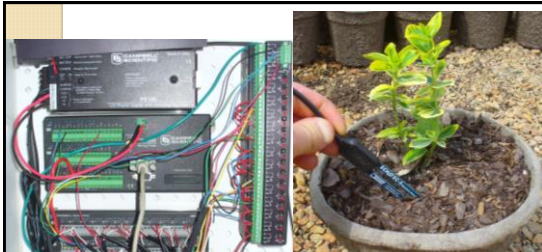
Types of Moisture Sensors

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Plant Daily Water Use Determination (DWU) 2006 - 2009

- Substrate volumetric moisture measured with Theta-probe
- 1 hour and 24 hours after irrigation
- Irrigation applied at rate of lowest DWU Taxa
- Additional Irrigation applied by Hand
- Measured every 10-14 days

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Substrate volumetric moisture content determined with Decagon 10HS sensors via a Campbell datalogger programmed to calculate DWU and apply irrigation by controlling solenoid valves. Irrigation applied based on the highest plant DWU.

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Irrigation and Runoff


Application Rates: N = 123 lb/ac, P = 15 lb/ac (35 lb P2O5)

Amount recovered based on 100% land use with #3 containers spaced 1.5 ft on-center over 4 months.

Treatment	Irrigation Applied (gal/acre)	Runoff volume (gal/acre)	Nitrate recovered (lb/acre)	Phosphate recovered (lb/acre)
Control	2.4 million	1.04 million (43%)	12 (10%)	3.1 (21%)
100% DWU	1.6 million	0.48 million (31%)	7.2 (6%)	1.7 (11%)
100-75% DWU	1.4 million	0.29 million (29%)	5.9 (5%)	1.2 (8%)
100-75-75% DWU	1.3 million	0.37 million (29%)	5.7 (5%)	1.2 (8%)

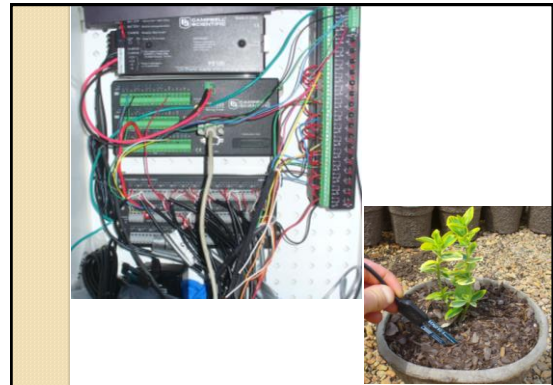
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Viburnum dentatum 'Ralph Senior' September 2006




Control 100 DWR 100a75 100a75a75

Nutrition Problems?



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Wireless sensor networks




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Cost of Water

- For 160 irrigation events per year = \$0.032 per plant
- Reduce water use by 30% = \$0.022 per plant
- Reduce water use by 70% = \$0.009 per plant
- Reduce fertilizer leaching by 6% = \$0.005 per plant
- Saving \$0.015-\$0.028 per plant, Whoopee!!
- About \$225-\$420 per acre
- Water is cheap!
.....at least east of the Mississippi

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McCorkle Nursery, GA



- Gardenia crop: 20,000 sq ft area with 23,400 plants (50,965 plants per acre)
- Reduced production time from 11-22 to 8-11 months
- Improved survival from 10% loss to zero loss

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Van Iersel, Chappell, Ruter, Lichtenberg, Majstrlik, U's of GA and MD

Economic Impact

Costs	
Control node	\$6.75
Sensors (4 @ \$90)	\$3.60
Rain gauge	\$3.00
Base station, computer & software	\$1,000
Installation	\$1,500
Total Cost	\$3,835
Savings/Profit	
Fewer plant losses	\$13,000 (\$6.50 per plant)
Time/interest (avg 6 months shorter production cycle @ 8%)	\$500
Less fertilizer, pesticides, maintenance, labor	\$7,700
Total Savings/Profit	\$21,200 (\$0.90 per plant)
Net	\$17,365

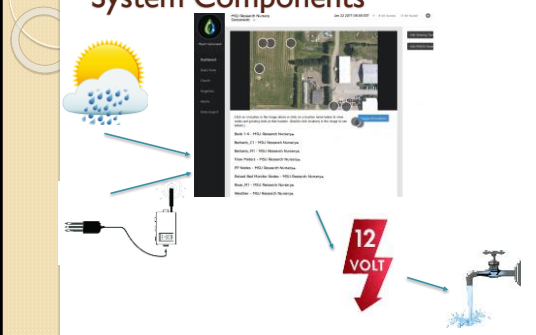
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Cost of Water

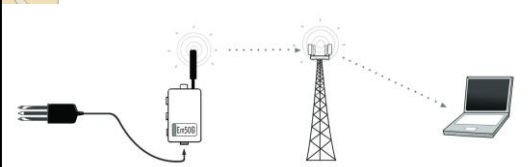
- Cheap! But not the consequences of over-irrigation
- For 160 irrigation events per year = \$0.032 per plant (or \$0.022 or \$0.009 for more efficient irrigation)
- Less shrinkage, shorter production cycle, less fertilizer applied, less fertilizer lost, less labor, less pesticides used = save up to \$0.90 per plant (remember this example is with a "problem" crop)
- Less off-site movement of water and contaminants

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System Components



Schematic of entire system




Monitor Nodes

- Substrate moisture content, EC, and other vital information can be acquired via monitor nodes.
- Ports can be configured for a variety of sensors


• Model Shown:

- Decagon Em50R



Soil Sensors

- IOHS Sensor
 - VWC
- GS3 Sensor
 - VWC
 - EC
 - Temp



Monitor Nodes

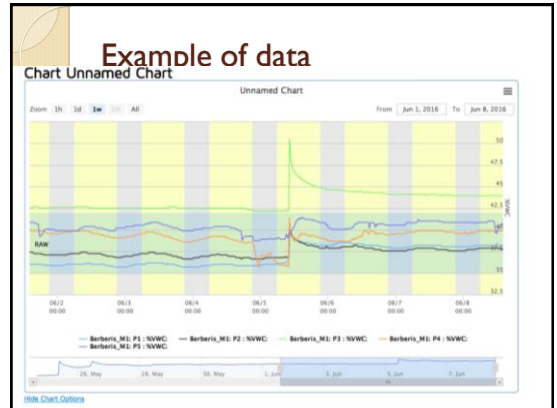
Container Capacity Bed 2	Mon Oct/31/16 12:35 Averaging Tool	45.35 %VWC
Container Capacity Bed 3	Mon Oct/31/16 13:15 Averaging Tool	41.27 %VWC
Container Capacity Bed 4	Mon Oct/31/16 13:55 Averaging Tool	41.77 %VWC
Container Capacity Bed 7	Mon Oct/31/16 13:55 Averaging Tool	36.27 %VWC
Container Capacity Bed 12	Mon Oct/31/16 13:55 Averaging Tool	28.12 %VWC

- Enhanced knowledge of substrate conditions
- Averaging tools for localized regions

Monitor Nodes


- Improved record keeping and system management
- MDARD Water Use Report

101	Tue Sep/27/16 12:45 63.0% battery	64905.0Gallons	65530.0Gallons
102	Thu Sep/29/16 09:11 44.0% battery	0.0Gallons	0.0Gallons
103	Mon Sep/26/16 11:30 53.0% battery	65533.0Gallons	0.0Gallons
104	Mon Sep/26/16 11:30 64.0% battery	0.0Gallons	0.0Gallons



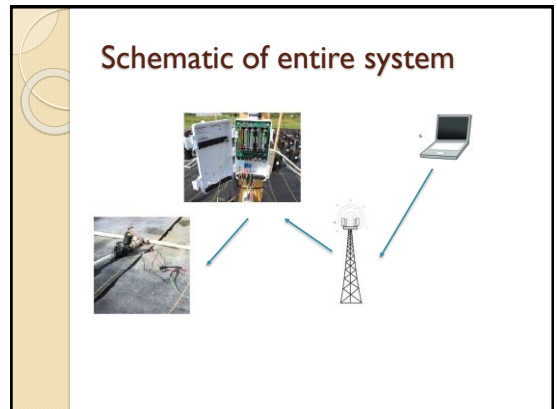
Weather Stations

- Precipitation, wind speed, air pressure data etc., can be collected on a localized level.



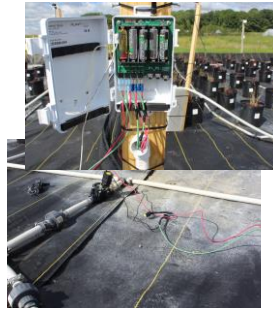
Weather - MSU Research Nursery

Weather	Fri Jan/20/17 15:40 39.0% battery	151.97Bumol/(m ² ·2s) Measures photons of light	0.62kPa 35.6Fahrenheit 87.85%RH Temp and Atmosphere	0.0mm Precip.	309.0Degrees 116m/s average 1.7m/s Wind gusting
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DC Latching Solenoid Valves

- Wired to control nodes
- Used extensively in timer based irrigation



Irrigation Management

