

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

Tom Fernandez and Damon Abdi
 Department of Horticulture
 Michigan State University



Leaching Fraction (LF) =
 $(\text{amt of water leached with plant} / \text{amt without plant}) * 100$

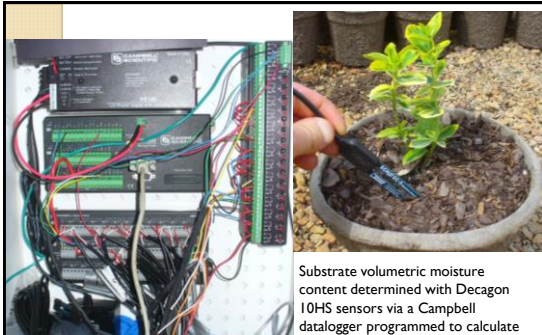
Types of Moisture Sensors

Tom Fernandez
 Department of Horticulture
 Michigan State University

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.

Tom Franzoso
Department of Horticulture
Mississippi State University

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%)

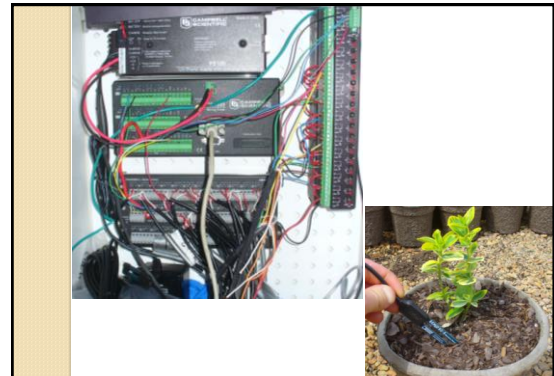
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Department of Horticulture
Mississippi State University

Viburnum dentatum 'Ralph Senior' September 2006




Control 100 DWR 100a75 100a75a75

Nutrition Problems?



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Wireless sensor networks



Tom Franzoso
Department of Horticulture
Mississippi State University

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

Tom Franzoso
Department of Horticulture
Mississippi State University

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

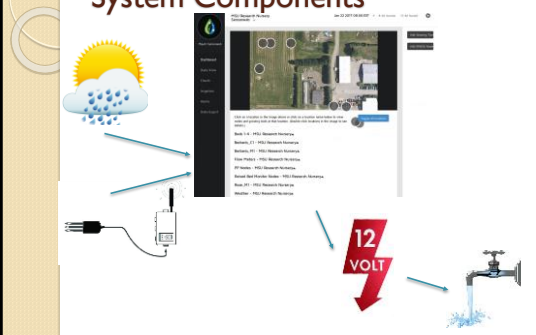
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Cost of Water

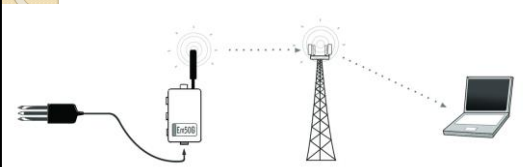
- Cheap! But not the consequences of over-irrigation
- For 160 irrigation events per year = \$0.032 per plant (or \$0.022 or \$0.009 for more efficient irrigation)
- Less shrinkage, shorter production cycle, less fertilizer applied, less fertilizer lost, less labor, less pesticides used = save up to \$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

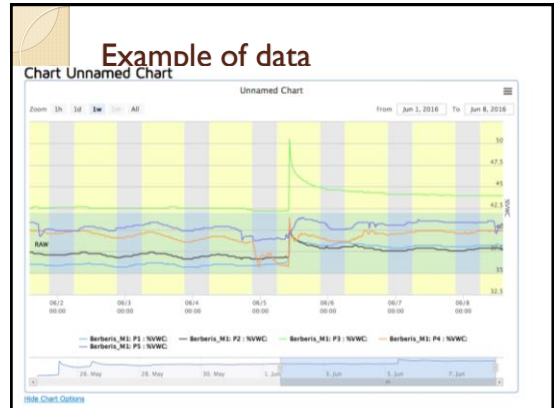
Container Capacity Bed 2	Mon Oct/31/16 12:35 Averaging Tool	45.35 %VWC
Container Capacity Bed 3	Mon Oct/31/16 13:15 Averaging Tool	41.27 %VWC
Container Capacity Bed 4	Mon Oct/31/16 13:55 Averaging Tool	41.77 %VWC
Container Capacity Bed 7	Mon Oct/31/16 13:55 Averaging Tool	36.27 %VWC
Container Capacity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



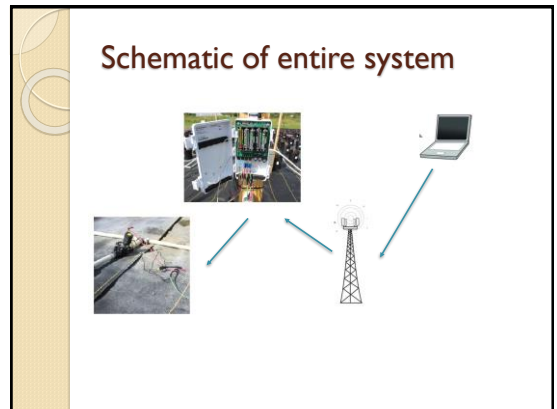
Weather Stations

- 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 ·2's) 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

