

SCHEDULING IRRIGATION TOOL

BACKGROUND AND CURRENT PRACTICE

Generally due to time honoured processes in most instances certain irrigation and rainfall records are kept on a turf farm, however it is usually in a notebook or some form of recording on the back of the door or a blackboard. It is not centralised or computer-based on most turf farms and therefore not readily available to everyone.



Irrigation scheduling can support water and energy use efficiency and reduce waste. This in turn provides improved yield and profit. The lack of an irrigation scheduling regime within the turf facility increases the use of water, energy, waste and labour.

PROPOSED PRACTICE

It is proposed that turf irrigators can access freely a process known as **Scheduling Irrigation Diary (SID)** through the www.sid.usq.edu.au. SID is an irrigation scheduling program that can support water use efficiency and reduce waste, linking better irrigation management that can reduce operating times of the irrigator. This in turn provides assistance in the targeted improved yield and profit turf producers are seeking. SID also provides base data and allows for the development of improvement measures as part of a farm management process.

The Scheduling Irrigation Diary assesses crop water needs via supply and demand based on the actual irrigation amount, irrigation frequency, rainfall and crop water use. **SID is not a fertiliser scheduling program.**

WHAT IS SCHEDULING IRRIGATION

The Scheduling Irrigation Diary (SID) is a free to use web-based computer software designed to help irrigators make informed decisions about when and how much to irrigate after registration access.

SID simulates soil moisture conditions based on real time daily rainfall and evapotranspiration data either from the Bureau of Meteorology or your own database to calculate an irrigation schedule for correct turf production on the farm computer.



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From this information, a crop scheduling report can be generated for crops, taking the guesswork out of when to turn on the pump and the amounts to apply. SID also allows the user to input their irrigation records so it can provide a history and record of actual irrigation performance over seasons. Irrigators also have the option to enter their own rainfall records if no computer connected; rain measurement is always available from BOM but may not be as accurate as your own on farm measurement.

All data entered by an irrigator is stored in a secure remote environment that can only be accessed by the account holder.

The SID program takes only a few minutes to set up. Actual irrigation times are input by the turf producer. A series of graphs provide excellent knowledge based information on modelled water requirements is then produced for the production manager to accurately assess irrigation requirements from the conditions on the farm.

FEATURES

- Recorded long-term base data for management use in farm planning
- Graphical records
- Turf species and date planted
- Accumulated total rainfall available
- Accumulated total irrigation applied
- Advice on when irrigation is due
- Record daily rainfall and irrigation amounts
- View graphs showing -
 - soil moisture and refill point
 - rainfall and irrigation amounts
 - crop water requirement
 - seasonal irrigation water use
- Generate an irrigation scheduling report for selected crops
- Set up details of your farm and irrigated fields with the required information; e.g. location, soils, crops



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