

SURFACE IRRIGATION

FACTS VS FICTION

IRRIGATION TOOLBOX
SERIES 2024



PERCEPTION: Old, wasteful & inefficient.

FACTS:

- Precision surface irrigation is more than 90% efficient
- Cheapest to build & cheapest to operate
- CP LM \$25-\$40/ML just to pressurise

PERCEPTION: Doesn't really matter how long it takes to irrigate. The clay only takes so much water.

FACTS:

- Not quite - the rate of infiltration slows dramatically but infiltration still continues while the water is on the soil
- Opportunity Time

PERCEPTION: Should stop the siphons before the furrows run through - there is plenty of water still coming down.

FACTS:

- Long runs and high flow rates need to run tailwater

PERCEPTION: Overhead irrigation is cheap insurance for good crop yield.

FACTS:

- Not anymore: consider cost + availability of water
- Nutrients flushed below root zone
- Reduced yield

PERCEPTION: Siphon size makes no difference.

FACTS (with 0.3m Head)

- 50mm = 0.16 ML/day
- 63mm = 0.285 ML/day
- 75mm = 0.432 ML/day

FACTS (with 66mm Siphon)

- 0.1m head = 0.16 ML/day
- 0.2m head = 0.233 ML/day
- 0.3m head = 0.285 ML/day

Source: Jim Purcell, Aquatech Consulting, Narrabri
More information: www.cottoninfo.com.au



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