Drip Irrigation Encyclopedia Article

Drip Irrigation

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Drip Irrigation

Drip **irrigation** maximizes scarce resources by delivering water exactly where it is needed. The **percolation plume** from drip sources follows the bulb shape of the root zone, wasting little water. This also better controls **fertilizer** inputs by applying nutrients with the water application. Though expensive to install, and best-suited to perennials or high-value crops, this system overcomes or minimizes problems from traditional irrigation methods. Spray irrigation maximizes evaporation; while gravity-fed systems contribute to **seepage** losses, **waterlogging**, and **salinization**. Through water budget analyses and weed control, growers can maintain the exact moisture and nutritional levels needed for optimum plant growth.