

The secret to growing more with less water...

Growing your own vegetables is one of the greatest joys of owning a garden. You can have fresh produce everyday while having full control over the fertilisers and chemicals being used. But having a vegetable garden requires water. The secret to growing more with less water is to use dripline irrigation, which will only irrigate where required.

Dripline has been used for many years in commercial horticulture and flower production. The main difference between a normal sprinkler and dripline is that with dripline the plant itself does not get sprayed and wet. In flower and fruit production this is very important as you do not want to damage the flowers on the plants.

Basically, a dripline is a hosepipe with small emitters inside that allows water to drip out at certain intervals and speed. The normal spacing for each emitter is 30cm apart, emitting 1.5 litres to 2 litres an hour. Because the dripline is lying on the ground, only the ground along the dripline is getting wet, and all the water that is normally wasted by watering between the plants is saved. This does not mean you only plant every 30cm. As the water permeates the soil, it will spread horizontally in an onion like shape. So when planting small plants like radishes, carrots or herbs, you can plant all along the dripline and the roots will still absorb water, but when planting larger plants, like tomatoes and butternuts, you should plant next to an emitter as you will be able to water even less. If you have a mix of both small and large plants, you will quickly learn how much water is needed to wet the soil. In the beginning, you can try to dig along the dripline to see how far the water spreads, also depending on how long you leave the water on. But as a standard recommendation, a full 250m² drip kit will use approximately 1.7m³ of water a day, depending on temperature and plants. So a 10 x 10 metre veggie patch should only need around 0.7m³ of water a day.



As plants do not obtain water through their leaves but through their roots, any water sprayed onto a plant is essentially wasted, as most of it will evaporate before it hits the ground. Also by not wetting the plant itself, you are greatly reducing the chance of disease on the plants, which will reduce the amount of spraying needed and will save you money and make for a healthier crop.

Driptech is now offering drip kits specifically made for our urban customers. They come in either 250m² or 500m² sizes, but can easily be made smaller if so desired. The drip kit is made by NaanDanJain who is one of the world's leading dripline and irrigation companies. The drip kit comes in a box complete with all fittings, main line, filter and the dripline. It also has a very detailed guide on how to assemble the drip kit, which can be done by anybody – you just need a sharp knife and a source of water. The drip kit is made to work using gravity, so if you already have a tank you can easily connect the drip kit directly onto it. If your water is pressure based, you need a small pressure regulator in front of your drip kit set up.

250m² drip kit \$228

500m² drip kit \$298
(VAT included)

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