

Water for Profit

WEATHER STATIONS



Weather stations provide site-specific weather information for growers interested in monitoring atmospheric conditions. Weather stations can be fitted with a range of sensors, depending on the needs of the growers.

Options

Weather stations tend to be expensive, require high maintenance and may be difficult to use. There are three options available to an irrigator who is after climatic data. They are listed below.

- Purchase an on-farm weather station and hire a consultant to service it.
- Purchase data from a nearby weather station (if available).
- Obtain free regional data from sources such as universities, research stations and the Bureau of Meteorology.

Numerous companies in Australia manufacture and service weather stations with a full array of sensors e.g. temperature, rainfall, humidity, wind speed and wind direction. However, these sensors are not the only factor to consider when looking at purchasing a weather station. Other factors include:

- the ability of the weather station to be remotely downloaded via telemetry such as modems or mobile phones
- technical support if and when the weather station malfunctions.

Telemetry

Telemetry is useful if the weather station is not easy to get to or if you are too busy to visit the weather station regularly. A disadvantage of telemetry is the patchiness of mobile phone coverage though advances in telemetry have seen UHF and other transmission techniques being used to overcome this problem.

Technical Support

Maintenance is vital for the quality and consistency of the recorded data. If support is too far away, data may be lost while support has to come from a large distance away. Local support is ideal though the grower, through collaboration with the manufacturer via email, phone or fax can perform a lot of maintenance and repair work.

For more details contact the Growcom members access line on 07 3620 3844.

Disclaimer: This information is provided as a reference tool only. Seek professional advice for irrigation specifics.

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