

An East African rose grower has developed an irrigation regime based on advice from his Sentek Distributor of only watering when the plants require it, whilst developing the root systems needed by roses to grow big stems.

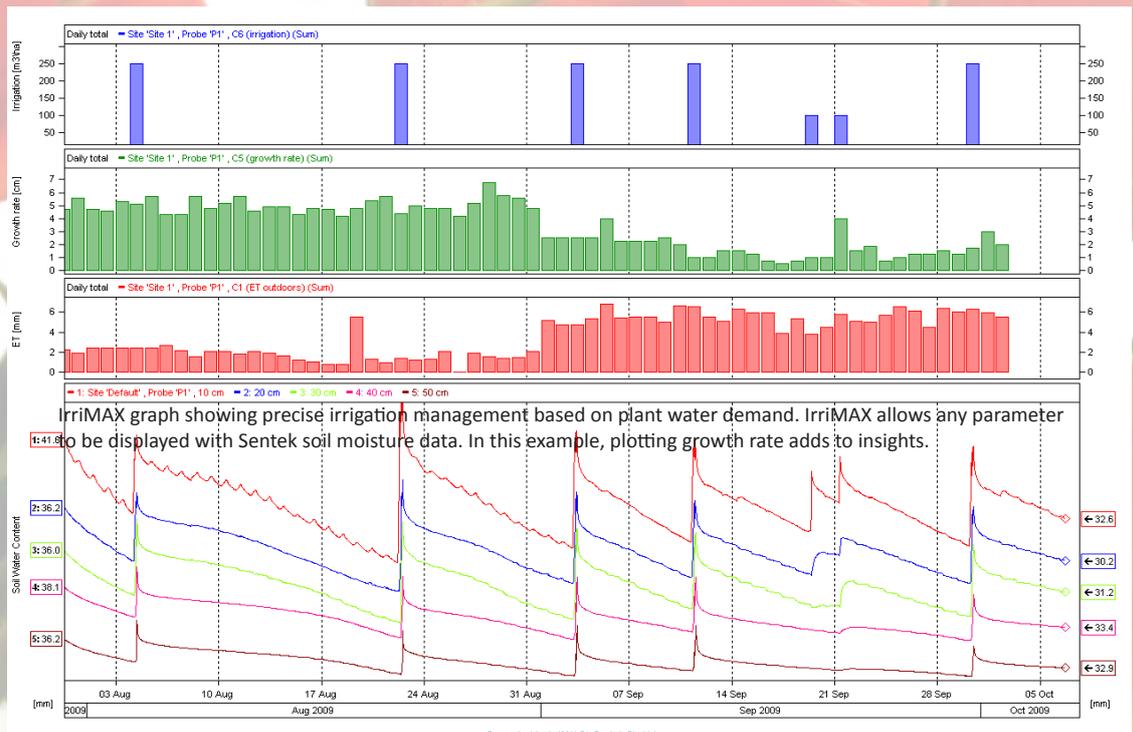
Sentek EnviroSCAN systems have enabled this grower to optimize their water and nutrient applications and maximise quality of production.

Importance of effective irrigation management in rose production.

Irrigation management is critical in rose production. Applying too much or too little water can have dramatic effects of plant health and quality of flower production.

If too much water is applied the soil is always full. Drainage will occur at all times, resulting in fertilizer leaching. In many soil types roots & root hairs are reduced by lack of oxygen causing smaller root systems. This in turn increases drought risk and reduces the volume of soil to draw nutrients and water.

If too little water is being applied, the wetting zone may be too small for the plant to grow optimally, especially if this occurs at critical times. When fertigation is also being used the local EC may be too high.



Monitoring soil moisture

In East Africa, Sentek's Diviner 2000 portable multi-depth monitoring probe has been popular as it allows growers to monitor many sites with the one device. However, as water becomes scarce, growers are increasing turning to Sentek's EnviroSCAN permanent multi-depth logging solution, offering more advanced detail to further fine tune irrigations.

By using the EnviroSCAN system, this rose grower's irrigation is now exact, with continual fine tuning based on weather conditions and crop stage. This avoids leaching of water and nutrients due to over-irrigation that typically occurs in the region. For example, in August the grower only watered his roses twice.