

Irrigation Unlimited:



Choose an irrigation system to fit your farm

by Annemarie Bremner



Dirk van Zuydam from Natal in the RSA says this Ocmis irrigator has now worked for more than a year without problems or downtime, and it has freed his hands for other important work on the farm.

Even the highest maize plants can be uniformly irrigated with the precipitation from the Ocmis impact sprinkler.

The most important party in the farming industry is the farmer, therefore his interests should always be placed first. This is the conviction of Irrigation Unlimited's people.

Dirk van Zuydam from Weenen in the Natal Province of the RSA was looking for an irrigation solution suited to the needs of his farm and for which he would not need to adapt his farming practices. He found the solution in ProAgri, where farmers related how satisfied they were with Irrigation Unlimited's Ocmis self-propelled irrigators.

Every farmer has different needs, says Dirk. Some farmers with extensive fields would be unwise not to use pivots, but Dirk himself needed something to irrigate his angular fields

without wasting corners that cannot be reached by a pivot.

He says: "Land is expensive. I cannot afford wasted corners, neither can I make an alternative irrigation plan for every unreachable corner."

Yet, the time was more than ripe to utilise labour and time more efficiently and to get rid of time wasting quick coupling systems that they have used up to now.

Dirk mainly grows potatoes, maize and dry beans, and his fields consist of blocks of various sizes between the irrigation canal, the road and the hills. Presently, he is laying a main water supply line to all his fields with a hydrant every 60 meters. This means that he will be able to move his Ocmis irrigators to any point, connect them

and irrigate without further ado.

He bought his first two Ocmis irrigators a year ago, and now he acquired a third one.

Dirk properly weighed all his options, and says a further reason why he decided against a pivot is that such a system is an expensive investment, often standing idly for three months of the year because he cannot plant anything in certain fields at certain times.

He also looked at the various self-propelled irrigators, and what impressed him most about the Ocmis, was the sturdy construction. A 100 mm diameter hose, 300 m long and filled with water is not slightly heavy – it is very heavy. The machine that reels in this hose must have a strong gearbox and must stand very firmly not to be toppled over.

Furthermore, all the settings are mechanical and easy to understand, and no electricity supply is necessary. Everything works with water pressure and the 5 bar delivered by the pump out of the canal is fully sufficient to propel everything and to irrigate even the highest growing maize properly.

Dirk uses an impact sprinkler with a 26 mm nozzle, and his machine is set to proceed at 14 meters per hour. In some fields the 300 meter hose with its sprinkler cart at the end is fully extended before commencing its calm, life-giving journey back to the reel. On smaller fields, a shorter part of the hose is reeled out.

"This just goes to show how versatile and adaptable the machine is," says Dirk.

Moving the Ocmis is really a one man operation. All you have to do, is to pull out a pin, lift the supports and then you can hitch the Ocmis and draw it to the next position.

Dirk could increase his production, because he can now plant fields that were too difficult to irrigate before.

Another benefit is that he could now use his tedious and time consuming quick couplers to permanently supply water to a new field.

"All this enabled me to apply my workforce more efficiently to perform other essential tasks on the farm without regular interruptions to go and move irrigation pipes," he says.

The local dealer supplied the equipment, but Tobie van den Heever travelled to the farm from Pretoria to help set up the first two irrigators.

"With the third one, I did everything by myself, as it is in fact very simple," Dirk says.

Call Tobie van den Heever of Irrigation Unlimited on +27 82-658-6054 or +27 12-736-2121, or e-mail tobie@iunlimited.co.za for your customised irrigation solution. Also visit www.iunlimited.co.za for more information.