

Irrigation Tune-Up for Irrigation Season

Pasture Sprinkler Irrigation

The following tips will help you maximize your irrigation system for efficiency. Prior to beginning to irrigate your plants, consider this checklist for a successful growing season:

1. Design your irrigation system with a blow off valve at the end and lowest level of your system so you can flush your system of sediment at the beginning of the irrigation season and drain it at the end of the season to avoid broken sprinklers and pipes from frost.
2. Remove sprinkler heads and flush your system to remove any sediment and debris especially at the beginning of irrigation season when water moving through the canals tends to be more turbid.
3. If possible, install a sediment trap near a good access point where you can check it and clean it when necessary.
4. Keeping sediment and debris from your sprinklers will maximize their efficiency and allow the sprinkler to cover the maximum distance. Rotary sprinklers tend to capture sediment and need to be cleaned periodically for maximum efficiency.
5. Turn on each valve and check system for leaks. Repair leaks immediately to maintain maximum pressure in your system as well as avoid water loss and run-off.
6. If you have pop-up sprinklers or sprinklers on risers, make sure the vegetation around your sprinklers is not too tall and blocks the spray.
7. Remember that most established pastures require deeper, more infrequent watering. Use a soil probe to help you determine the moisture content in your soil at the root zone. This will help you determine how often to irrigate.
8. If you have an irrigation controller, remember to change the scheduling with the different seasons and ambient temperature changes.
9. Clean your irrigation box screen as needed.

