

Tips offered to help decide when to stop irrigating

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Deciding when to stop irrigating is an important and challenging decision to make. An unneeded 24 hours on a 500-gallon-per-minute well is 720,000 gallons wasted, not to mention the electricity costs. On the other hand, applying that one additional irrigation round could mean several bushels per acre.

The NebGuide, "Predicting the last irrigation for Corn, Grain Sorghum, and Soybeans," is a two-page, easy-to-read Extension pamphlet designed to help irrigators decide when to stop irrigating. A table is included that lists the normal water requirements for corn, grain sorghum, dry and soy beans between various late growth stages and maturity.

All of these crops require some moisture up to the point that the seeds or grain stops filling. Since some of the required moisture can come from the soil, the last irrigation can usually be applied two to four weeks before physiological maturity.

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