Drip Irrigation:
Tips for laying drip tape

Cooperative Extension•Delaware State University

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Drip Tape:

1. Reduces time spent on watering (more efficient)
2. Can be used to fertilize your growing area
3. Allows safe use of recycled water
4. Minimizes soil erosion
5. Uniform distribution of water
6. Minimizes fertilizer waste
7. Foliage remains dry thus reducing risk of disease (targets root area only)
8. Can be used in conjunction with plastic for optimal weed suppression
9. Irrigation can be on a water timer (optional)

What You Need:

1. Scissors
2. Drip tape
3. Flat line
4. Drip tape barbs with valves (valves used for turning row on or off)
5. Hole punch barb for high flow drip tape fittings
6. Water regulator
7. Hose clamp

Things to Consider:

1. Expense of the drip tape, flat line, and pressure regulators
2. Set up time involved pre-harvest and cleanup of tape post-harvest
3. Will need to be replaced after a few years due to ultra-violet damage, pest damage, and general wear-and-tear

Below, are tips from the Cooperative Extension Small Farms Program for the successful use of drip irrigation tape:

Tip 1: You can purchase drip tape in 8 mil and 15 mil thick tubing. The drip emitter spacing for water comes 8 or 12 inches apart. When laying the drip tape, make sure that the holes are facing upward, and that there are no kinks in the line. This picture shows an irrigation drip tape applicator; in this example it is used in conjunction with a plastic mulch layer.

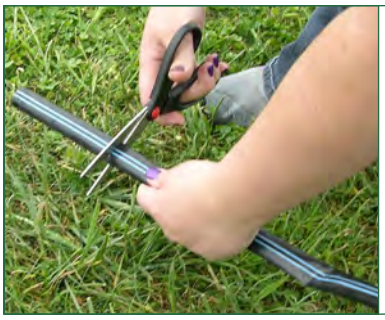
Tip 2: This picture shows drip tape being laid under plastic mulch, which is helpful for weed suppression. Note how the drip tape line comes off the applicator and under the role of plastic.

Tip 3: Once you have run drip tape down each of your rows, next run flat line across the top of your drip tape row ends.

Tip 4: Add a water regulator to the end of the flat line to reduce water flow, and thus ensure proper water dispersal through the drip tape lines.

Tip 5: Punch a hole in the flat line using a hole punch (make sure the water source is turned off). Do not puncture all the way through the flat line. Once the hole is punched, add the drip tape barb with valve. You will do this for each row of drip tape you are connecting to the master flat line.

Tip 6: Attach drip tape to the barb with valve, thus connecting the drip tape line to the flat line. Do this for each row in your growing area to control water flow. The opposite ends need to be adequately tied off to ensure no water leakage.



Tip 7: Tie off each end of drip tape to ensure no water leak-age. First cut off approximately 5”- 6” inches from each end.

Tip 8: Take the remaining end and fold back tightly twice.

Tip 9: Now use the drip tape end that you previ-ously cut off and slide it back over the folded end like a sleeve.

Tip 10: Your finished end should look similar to the picture.

Tip 11: Make sure you place a cap on the end of the flat line to stop the water flow.

Tip 12: Enjoy your finished rows!

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By Kathryn Carroll and Megan Pleasanton.

For more information, contact:
John Clendaniel, AgNR Program Leader
DSU Cooperative Extension
jclendaniel@desu.edu, (302) 857-6425

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