

WHAT TO CONSIDER BEFORE INVESTING IN IRRIGATION TECHNOLOGY

In-field monitoring systems that monitor such variables as weather, soil moisture and plant stress can be highly advanced and have multiple “moving parts.” Some examples are wind sensors, rain gauges, temperature sensors and pest traps. These technologies have a certain life expectancy, just like any other piece of equipment on your operation. A monitoring system is simply a computer in a weather-resistant case — it is exposed to constant heat, rain, sprays and dust. Equipment does not last forever and requires maintenance.

Consider asking these questions:

- Does the provider only offer one solution or multiple solutions for growers? For example, what type(s) of irrigation monitoring sensors are available?
- Is this company investor-backed?
- Under what conditions does this type of technology or sensor work best? For example, what is the best sensor for your growing environment?
- What is the life expectancy of the sensors?
- What is included in the warranty?
- Does the company review your data for reliability, or are you responsible for this?
- What is included in the grower support network?
- Does the company have a service team, and if so, what kind of training or certifications do they have?
- What kind of documentation does the company provide when service is done in the field?



Photo courtesy Spencer Cooper.

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