

NETAFIM DRIP IRRIGATION SUCCESS STORIES

MULTIPLE CROPS

DRIP IRRIGATION: A NATURAL FIT

SHAYNE FRANZOY - SALEM, NM

Shayne Franzoy operates Chile River, Inc., with his father Jerry. The operation farms approximately 1,000 acres and grows onions, chile peppers, alfalfa, corn, pinto beans and sometimes cotton. All of the operation's deeded ground is under drip irrigation, and has been for approximately 11 years.

"Our primary reasons for shifting to drip irrigation were increasing the efficiency of water use, as well as fertilizer application," says Franzoy. "It has also improved our management as everything is so much more automated. I am able to do all of the irrigation myself."

Franzoy adds that working with Netafim, a leading drip irrigation product manufacturer, made the transition from more traditional methods such as furrow irrigation much easier.

"We had the support we needed with Netafim to get up and running," says Franzoy. "If we ran into issues, there was always technical support to get things back on track."

Drip irrigation has been a natural fit for Chile River, Inc., not only because of the types of crops the farms grows, but also because the operation has focused on water conservation as part of its mission. The farm has been featured on Food Network and the Travel Channel, and also does a lot of direct sales to consumers, which means that being able to talk about responsible water use is an important component to marketing their product and farm products more effectively.



SHAYNE FRANZOY



DRIP IRRIGATION: INCREASED YIELDS

KEVIN PENN - DEMING, NM

Kevin Penn, along with his son Zach, farm more than 2,000 acres near Deming, New Mexico. In an area characterized by chile production, the Penns also grow onions, alfalfa, corn as well as pecans and a limited amount of wheat. Almost all of that acreage is under drip irrigation.

"Drip irrigation saved agriculture in this region," says Penn. "When we started installing our drip systems about 15 years ago, commodity prices were low and our overhead was constantly going up. Drip offered a much more economical method of delivering water to our crops, and also increased our yields by allowing us to apply chemicals more efficiently."

Penn says the savings in labor costs that drip irrigation has provided has been the most significant benefit in changing from more traditional irrigation methods.

"Labor expenses had increased significantly in the late 1990's. Once we transitioned to drip irrigation with the majority of our crops, our overhead went down and our yields went up."

That's good for your bottom line, no matter how you pencil it.



PENN FARMS

NEW MEXICO



DRIP IRRIGATION: DO MORE WITH LESS

SCOTT & TYSON ADAMS - HATCH, NM

In an area known as the chile capital of the world, you can also find a wide variety of crops grown including onions, pecans, alfalfa, lettuce, cabbage, sweet potatoes, wheat, cotton, and various other crops. Scott Adams farms approximately 2,500 acres of primarily onions, chiles, alfalfa and corn in this unique area that was historically irrigated with furrow and pivot irrigation systems. Now Uvas Valley Farms has more than 80% of its farmland under drip irrigation.

"We have used Netafim drip irrigation products as there has always been a more than satisfactory level of customer service," says Adams. "Switching to drip irrigation has really allowed us to do more with less. We have significantly improved the efficiency of our chemical application, and yet at the same time improved our crop yields."



SCOTT ADAMS (TOP) AND
SON TYSON ADAMS (BOTTOM)



DRIP IRRIGATION: IRRIGATE WHILE HARVESTING

DON HARTMAN - DEMING, NM

"I have been using drip irrigation on everything for more than a decade," says Don Hartman, who grows chile peppers, onions and small grain crops near Deming, New Mexico. "Many of our fields are odd shapes due to the associated water rights that go with specific parcels dating back to the turn of the twentieth century. One hundred years ago, people didn't have to worry about farming to fit with the constraints of center pivots. Now, when irrigation is so critical to our crop production in this area, being able to match a method with existing constraints is very important. As a result, drip irrigation works extremely well."

Hartman even uses drip irrigation with his grain crops by installing the tape approximately six inches below the surface. Hartman has been using Netafim products exclusively in his farming operation, and has been more than happy with the technical service he has received. All of his irrigation system can be monitored remotely as modems have been installed to allow off-site management of the irrigation. "I can be anywhere in the country, and if I have internet or access to a phone line, I can check on the status of my irrigation. I am able to monitor the flows from each of my farming locations as well as if I was right there."

Hartman farms about 450 acres, and says the installation of the drip coupled with the remote monitoring has resulted in considerable time and labor savings.

"It used to take four employees to get all of my irrigation done, and now I can take care of it by myself," he adds. "Other costs, including fertilizer, fuel and pumping costs have all been reduced after implementing drip irrigation."

Hartman says the ability to 'spoon feed' fertilizer to crops has reduced excessive application because they are not broadcasting. The amount of tractor time in his fields has also been reduced as the irrigation water is delivered subsurface and fewer weed species germinate, resulting in less time devoted to cultivation.

"I'm a hands-on manager, and the drip irrigation coupled with the remote monitoring has allowed me to manage the farm much more effectively than I used to," says Hartman. Additionally, Hartman notes how drip irrigation assists tremendously with harvest entry timeframes.

"Our chilies and onions are sold by fresh weight and we are able to irrigate while harvesting at the same time, maintaining maximum weight and freshness. Before drip irrigation when we were furrow irrigating we would have to irrigate then wait for the ground to dry 3-4 days before we could enter with harvest equipment, constantly trying to juggle the harvest and irrigation scheduling," said Hartman. "Also as our vegetables needed more water the fresh weight and the quality of fruit would decline. With drip you can irrigate while harvesting, maintaining maximum harvest weight and freshness in the fruit."



NETAFIM USA
5470 E. Home Ave.
Fresno, CA 93727
CS 888 638 2346
www.netafimusa.com