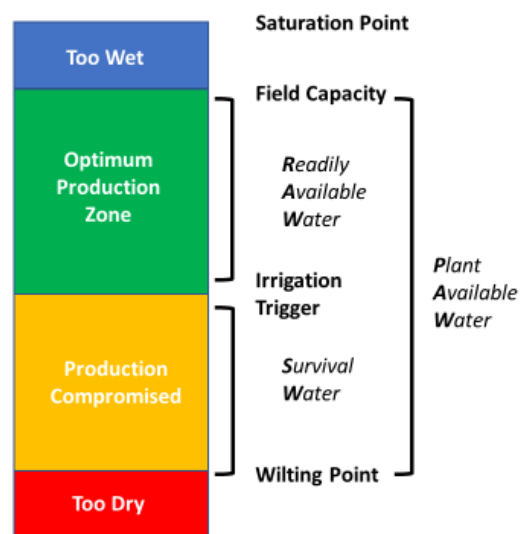


The following information is required for successful irrigation -

- The different soils on your property and how much water they hold (mm/100mm depth)
- The rooting depth of the different crops you grow (to the nearest 100mm) and any changes during the growing season
- The typical and range of rainfall you receive during the irrigation season (mm/ month)
- How much each irrigation system typically applies (mm) and the return period (days)
- The system capacity of each irrigation system (mm/ day)
- The reliability of water supply (month)

Knowledge of the soils on your farm is the most critical information for successful irrigation. The diagram opposite shows the information you need to know about your soils, and the common terms used. Successful irrigation is about keeping your soil moisture level in the 'Green Zone'.

Once you have identified the different soil types on your farm determining the field capacity of each (the maximum amount of water the soil holds) is a relatively simple task. However, setting the Irrigation Trigger point is more complex.



Most companies that sell irrigation scheduling software or soil moisture sensors, set a single Irrigation Trigger point for the entire irrigation season. If this is set correctly it is a great first step, but if you want maximise profitability and minimise nutrient leaching, a more tailored approach is required.

The diagram opposite provides an example irrigation strategy. This can be easily adapted for different soils, crops and irrigation systems to meet your specific need.

