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Practical and doable water-saving techniques in controlled irrigation

Pre-planting techniques

1. Construct farm ditch parallel or across dikes to facilitate transfer of water at higher rates. Do this during land preparation. This favors efficient use of water and time.

The farm ditch maybe any of the following sizes:

- a. About 30 cm wide - an ideal size; facilitates faster flow of water, easier to manage
- b. Hand tractor size - facilitates faster flow of water; about four to five rows of seedlings can also be planted in this area.



A ditch that is about 30 cm wide

2. Use appropriate planting method based on water availability and your ability to control it.
3. Plow the field immediately after the first irrigation. Do not allow to stand unplowed for several days.



A ditch that is about the size of a hand tractor

4. Use just enough irrigation water during land preparation to facilitate soil puddling, organic matter decomposition, and land leveling.
5. Establish and level the field very well. There should be uniform water distribution in the whole paddy at 2-3 cm depth of pond water.
6. Shorten land preparation time to 1-2 weeks for non weedy or dry-plowed field, until 3 weeks for fields with fresh rice stubbles, and four weeks for fields with much weeds and stubbles.
7. Apply minimal irrigation water, about 2-3 cm until 21-30 days after planting. This will promote better seedling establishment and weed control.
8. When using a herbicide during the first month, follow the water management scheme required by the herbicide that you will use.

Post-planting procedures

1. Maintain 2-3 cm water depth from planting up to 21 DAT. This will you control the weeds and make the seedlings survive.
2. Apply water by AWD by using an observation well. This facilitates the monitoring of water status in the field and helps determine the right timing of irrigation. (see handout on How to Make Observation Well for Controlled Irrigation)



Monitor water depth by using an observation well

Reviewed by:
Jovino de Dios