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Quick Facts

- Drip irrigation is the slow, even application of low-pressure water to soil and plants using plastic tubing placed near the plants' root zone.
- Drip irrigation systems facilitate water management in fields that are difficult to irrigate due to variable soil structure or topography.
- Onion yield and grade respond very sensitively to irrigation management.
- Recommended soil water tension for irrigation onset for drip-irrigated onion is 20 centibars (cb) on silt loam.
- Seasonal water needs for drip-irrigated onion are 28 to 32 inches, depending on the year.
- “Soil water potential” is the negative of “soil water tension.” A soil water potential of -20 cb is the same as a soil water tension of +20 cb. Also, cb is the same as kPa (kilopascals).
- Drip systems require careful design and maintenance.

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