

DARWIN RURAL CROP WATER USE GUIDE 2026

This fact sheet gives a simple guide to irrigation needs for Darwin rural growers applying for a water extraction licence.

In the Darwin Rural region, high evaporation and low dry-season rainfall mean most crops need regular irrigation. Water needs can change each year with the weather, and growers may adjust irrigation to manage crop growth and quality. Actual water use will vary depending on seasonal conditions, soil type, slope, irrigation design, water-delivery capacity, and farm management.

If applicants do not have their own water use data, they may use the irrigation figures in Table 1 as a reference. These figures are derived from rainfall and temperature data, along with basic crop water requirements for the Darwin Rural area and can be applied to inform licence decisions where scientific advice is not available.

For enquiries relating to water use requirements that are complex in nature or may require scientific advice, please contact the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) on (08) 8999 2017 or plantindustries@nt.gov.au.

For further assistance on your water licensing application, please contact Water Resources on (08) 8999 4455 or water.licensing@nt.gov.au.

Table 1 – Common crop types in Darwin Rural

Crop type	Approximate irrigation requirement (mega litre /per hectare /per year)	Crop type	Approximate irrigation requirement (mega litre /per hectare /per year)
Asian vegetables (including herbs and cabbage)	9 ML	Long melon	9 ML
Avocado	10 ML	Mango – green varieties	8 ML
Banana	14 ML	Mango - KP heritage (KP, R2E2, Honey Gold, Calypso, NMBP varieties, Lady Jane)	5 ML
Bamboo	14 ML	Okra	7 ML
Cabbage	9 ML	Papaya/ Paw Paw	11 ML
Citrus 2-3 years	11 ML	Passionfruit	5 ML
Citrus 4-5 years	10 ML		
Citrus mature	8 ML		
Cucumber	9 ML	Pineapple	5 ML
Custard apple	5 ML	Pumpkin	5 ML
Dragon fruit	4 ML	Rambutan	13 ML
Eggplant	9 ML	Rockmelon	4 ML
Figs	5 ML	Snake bean	6 ML
Ginger/ Galangal	6 ML	Star apple	10 ML
Guava	10 ML	Squash	3 ML
Hog Plum	8 ML	Tomato	8 ML
Irrigated pasture/ grasses	12 ML	Watermelon	4 ML
Jackfruit	10 ML	Zucchini	3 ML