

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, HUMAN
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT &
EMPLOYMENT

Department of Environment

Guidelines for irrigation water quality

The following guidelines refer to the quality of water used for irrigation, and are meant to help the planting community. The guidelines are general in nature, and should not be associated with any specific type of irrigation method, crop or soil. They have been based mainly on guidelines from Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO).

Parameters	Unit	Max limit
Temperature	°C	35
pH	—	5.0-9.0
Colour	Hazen	20
Odour	—	No objectionable
Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD ₅)	mg/l	30
Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD)	mg/l	90
Suspended Solids	mg/l	45*
Chloride	mg/l	250
Sulphate	mg/l	500
Nitrate-Nitrogen	mg/l	15
Ammonia-N	mg/l	5
Electrical Conductivity	µS/cm	2000
Sodium adsorption Ratio (SAR)	—	<6
Aluminium	mg/l	5.0
Arsenic	mg/l	0.1
Beryllium	mg/l	0.1
Boron	mg/l	0.75
Cadmium	mg/l	0.01
Chromium	mg/l	0.10
Cobalt	mg/l	0.05
Copper	mg/l	0.20
Iron	mg/l	5.0
Lead	mg/l	2.0
Lithium	mg/l	2.5
Manganese	mg/l	0.2
Mercury	mg/l	0.02
Molybdenum	mg/l	0.01
Nickel	mg/l	0.2
Selenium	mg/l	0.02
Vanadium	mg/l	0.1
Zinc	mg/l	2.0
Fluoride	mg/l	1.0
Oil & Grease	mg/l	No visible oil
Detergents	mg/l	5
Faecal Coliforms	Per 100ml	1000
Intestinal Nematodes	Arithmetic mean no of eggs per litre	≤1