



Job Description

Job title	Irrigation Technician	Location - base	East Malling, Kent
Team	Irrigation/fertigation team, East Malling Farm	Job group	Senior Technical/Specialist
Department	Farm and Glasshouse	Post ref.	SV/A1358
Reports to	East Malling Farm Manager	Line manages	N/A

1. Team overview

NIAB's East Malling site includes offices, laboratories, field and glasshouse facilities, alongside crop research, trials and commercial horticultural and arable land.

The Farm and Glasshouse Department is involved in many aspects of our wide-ranging research on horticultural crops on the site, with the team providing husbandry services primarily in soft and top fruit production.

2. Role purpose

The Irrigation Technician works as part of a team which deploys a range of irrigation and fertigation systems to support the effective delivery of horticultural research trials and development projects for internal and external customers. The focus of the Irrigation/fertigation team is to achieve efficient water usage in soft and top fruit production.

In this work, the Irrigation Technician plays a key role in installing, maintaining and monitoring irrigation and fertigation systems according to protocols and assisting with identifying and resolving problems.

3. Financial authority/responsibility

None

4. Key relationships

Internal Farm and Glasshouse Department colleagues, research scientists

External: External customers

5. Key tasks/responsibilities

1. Being part of the team delivering irrigation system support for top and soft fruit research across NIAB.
2. Ensure proper coverage and appropriate spacing for plantings.
3. Set up and activate irrigation lines.
4. Monitor cloud-based data to ensure that systems are functioning correctly.
5. Identify, report, and resolve system issues.
6. Maintain accurate irrigation records.
7. Maintain the irrigation and fertigation systems, including setting and adjusting timers, valves, and controllers.
8. Develop and maintain professional relationships with colleagues and suppliers.
9. As part of the irrigation/fertigation team be involved in the process of identifying and resolving issues.

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10. Recommend equipment and materials to best meet project requirements, upgrading equipment where necessary.
11. Perform grading and drainage work as required.
12. Any other duties as required.

6. Working conditions

Due to peaks in workload, it may not be possible to take holiday at certain times of the year unless pre-arranged with sufficient notice.

Physically demanding work. Constant physical activity – walking, standing, bending and manual handling of items up to 25 kg.

Working outdoors in any weather conditions at all times of the year, meaning exposure to sunlight and rain. Working in glasshouses and polytunnels in high temperatures.

Occasional wearing of Personal Protective Equipment.

Regular exposure to plant material, pathogens, pollen, bees and other insects. Occasional exposure to dust.

Managed exposure to chemicals e.g. those used to fertilise and treat plants.

Lone working in field and glasshouse.

Person Specification

Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Qualifications		
GCSE's or equivalent qualifications/experience	x	
Knowledge and skills		
Good, verbal and written communication skills	x	
Good interpersonal skills	x	
Basic competency in Microsoft Office 365 applications – Outlook, Word, Excel, SharePoint	x	
Excellent practical knowledge of irrigation systems and components, including pumps, rigs, controllers, and sensors	x	
Pesticide application certification (PA1 and PA6)		x
Experience		
Experience in an irrigation technical role, installing, troubleshooting and repairing irrigation systems, ideally across a range of crops, .	x	
Attributes		
Accuracy and attention to detail.	x	
Evidence of commitment to own personal development and willing to learn new skills	x	
Flexibility – able to work alone and as part of a small team		x
Proactive and self-motivated; confident about working without direct supervision		x
Other		
Driving licence or access to independent means of travelling, enabling occasional travel to different locations if required.	x	

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