



## **USER INSTRUCTIONS: HOW TO USE RIOCOCO GROW SLABS?**

1. Place slab on level profile with good drainage
2. Insert the drippers into cut planter holes or appropriate dripper holes for slab hydration.
3. Release pure water in many intervals to the slab at least 48 hours prior to planting. This process will gradually expand the slabs while washing out access EC and bring down the EC level. Do not load up the nutrients with the water first time. Only pure water need to be released to the slabs and analyze the runoff water.
4. Then release the "Slab Hydration" nutrient solution to the slab. This should contain appropriate levels of calcium nitrate and chelated iron. Ensure adequate leaching (eg minimum 30% drain) during this process.
5. Space any slabs that may have shifted during the hydration/ expansion process and ensure drain from the pre-slit drain holes flows into collection gutter.
6. Check any slabs that may have not expanded fully for potential blocked irrigation drippers. Replace dripper and manually hydrate slab.
7. Once hydration/expansion is complete check that EC of the leachate is appropriate.
8. For Winter Plantings ensure that slab temperature is suitably warm for root establishment prior to planting.
9. Place the propagation blocks/starter plugs onto or beside the pre-cut plant holes as appropriate.
10. At planting insert the drippers into the blocks/ start plugs.
11. When re-circulating starter nutrient solution, consider the influence of sodium and potassium from the leachate and the make up of the feed composition in final EC. Alternatively use only fresh starter nutrient in the first two weeks of production.
12. Make frequent Laboratory analysis of the nutrient drain to ensure plants are receiving optimum nutrient levels for their respective stages of plant development.
13. Take care to avoid too Early "Start Times" or too Late "Stop Times" during the first 4 weeks of cropping to avoid excessive vegetative plant reaction.
14. Monitor slab weight or water content, drain percentage and EC stability to ensure plants receive adequate irrigation inputs.
15. During the first 3 to 4 weeks in dry mixes such as RC300 & RC400 smaller shot sizes are recommended to ensure that the upper layer of the slabs are fully hydrated. At approximately week 3 it is recommended that drippers be spaced evenly along the slab, ie one dripper per block plus one dripper into the slab between blocks. This will encourage uniform root development and more stable EC through the life of the crop.
16. Ensure adequate dry-down is realized each day to enhance root activity and function.

### **Note:**

Above instructions are few basic starter points that growers should think about along the way. Actual detail should come from your consultant based on the variety and crop planting date etc.

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