

Netafim launches smart irrigation controller for small and mid-sized farms

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GrowSphere FLEX brings connected irrigation and fertigation automation to smaller farms, targeting growers seeking simpler digital tools for water and nutrient management



Orbia's Precision Agriculture business has launched GrowSphere FLEX, a smart irrigation and fertigation controller designed to make connected farm automation more accessible to smallholder and mid-sized growers.

The new system expands the company's digital agriculture portfolio and provides a lower-complexity entry point into connected irrigation management. It complements GrowSphere MAX, which is designed for larger commercial agricultural operations.

The launch targets a significant segment of the global farming community. According to Netafim, farms covering less than two hectares account for approximately 84 per cent of farms worldwide and produce around one-third of global food supplies.

For these growers, improving the efficiency and precision of irrigation and fertigation can be critical to managing water, nutrients, labour and crop performance.

Bringing connected irrigation to smaller farms

GrowSphere FLEX is designed to reduce the amount of manual intervention required for irrigation while enabling farmers to manage water and nutrient applications more precisely.

The controller features built-in cellular connectivity and can be configured according to different crops, field layouts and farm sizes. Through GrowSphere Workspace, farmers can remotely manage irrigation and fertigation operations and monitor field and system performance.

The platform provides access to sensors, reports and alerts, enabling growers to track irrigation conditions and receive information on system performance. Cloud-based insights are also intended to help farmers make more informed decisions about irrigation and nutrient management.

A Crop Advisor function provides recommendations based on crop growth stages, adding an agronomic decision-support layer to the connected irrigation system.

Designed for diverse farming systems

The system is designed for a broad range of agricultural environments, including open fields, orchards, vineyards, citrus farms, greenhouses and nurseries.

Netafim said GrowSphere FLEX underwent a year-long beta phase across multiple regions and irrigation conditions before its phased global rollout.

The testing programme was intended to assess the system under different farming environments and support the development of a solution capable of adapting to varied crop, field and irrigation requirements.

"FLEX is bringing Agriculture 4.0 within reach for farms of different sizes, needs and stages of digital adoption," said Gaby Miodownik, president of Orbia's Precision Agriculture business.

The company said the launch reflects its broader objective of expanding access to digital irrigation technology beyond large-scale commercial farms.

Digital agriculture expands its reach

GrowSphere FLEX builds on the wider adoption of Netafim's connected irrigation platform. The company said GrowSphere already has thousands of users managing more than 100,000 hectares across dozens of countries.

The introduction of FLEX adds a solution specifically positioned for smaller and mid-sized farms, potentially lowering the complexity associated with adopting connected irrigation automation.

For growers, the system combines remote irrigation management, fertigation control, monitoring, alerts and agronomic recommendations in a connected platform. This approach is designed to help farmers move from manually managed irrigation towards more data-driven water and nutrient application.

The phased global rollout will introduce GrowSphere FLEX progressively across markets, with the technology aimed at supporting farmers at different stages of digital adoption.

The launch comes as agriculture faces increasing pressure to improve water-use efficiency while maintaining productivity. By extending connected irrigation and fertigation capabilities to a broader range of farm sizes, GrowSphere FLEX seeks to make digital water management a more accessible component of modern farming.