

TABLE 686-2**INTERPRETATION OF TENSIO METER READINGS**

* Dial Reading		Interpretation
Inches of Mercury	Centibars	
<u>Nearly Saturated</u> 3	0 10	Near saturated soil often occurs for a day or two following irrigation. Danger of water-logged soils, a high water table, poor soil aeration, or the tensiometer may have broken tension, if readings persist.
<u>Field Capacity</u> 6 9	11 20 30	Field capacity. Irrigations discontinued in this range to prevent waste by deep percolation and leaching of nutrients below the root zone. Sandy soils will be at field capacity in the lower range; clayey soil at field capacity in the upper range.
<u>Irrigation Range</u> 12 15 18	40 50 60	Usual range for starting irrigations. Soil aeration is assured in this range. In general, irrigations start at readings of 30-40 in sandy textured soils (loamy sandy and sandy loams). Irrigations usually start from 40-50 on loamy soils, (very fine sandy loams and silt loams). On clay soils (silty clay loamy, silty clays, etc.) irrigations usually start from 50-60. Starting irrigations in this range insures maintaining readily available soil moisture at all times.
<u>Dry</u> 21 24	70 80	This is the stress range. However, crop not necessarily damaged or yield reduced. Some soil moisture is readily available to the plant but is getting dangerously low for maximum production. Top range of accuracy of tensiometer, readings above this are possible but the tensiometer will break tension between 80 to 85 centibars.

* Indicative of soil conditions where the tensiometer is located. Judgment should be used to correlate these readings to general crop conditions in the field.