

Irrigating wisely

February 14, 2015

Reading your Feb. 10 editorial on almond trees, and their high water usage leads me to think of other possibilities. Why are not all of the orchards on drip irrigation? Drip irrigation waters in gallons per hour, rather than gallons per minute. The water drips down slowly, allowing maximum usage of the water by the almond tree. Drip properly done, waters just the tree, not spaces outside of the drip line of the tree, and not the weeds.

Adding mulch would save more water, prevent weeds, and add to the nutrients in the soil. This can be done with old hay or straw, almond hulls, wood chips, leaves, or whatever is available. Mulch also saves on labor by keeping down weeds, and the use of poisonous weed killers. It facilitates the presence of bees needed for pollination, keeps the moisture in the soil, and creates a win-win situation.

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