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CENTRO DE CIÊNCIAS RURAIS  
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM  
ENGENHARIA AGRÍCOLA**

**Felipe Tonetto**

**IRRIGAÇÃO POR ASPERSÃO EM ARROZ: AVALIAÇÃO ECONÔMICA, USO  
DA ÁGUA E RENDIMENTO DE GRÃOS EM RESPOSTA À DISPONIBILIDADE  
HÍDRICA**

**Santa Maria, RS  
2024**

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Tese apresentada ao Curso de Doutorado do Programa de Pós-Graduação em Engenharia Agrícola, Área de Concentração Engenharia de Água e Solo, da Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (UFSM, RS), Como requisito parcial para a obtenção do grau de **Doutor em Engenharia Agrícola**.

**Orientadora: Prof.<sup>a</sup> Dr.<sup>a</sup> Mirta Teresinha Petry**

**Santa Maria  
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**Aprovado em 07 de junho de 2024:**

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A maior recompensa para o trabalho do homem não  
é o que ele ganha com isso, mas o que ele se torna  
com isso.

(John Ruskin)

## RESUMO

### IRRIGAÇÃO POR ASPERSÃO EM ARROZ: AVALIAÇÃO ECONÔMICA, USO DA ÁGUA E RENDIMENTO DE GRÃOS EM RESPOSTA À DISPONIBILIDADE DE ÁGUA

AUTOR: Felipe Tonetto

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O cultivo do arroz por aspersão é uma alternativa à inundação contínua (IC), pelo menor consumo de água e menor custo operacional, sobretudo nas operações de preparo do solo e mão de obra. Entretanto, a manutenção dos parâmetros de crescimento e rendimento em níveis próximos aos da IC é o principal fator a ser superado. Portanto, o momento de irrigar e a frequência de irrigação necessitam ser investigadas, de modo a auxiliar o produtor na tomada de decisão em trocar um sistema bem conhecido e altamente produtivo por um sistema ainda pouco usado no arroz. Dentre esses desafios estão os estudos para calibrar os coeficientes de cultivo e determinar o manejo de irrigação mais adequado para se atingir alta produtividade com baixo consumo de água. Assim, experimentos foram conduzidos durante as safras 2020/21, 2021/22 e 2022/23 em Argissolo Bruno-Acinzentado, visando determinar o requerimento hídrico e derivar os coeficientes de cultura do arroz aeróbico, avaliar os parâmetros de crescimento, a produtividade da água e da cultura e retorno do arroz cultivado sob aspersão. Duas cultivares de arroz de terras baixas (IRGA-424 RI e IRGA-431 CL) foram submetidas a três manejos de irrigação: (i) irrigações diárias; (ii) irrigações alternadas e; (iii) sequeiro. Medições da umidade do solo foram realizadas durante todo o ciclo. Parâmetros de crescimento foram avaliados em alguns estádios do ciclo. O coeficiente de cultivo basal ( $K_{cb}$ ) calibrado pelo modelo SIMDual $K_c$  foi de 0,15, 1,08 e 0,80, enquanto os coeficientes de cultura ( $K_c$ ) foram 0,72, 1,13 e 0,95, para os estádios inicial, médio e final, respectivamente. Os valores de  $K_{cact}$  para o arroz irrigado por aspersão foram maiores do que para o arroz de sequeiro, principalmente na fase intermediária ( $K_{cact\ mid} = 1,13$  vs 0,82). A produtividade foi de 7.600 ( $\pm 1.400$ ) e 7.200 ( $\pm 1.800$ ) kg ha<sup>-1</sup>, com irrigação diária e alternada, respectivamente. A evapotranspiração da cultura foi de 694 ( $\pm 20$ ) e 450 mm para o irrigado e sequeiro, respectivamente. Os parâmetros de crescimento e rendimento foram afetados pelo déficit hídrico, mas não pelo manejo de irrigação. Os manejos ID e IA proporcionaram lucro operacional ao produtor.

**Palavras chaves:** *Oryza sativa* L., manejo da água, sustentabilidade, aspersão e  $K_c$ .

## ABSTRACT

### SPRINKLER IRRIGATION IN RICE: ECONOMIC EVALUATION, WATER USE AND GRAIN YIELD IN RESPONSE TO WATER AVAILABILITY

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ADVISOR: Mirta Teresinha Petry

Sprinkler rice cultivation is an alternative to continuous flooding (CF), due to its lower water consumption and lower operating costs, especially in terms of soil preparation and labor. However, maintaining growth and yield parameters at levels close to those of the CF is the main factor to be overcome. Therefore, the timing of irrigation and the frequency of irrigation need to be investigated to help growers make the decision to switch from a well-known and highly productive system to one that is still little used in rice. Therefore, the timing of irrigation and the frequency of irrigation need to be investigated to help growers make the decision to switch from a well-known and highly productive system to one that is still little used in rice. Among these challenges are studies to calibrate crop coefficients and determine the most appropriate irrigation management to achieve high yields with low water consumption. Furthermore, experiments were conducted during the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 harvests to determine the water requirement and derive the crop coefficients of aerobic rice, evaluate the growth parameters, water and crop productivity, and return of rice grown under sprinklers. Two lowland rice cultivars (IRGA-424 RI and IRGA-431 CL) were subjected to three irrigation managements: (i) daily irrigations; (ii) alternating irrigations and (iii) rainfed. Soil moisture measurements were taken throughout the cycle. Growth parameters were assessed at certain stages of the cycle. The basal crop coefficient ( $K_{cb}$ ) calibrated by the SIMDual $K_c$  model was 0.15, 1.08 and 0.80, while the crop coefficients ( $K_c$ ) were 0.72, 1.13 and 0.95 for the early, middle, and late stages, respectively. The  $K_{cact}$  values for sprinkler-irrigated rice were higher than for rainfed rice, especially in the middle phase ( $K_{cact\ mid} = 1.13$  vs 0.82). Rice yields were 7,600 ( $\pm 1,400$ ) and 7,200 ( $\pm 1,800$ ) kg ha<sup>-1</sup>, with daily and alternate irrigation, respectively. Crop evapotranspiration was 694 ( $\pm 20$ ) and 450 mm for irrigated and rainfed crops, respectively. Growth and yield parameters were affected by water deficit, but not by irrigation management. ID and IA management provided the producer with an operating profit.

**Key words:** *Oryza sativa* L., Irrigation management, sustainability, sprinkler irrigation e  $K_c$ .



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## LISTA DE ABREVEATURAS E SIGLAS

$a_{DP}$ e $b_{DP}$ -	Parâmetros para estimativa de percolação
AF-	Área Foliar
ANEEL-	Agência Nacional de Energia Elétrica
ASW-	Available Soil Water - Água disponível no solo (mm)
AWD-	Alternate Wetting and Dry- Alternado inundado e seco (mm)
B/G -	Blue/Green
BRS -	Brasil Sementes
Bt -	Horizonte B textural
$b_0$ -	Coefficiente de regressão
CAMNPAL -	Cooperativa Agrícola Mista Nova Palma
CGDD -	Cumulative growing degree-days- Graus-dia acumulado de crescimento
COFINS -	Contribuição para o Financiamento da Seguridade Social
CONAB -	Companhia Nacional de Abastecimento
CEPEA-	Centro de Estudos Avançados em Economia Aplicada – Escola
ESALQ	Superior de Agricultura Luiz de Queiroz
CPFL -	Companhia Paulista de Força e Luz
CN -	Curva Número da percolação profunda
CRi -	Ascensão capilar (mm)
CT -	Custo Total
CU -	Coefficiente de uniformidade
cv -	Unidade de medida de força cavalo-vapor
D -	Demanda energética do conjunto moto-bomba (kWatt)
DAE -	Dias Após e Emergência
DP -	Percolação profunda
Dri -	Esgotamento da água do solo na zona radicular no dia i
Dri-1 -	Esgotamento da água do solo na zona radicular no dia i-1
EF-	Curva Número
$E_s$ -	Evaporação da água do solo (mm)
$E_s/ET_{c \text{ act}}$ -	Relação de evaporação de água do solo com a evapotranspiração atual.
$ET_c$ -	Evapotranspiração da cultura (mm)
$ET_{c \text{ act}}$ -	Evapotranspiração da cultura ajustada (mm)

ET <sub>o</sub> -	Evapotranspiração de referência (mm)
FC -	Floating Continuous, inundação contínua
fc -	Fração de cobertura do solo pelo dossel vegetativo
FDR -	Frequency Domain Reflectometer - Reflectometria de domínio de frequência
FP -	Fora de Ponta
h -	Altura da planta (m)
ho -	Horas de operação
IA -	Irrigation alternate, irrigação alternada
IAC -	Instituto Agrônomo de Campinas
IC -	Índice de carregamento
ICMS -	Imposto sobre circulação de mercadorias e serviços
Ii -	Lâmina de irrigação
ID -	Irrigation Daily, irrigação diária
IN -	Inundação contínua
INMET -	Instituto Nacional de Meteorologia
IRGA -	Instituto Rio Grandense do Arroz
JPEG -	Join Photographic Expert Grup
Kc -	Coeficiente de cultura
Kcb -	Coeficiente de cultura basal
Kc act -	Coeficiente de cultura real
Kcb end -	Kcb para o período final de desenvolvimento da cultura
Kcb ini -	Kcb para o período inicial de desenvolvimento da cultura
Kcb mid -	Kcb para o período intermediário de desenvolvimento da cultura
Ke -	Coeficiente de evaporação
Ks -	Coeficiente de estresse
Ky -	Fator de resposta ao rendimento
LO-	Lucro Operacional
MPa-	Mega Pascal
NBRWUR -	Razão de uso não benéfico da água
NRMSE-	Raiz quadrada do erro médio normalizada
NS -	Não Significativo
PASEP -	Programa de Formação do Patrimônio do Servidor Público

Pi -	Precipitação
Pini -	Esgotamento de água do solo na fase inicial
PIS -	Programa de Integração Social
Pmed -	Esgotamento de água do solo na fase média
Pfinal -	Esgotamento de água do solo na fase final
p -	Fração de depleção da água do solo para condição sem estresse
Pn -	Potência nominal do motor em cv
FAO-PM ETo	Equação de determinação da evapotranspiração de referência de Penman- Monteith proposta pela FAO
R <sup>2</sup> -	Coeficiente de determinação
RB -	Receita Bruta
RAW-	Água prontamente disponível do solo (mm)
REW-	Água prontamente evaporável (mm)
RGE -	Concessionária Rio Grande Energia
RGB -	Red - Green - Blue
R/G -	Red-Green
Rhmax -	Umidade relativa máxima
Rhmin -	Umidade relativa mínima
RMSE -	Raiz quadrada do erro médio
ROi -	Escoamento superficial
SWB -	Balanço Hídrico do Solo
SWC -	Soil water content - Conteúdo diário de água do solo
t -	tempo
TaE -	Trial and Error -Tentativa e Erro
TAW -	Água total disponível no solo (mm)
TE -	Tarifa de energia
TEW -	Água total evaporável (mm)
Tc -	Transpiração da cultura (mm)
Tc act -	Transpiração atual da cultura (mm)
TUSD -	Tarifa de Uso do Sistema de Distribuição
TWU -	Total de água utilizado (m <sup>3</sup> )
U2 -	Velocidade do vento a 2 m de altura
VC -	Valor de comercialização

WP -	Water Productivity - produtividade da água ( $\text{kg m}^{-3}$ )
WP <sub>IRRI</sub> -	Water Productivity irrigation -produtividade da água de irrigação( $\text{kg m}^{-3}$ )
WP <sub>T</sub> -	Produtividade da água total utilizada ( $\text{kg m}^{-3}$ )
Y <sub>a</sub> -	Rendimento real de colheita (Mg)
Z <sub>e</sub> -	Camada de solo evaporável (m)
Z <sub>r</sub> -	Comprimento radicular (m)
$\Delta$ ASW -	Variação da água disponível do solo
$\theta_{CC}$ -	Conteúdo volumétrico de água no solo na capacidade de campo ( $\text{cm}^3 \text{cm}^{-3}$ )
$\theta_{PMP}$ -	Conteúdo volumétrico de água no solo no ponto de murcha permanente ( $\text{cm}^3 \text{cm}^{-3}$ )
$\theta_{\text{sat}}$ -	Conteúdo volumétrico de água no solo saturado ( $\text{cm}^3 \text{cm}^{-3}$ )
$\eta$ -	Eficiência do motor (%)
2 G-R-B -	2 Green- Red -Blue

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## 1. INTRODUÇÃO GERAL

O arroz é um alimento básico de aproximadamente 4 bilhões de pessoas ao redor mundo (IRRI, 2019). Em 2022, a produção mundial superou 776 milhões de toneladas (FAO, 2022). O Brasil cultivou 1479,6 mil hectares de arroz na safra agrícola de 2022/23, sendo 303 mil hectares de sequeiro (CONAB, 2023). O método mais comum de irrigação para a produção mundial do arroz é a inundação. No Brasil, o arroz irrigado concentra 90% da produção e 77% da área, enquanto o arroz de sequeiro ocupa 23% da área (CONAB, 2024).

A crescente pressão de fatores socioeconômicos, somadas às alterações climáticas, têm impulsionando modificações nos sistemas tradicionais de arroz para sistemas que economizem água, sem penalizar o rendimento (CHLAPECKA et al., 2021; PETRY et al., 2024;). Dentro deste contexto, o arroz é cultivado sob sistemas de irrigação por aspersão, gotejamento ou superfície (sulcos ou faixas) (PEREORA et al., 2021), sendo caracterizado como arroz aeróbico. Esses sistemas alternativos à inundação contínua (IC) visam um menor consumo de água (BOUMAN et al., 2007), além de reduzir a emissão de gases de efeito estufa (LINGUIST et al., 2012) e acumulação de metais pesados no grão, como o mercúrio e arsênico (CARRACELAS et al., 2019b).

No Sul do Brasil, o cultivo do arroz em aspersão (pivô central) surge como alternativa à inundação, devido a sua praticidade e facilidade de operação (PINTO et al., 2018). Parfitt e Scivittaro (2017) observaram uma redução de 40% no uso da água na irrigação por aspersão em relação à inundação. De acordo com Santos et al. (2017) além dos custos de produção refletirem o processo decisório do produtor, a eficiência econômica e a gestão do empreendimento, também são indicadores relevantes do sucesso da atividade rural, pois quanto menor o custo de produção, maior será a rentabilidade do produtor. Este método de irrigação pode resultar em melhor retorno econômico e melhor sustentabilidade desse sistema de produção (PINTO et al., 2016).

Os pivôs centrais são de fácil operação, o que favorece a sua utilização (STEVENS et al., 2012), conforme referido anteriormente, mas o manejo da irrigação ainda requer atenção especial (VORIES et al., 2017; PINTO et al., 2020), principalmente a superação de incertezas referidas a: 1) ao momento e a quantidade de água para aplicar na irrigação, 2) ao limiar de umidade do solo a ser adotado para manter um crescimento e produtividade adequados para o arroz, e 3) informações confiáveis sobre a performance agrônômica do arroz sob pivôs centrais em solos drenáveis, ou em solos com características físicas diferentes daquelas de terras baixas que são atualmente empregues em IC. Observações de campo combinadas com técnicas de

modelagem podem fornecer informações confiáveis sobre estratégias de irrigação e sistemas de cultivos a serem adotados por produtores.

Para fins de manejo de irrigação e determinação do uso consuntivo de água ou evapotranspiração da cultura ( $ET_c$ ) é extremamente importante. Usualmente, a  $ET_c$  de uma cultura é estimada pela multiplicação da evapotranspiração de referência ( $ET_o$ ) por um coeficiente de cultivo ( $K_c$ ), onde a  $ET_o$  é influenciada basicamente pelas condições meteorológicas, enquanto o  $K_c$  depende da planta, do estágio de desenvolvimento, área foliar e altura da planta (KOOL et al., 2014). No arroz irrigado por aspersão assim como nos demais cultivos, o  $K_c$  varia com a idade da planta, o estágio de desenvolvimento, além do local de cultivo e das condições meteorológicas. Valores de  $K_c$  podem ser facilmente encontrados na literatura (ALLEN et al., 1998), entretanto, esses se aplicam para cereais, onde o consumo de água é máximo e necessitam ser calibrados para as condições ambientais do local de plantio. Assim, estudos para estimativa do  $K_c$  para o arroz irrigado por aspersão são necessários na tentativa de melhorar o atendimento da demanda e da eficiência hídrica.

No arroz irrigado por aspersão assim como nos demais cultivos, o  $K_c$  varia com a idade da planta, o estágio de desenvolvimento, além do local de cultivo e das condições meteorológicas. Valores de  $K_c$  podem ser facilmente encontrados na literatura (ALLEN et al., 1998), entretanto, esses se aplicam para cereais, onde o consumo de água é máximo e necessitam ser calibrados para as condições ambientais do local de plantio. Assim, estudos para estimativa do  $K_c$  para o arroz irrigado por aspersão são necessários na tentativa de melhorar o atendimento da demanda e da eficiência hídrica da cultura. O  $K_c$  pode ser obtido pela combinação de robustas observações à campo com diferentes tratamentos de manejo da irrigação com modelos de balanço hídrico do solo robustos e confiáveis, a exemplo do SIMDual $K_c$ , usado por PAREDES et al. (2014, 2017a e 2017b), o qual foi utilizado para desenvolver estratégias adequadas de gestão da água na irrigação.

Considerando a possibilidade que a irrigação por aspersão possa otimizar os sistemas de cultivo de arroz, torna-se evidente a importância de determinar o coeficiente de cultura, a necessidade hídrica e obter de um manejo adequado de irrigação que auxilie o produtor irrigante na tomada de decisão e resulte em um melhor retorno econômico.

## **2. OBJETIVO GERAL**

O objetivo deste estudo é estimar o requerimento hídrico ( $ET_c$ ) do arroz, com ênfase à derivação dos coeficientes de cultivo ( $K_{cs}$ ) para o arroz aeróbico, e avaliação do desempenho geral do crescimento de duas cultivares de arroz irrigado por aspersão (Capítulo I); avaliar o uso da água da água, rendimento e retorno econômico do arroz irrigado por aspersão sob diferentes estratégias de irrigação (Capítulo II).

### 3. CAPÍTULO I - EVAPOTRANSPIRATION AND CROP COEFFICIENTS OF SPRINKLER IRRIGATED AEROBIC RICE IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL USING THE SIMDUALKC WATER BALANCE MODEL

(Paper published on the Journal of Irrigation Science)

**Abstract:** Flooding rice (*Oryza sativa L.*) is commonly used in lowlands of Southern Brazil. The sustainability of this production system is threatened by an increase in the production costs, excessive water uses and an incipient plateau in yield due to biophysical limitations. Sprinkler irrigation is considered a feasible strategy to improve crop and water productivity but requires proper assessment since advances in irrigation scheduling and crop performance are not yet conclusive. A study was therefore developed to evaluate water use and overall growth performance of two sprinkler irrigated rice cultivars. Field experiments from 2020/21 to 2022/23 growing seasons, compared three treatments: (i) daily irrigation (DI), (ii) irrigation in alternate days (AI), and (iii) rainfed (RF). The season water applied for the DI treatments were 532 mm in 2020/21, 514 mm in 2021/22 and 614 mm in 2022/23, and for AI they were 490 mm, 474 mm and 621 mm for the same crop seasons. Soil water content was maintained close to field capacity in the irrigated plots. Soil moisture was daily measured using FDR sensors. Measurements of crop growth parameters were taken throughout the growing seasons. The SIMDualKc model was used to assess evapotranspiration and derive crop coefficients for each treatment. The model was calibrated with the 2020/21 DI treatment and validated with all other sets of the three growing seasons. The model accurately simulated the soil water dynamics in the root zone, with RMSE < 4.4 mm and normalized RMSE < 7%. The calibrated basal crop coefficients adjusted to climate were 0.15, 1.08(±0.01) and 0.80(±0.01), while the single crop coefficients ( $K_c$ ) were 0.72(±0.04), 1.13(±0.01), and 0.95 (±0.01) for the initial, mid-season, and end-season stages, respectively. Grain yield was 7,600 (±1,400) and 7,200 (±1,800) kg ha<sup>-1</sup>, with daily and alternate days irrigation, respectively, which are comparable with flooding irrigation. Results showed that sprinkler irrigation may be a proficient water-saving technology, without decreasing yields and contributing to improve the sustainability of rice systems in Southern Brazil.

**Key-words:** Rice cultivars performance, soil water balance, water saving irrigation, water use, yield assessment

## 1. Introduction

Rice is the main staple food crop in the world, the primary one for about half of the world's population, particularly in Asia. The most common irrigation method in rice production worldwide is flooding. However, aimed to decrease water use, flooding variants are applied such as dry seeding, anticipated cut-off, and intermittent water application. More recently, aerobic rice is often used with sprinkler or surface irrigation (Pereira et al. 2021). Rice is also a fundamental food in Brazil, where it is grown mainly in lowlands of Southern Brazil under continuous flooding irrigation (Sousa et al. 2021). There, the standard rice system consists of intense conventional tillage (plowing, harrowing, and leveling) in early Spring, followed by dry sowing. These fields are generally flooded by V3 to V5 stages (Counce et al. 2000), hence around 15-25 days after sowing (Sosbai 2018; Carracelas et al. 2019), and remaining with a 10 cm water layer over the ground until near harvest. However, most of these rice fields are not precise leveled, which leads to poor uniformity of water application and to larger water use.

Common continuous flooding (CF) systems require large amounts of irrigation water and much labor force, thus rising in labor and pumping costs (Ávila et al. 2015; Clegert et al. 2016). CF systems have various negative environmental impacts that are difficult to control, which lead to shift for more environmentally friendly systems that require less labor and allow better control of water and chemicals use. Alternatives to CF include: a) alternate wetting and drying (AWD), where alternate cycles of flooding and soil drying are used (Lindquist et al. 2015a; Carrijo et al. 2017, 2018; Carracelas et al. 2019; LaHue and Linquist, 2021; Mote et al. 2021); b) intermittent irrigation, in which the soil surface is maintained saturated but without ponding (Bouman et al. 2007; Li et al. 2022), and where water is applied as a sheet on leveled strips (Carracelas et al. 2019; Aramburu et al. 2022); c) aerobic rice, which include surface irrigated (Alberto et al. 2011; Chowdury et al. 2013), sprinkler-irrigated (Spanu et al. 2010; Vories et al. 2013; Borja Reis et al. 2018; Pinto et al. 2020), or drip irrigated rice (Coltro et al. 2017; Parthasarathi et al. 2018). Common objectives of all these strategies consist of reducing water use without decreasing grain yield and, at same time, improving the sustainability of rice production.

In the Southern Brazil, sprinkler irrigation using center-pivot systems has increased in the last years (Parfitt et al. 2017; Pinto et al. 2020), also driven by the need to control weed species that are difficult to manage under flooding (Avila et al. 2021). Sprinkler-irrigation by center pivots is known after a few decades but with contradictory results (Muirhead et al. 1989). Recently, with new rice cultivars sprinkling shows advantages over hand-managed intermittent and AWD systems, mainly to maintain a shallow water sheet on the soil surface if soils are

permeable or the paddies are not precision leveled, so resulting in non-uniform water infiltration into the fields (Vories et al. 2013). Non-uniformity also causes problems in weed control (Ávila et al. 2015) and nutrient availability, resulting in lower yields (Vories et al. 2017; Carrijo et al. 2017). Moreover, sprinkler irrigation allows farmers to include rice in crop rotations and eases other agronomics practices such as weeds control (Ulguim et al. 2021). This approach may result in improved economic returns and sustainability (Pinto et al. 2016).

The easy-to-use center pivots favors their use (Stevens et al. 2012) as referred before, but irrigation management still requires adequate attention (Vories et al. 2017; Pinto et al. 2020). Overcoming related uncertainty which mainly refers to: 1) the timing and amount of irrigation water to apply, 2) the soil moisture threshold to be adopted to maintain appropriate rice growth and productivity, and 3) reliable information about rice agronomic performance under center pivots in drainable soils, or in soils with physical characteristics different of those of lowlands currently used in CF. Field observations combined with modeling approaches may provide robust and reliable information about the irrigation strategies and cropping systems to be adopted by farmers. This is the case of using the soil water balance model SIMDualKc (Rosa et al. 2012), tested for center-pivot irrigated maize (Paredes et al. 2014), malt barley (Paredes et al. 2017a) and pea (Paredes et al. 2017b), and more recently for rice with drainage lysimeters measurements (Anupoju and Kambhammettu 2020). This model may perform as a decision support system relative to the timing and amount of water to apply. Alternative cropping and rotation systems may also be simulated with SIMDualKc, as tested by Miao et al. (2016). Irrigation schedules with SIMDualKc at the farm level should lead to suitable crop yields aligned with optimized water use when combining irrigation water with precipitation and available soil water (Pereira et al. 2020; Jovanovic et al. 2020) with consideration of economic returns (Paredes et al. 2017a).

The widely accepted method to estimate crop water demand, the crop evapotranspiration ( $ET_c$ ), is the FAO  $K_c$ - $ET_o$  approach (Allen et al. 1998), where  $ET_c$  is the product of the grass reference evapotranspiration ( $ET_o$ ) by a crop coefficient ( $K_c$ ). Although the  $K_c$ - $ET_o$  approach has been widely used for rice, its application for sprinkler irrigation rice is yet limited (Spanu et al. 2009; Moratiel and Martinez-Cob 2013; Alberto et al. 2014). A first Brazilian study on rice sprinkling (Arf et al. 2003) did not search for  $K_c$  values but, more recently, Pereira et al. (2021) reported on standard  $K_c$  and  $K_{cb}$  values for aerobic rice. Therefore, it is opportune to search for  $K_c$ , water use and yields for rice under sprinkling.

When adopting the FAO  $K_c$ - $ET_o$  approach, searching for  $K_c$  is important because, while  $ET_o$  is well standardized, it is required to obtain  $K_c/K_{cb}$  from performing the soil water balance

(SWB) simulation against observed water use and to relate the latter with yield. Focusing on the standard  $K_c$  allows its transfer to different locations and climates (Allen et al. 1998; Pereira et al. 2021) since the standard  $K_c$  refers to a crop grown under pristine conditions, free of pests and diseases, and without fertilizer restrictions or soil salinity problems (Pereira et al. 2015a; Pereira et al. 2021). Standard  $K_c$  refers to standard sub-humid climate conditions (minimum relative air humidity of 45% and wind speed at 2 m height of  $2 \text{ m s}^{-1}$ ), thus when transferred must be adjusted to the local climate (Allen et al. 1998; Pereira et al. 2021). Thus, yet with few research information, it is required to find  $K_c$  and  $K_{cb}$  values for local conditions of sprinkler irrigated rice, however cropped under near pristine conditions.  $K_c$  may then be obtained by coupling robust and reliable field observations of different irrigation scheduling treatments with well proved soil water balance models, e.g., SIMDualKc used by Paredes et al. (2014, 2017a and 2017b) which were used to develop appropriate strategies for irrigation water management.

The existing SWB models are for lowland paddy fields adopting CF (Mao et al. 2004), AWD (Yu and Cui 2022) or rainfed (Inthavong et al. 2011). The use of SWB models for sprinkler rice is not yet reported in literature. Nevertheless, the model SIMDualKc (Rosa et al. 2012), many times used for aerobic crops as referred before, has also been used for anaerobic rice (Anupuju and Kambhammettu 2020), thus having a wider applicability. A SWB is supposed to account for the water inputs and outputs of the paddy field system, on the one hand rainfall, irrigation, upflow, soil water reserve and, on the other hand, soil evaporation, transpiration, deep percolation, and runoff (Fukai and Mitchell 2022). Using SIMDualKc has the advantage of well performing the partition of ET using the FAO dual  $K_c$  approach (Allen et al. 1998, 2005). This model is well known in Brazil, which is an advantage (e.g., Martins et al. 2013; González et al. 2015; Paredes et al 2018; Petry et al. 2023). Alternatively, crop models, e.g., DSSAT (Jeong et al. 2014) and AquaCrop (Xu et al. 2019), that may be used if able to simulate the overall rice system behavior and yields.

Hypothesizing that sprinkler irrigation can improve the rice cropping systems, the objectives of this study in the subtropical climate region of Southern Brazil are to: (i) calibrate and validate the SIMDualKc model and estimate the basal and single crop coefficients for aerobic rice; ii) investigate the daily and seasonal variation of the actual crop evapotranspiration of aerobic rice; (iii) assess the soil water balance of upland aerobic rice and compare water use with flooded rice paddies (iv) evaluate the impact of the different irrigations strategies on agronomic features, mainly yields. Innovation consists of modeling sprinkler irrigated aerobic rice and accurately performing the soil water balance.



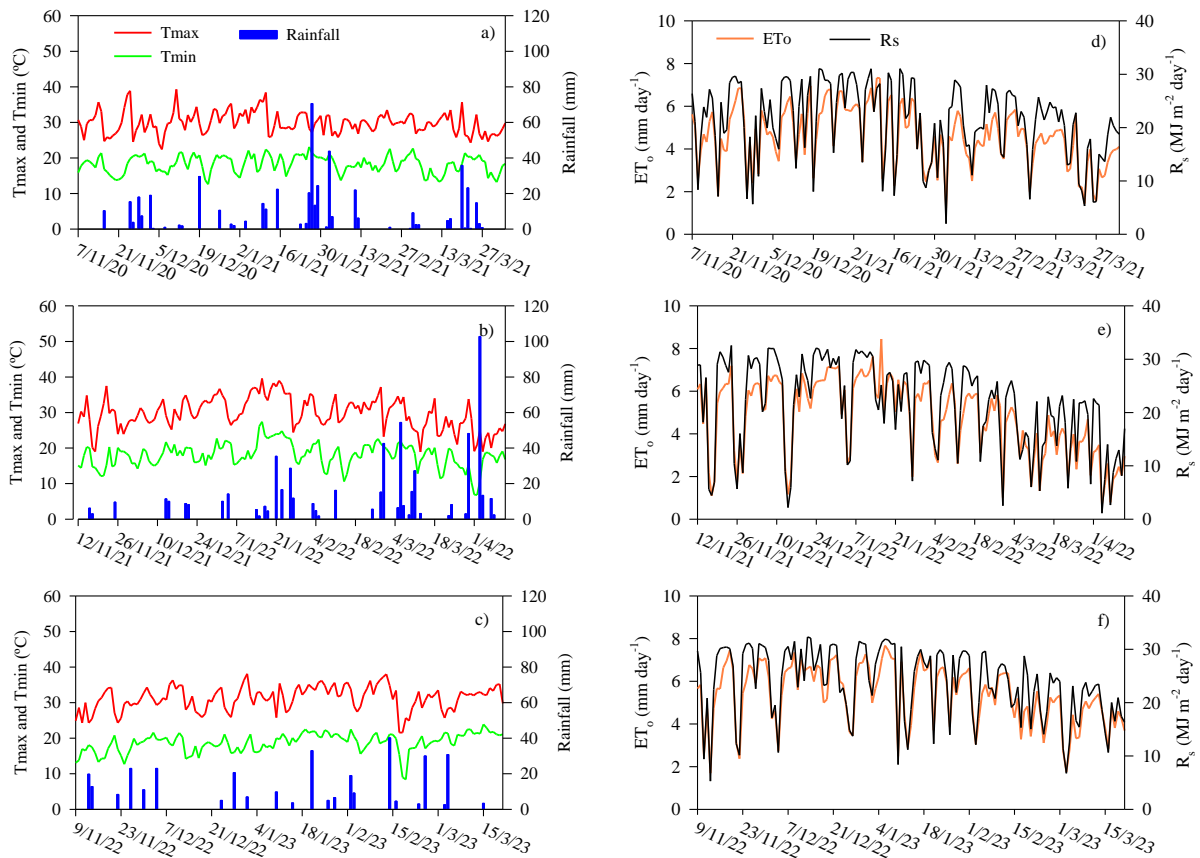
## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1 Study site characteristics

The research was conducted in the cropping seasons of 2020/2021, 2021/2022, and 2022/2023 in an experimental area at the Federal University of Santa Maria (29°41'24" S, 53°48'42" W and 105 masl). The climate is characterized as humid subtropical "Cfa," according to the Köppen-Geiger classification (Kottek et al. 2006). In this type of climate, there is no well-defined dry season, but rather hot summers and temperate winters (Alvares et al. 2013). Precipitation is distributed evenly throughout the year, summing around 1700 mm.

During the three experimental seasons, meteorological data were obtained from an automatic weather station from the National Institute of Meteorology (INMET) located approximately 150 m from the experimental site. The collected daily weather data included maximum and minimum air temperature ( $T_{\max}$  and  $T_{\min}$ , °C), global solar radiation ( $R_s$ , MJ m<sup>-2</sup> day<sup>-1</sup>), wind speed measured at 2 m height ( $U_2$ , m s<sup>-1</sup>), maximum and minimum relative humidity ( $RH_{\max}$  and  $RH_{\min}$ , %) and rainfall (mm). The reference evapotranspiration was computed daily with the FAO-PM  $ET_o$  equation (Allen et al. 1998). Some of the weather conditions recorded during the experimental periods in all growing seasons are shown in Figure 1 and the average monthly climate data are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1** shows that precipitation during the experimental growing seasons is much lower than in the long-term average data series; differently,  $ET_o$  values were quite similar.



**Fig. 1-** Weather data relative to the three-years (2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23) of experimentation: (a; b and c) maximum and minimum temperature, and precipitation; (c; d and e) reference evapotranspiration and solar radiation.

**Table 1** Average monthly climate data for the experimental growing seasons (2020-2023) and for the long time series 1990-2022, Santa Maria, Brazil.

(continua)

Season/month	$T_{\max}$ (°C)	$T_{\min}$ (°C)	RH <sub>min</sub> (%)	$U_2$ (m s <sup>-1</sup> )	$ET_0$ (mm day <sup>-1</sup> )	Rainfall (mm)
2020/2021						
Nov	29.8	17.9	38.0	1.8	1.7	55
Dec	30.4	18.4	37.7	1.7	5.3	69
Jan	30.9	19.4	44.4	1.7	5.0	187
Feb	29.7	18.1	48.6	1.3	4.5	82
Mar	28.9	17.7	50.5	1.3	3.7	104
Apr	27.7	16.2	44.3	1.7	4.0	0
2021/2022						
Nov	28.0	16.6	46.2	1.3	4.6	19
Dec	30.4	17.9	42.3	1.5	5.8	63
Jan	33.2	20.5	43.1	1.7	5.9	127
Feb	30.9	18.3	46.0	1.4	4.8	86
Mar	28.0	17.2	56.8	1.4	3.6	288
Apr	23.0	15.3	68.3	1.3	2.2	14

**Table 1** Average monthly climate data for the experimental growing seasons (2020-2023) and for the long time series 1990-2022, Santa Maria, Brazil.

Season/month	T <sub>max</sub> (°C)	T <sub>min</sub> (°C)	RH <sub>min</sub> (%)	U <sub>2</sub> (m s <sup>-1</sup> )	ET <sub>o</sub> (mm day <sup>-1</sup> )	Rainfall (mm)
(conclusão)						
2022/2023						
Nov	29.0	16.5	42.0	1.8	5.5	75
Dec	31.1	18.2	38.7	1.8	5.9	49
Jan	32.7	19.8	39.7	1.6	5.9	65
Feb	31.3	18.2	42.4	1.3	5.0	106
Mar	31.5	21.1	55.0	1.3	4.1	37
Long time average (1990-2022)						
Nov	27.3	17.7	51.5	1.8	4.7	157
Dec	29.6	19.9	51.0	1.8	5.3	166
Jan	30.1	20.9	54.3	1.6	5.1	171
Feb	29.4	20.3	58.2	1.5	4.4	132
Mar	28.1	18.8	58.6	1.4	3.7	137
Apr	25.2	15.8	60.4	1.4	2.6	152

The soil is a well-drained Ultisol (Soil Survey Staff 2022), with a loam texture to a depth of 0.70-0.80 m, followed by a Bt clayey horizon. To determine the soil hydraulic properties three undisturbed soil samples of 71 cm<sup>3</sup> were taken at every 0.10 m soil layer and at each site before the experimental implementation (Table 2). The soil water retention at -10 kPa, used as estimator of the water content at field capacity ( $\theta_{FC}$ ), was determined with the pressure plate apparatus (Soil Moisture Equipment Corp., S. Barbara, CA, USA). The water retention at the wilting point ( $\theta_{WP}$ ) was set using the pedotransfer functions (PTF) developed by Michelin et al. (2010). The particle size distribution was determined using the Pipette Method (Day 1965). The mean and standard deviation results of the three fields used in this study are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2** Mean and standard deviation of soil textural and hydraulic characteristics of the soils of the experimental sites.

Soil depth (m)	Texture (%)			$\theta$ (cm <sup>3</sup> cm <sup>-3</sup> )		
	Sand	Silt	Clay	$\theta_{sat}$	$\theta_{FC}$	$\theta_{PWP}$
0.0-0.10	41±1.8	39±2.2	21±2.1	0.50±0.03	0.37±0.01	0.16±0.01
0.1-0.2	42±0.8	36±1.4	23±1.6	0.47±0.03	0.35±0.02	0.16±0.02
0.2-0.3	39±0.9	37±4.3	24±4.0	0.46±0.02	0.33±0.02	0.15±0.01
0.3-0.4	42±1.2	30±5.9	28±1.2	0.48±0.01	0.33±0.03	0.15±0.00
0.4-0.5	41±1.1	23±1.7	37±5.2	0.52±0.05	0.37±0.03	0.18±0.00

$\theta_{sat}$  - volumetric soil water content at saturation;  $\theta_{FC}$  - volumetric soil water content at field capacity;  $\theta_{PWP}$  - volumetric soil water content at the permanent wilting point.

## 2.2 EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN AND TREATMENTS

During the 2020/21 and 2021/22 growing seasons, the experiments were designed in a randomized 3x2 bifactorial scheme in stripes with 12 x 4.10 m and four replicates. Factor A comprised the irrigation strategies, while factor B comprised two rice cultivars. The irrigation strategies were: a) DI, using daily irrigation depths of 8 mm, aiming at no stress; b) AI, alternate irrigation, applied every other day with depths of 16 mm; and c) RF, rainfed. Two of the most planted rice cultivars in paddy fields of Rio Grande do Sul were used: IRGA 424 RI and IRGA 431 CL, respectively of intermediate and precocious cycle duration and herbicide-resistant to the chemical group of the imidazolinones (Clearfield®). In the 2022/23 growing season, the cultivar IRGA 431 RI was cropped in a completely randomized design with the two referred sprinkler irrigation strategies in six replications.

Experiments were sown by November 7, 2020, November 12, 2021, and November 9, 2022 with a seedling rate of  $\sim 112 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$ , and a row-spacing of 0.17 m using a direct-tillage drill (12-rows continuous flux, model Ceres 1870 (Stara Corp, Não-Me-Toque, RS, Brazil). Sowing was performed on black oat crop residues. Seeds were treated with  $25 \text{ g L}^{-1}$  Pyraclostrobin +  $225 \text{ g L}^{-1}$  Methyl Thiophanate +  $250 \text{ g L}^{-1}$  Fipronil using a spray volume of 1000 ml for each 100 kg of seeds. At sowing,  $15 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$  of N,  $60 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$  of P, and  $60 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$  of K were applied. For all growing seasons, the N at topdressing was split into three applications:  $90 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$  at the beginning of tillering (V3 to V4),  $40 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$  in the V6 stage (panicle initiation), and  $30 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$  in the form of urea in the R1 stage, i.e., the panicle differentiation, when the newly formed panicle becomes visible (Counce et al. 2000). Weed control and other agronomics practices throughout the crop seasons followed technical recommendations for rice in Southern Brazil (Sosbai, 2018).

## 2.3 SOIL MOISTURE MEASUREMENTS AND IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT

Soil water content was measured using FDR sensors (Frequency Domain Reflectometer), model CS616, connected to an analogic multiplexer (AM16/32) and a CR1000 datalogger (Campbell Scientific, Logan, UT, USA). In the crop seasons of 2020/21 and 2021/22, measurements were taken to a soil depth of 0.4 m, while in 2022/23 the soil water content was measured to a depth of 0.5 m. All sensors were installed few days after sowing. The sensors have been carefully inserted with the aim of disturbing the soil as little as possible. First, the sensors were carefully buried in the ground to ensure complete contact between the probes and the soil surrounding them. The datalogger was set to store data every 15 minutes. All measurements were verified using the oven-dry soil water content ( $\theta$ ) at the same soil depth.

The datalogger was then set to store hourly measurements. The sensors were re-inserted or eventually replaced if the measurements deviated more than 0.1% from the oven dry value. In the 2020/21 and 2021/22 seasons two sensors per plot and two plots per cultivar and irrigation treatment were used, while in the 2022/23 crop season three sensors were used in four plots per treatment.

In the 2020/21 and 2021/22 seasons, irrigation was carried out using a semi-portable sprinkler system, with half-circle sprinklers type Pingo® (Tigre Ltda, Joinville, SC, Brazil), spaced 12 x 12 m, operating at a pressure of 350 kPa and a rate of 9.8 mm h<sup>-1</sup>. During the 2022/23 crop season, the sprinklers used were half-circle, type MIDI (Tigre Ltda, Joinville, SC, Brazil), with a rate of 17.7 mm h<sup>-1</sup>, operating at 420 kPa. Sprinklers were raised at 1.80 m above the soil surface. The distribution uniformity of the systems was assessed in all growing seasons, between the sowing date and crop emergency, using the Christiansen method (1942). The average uniformity coefficient (CU) was 80 and 74% for the 2020-2022 crop seasons and 2022/23, respectively. Catch cans were randomly placed in some irrigated plots throughout all crop seasons to ensure the intended water depth was adequately applied in each treatment. Irrigations were homogeneously applied in all irrigated treatments during the crop germination and initial development. Irrigations were applied either after sunset or at dawn to minimize the wind effects on the water distribution pattern.

Irrigations were scheduled to maintain the soil water content equal to or above field capacity. The mean value of  $\theta_{FC}$  was 0.34 cm<sup>3</sup> cm<sup>-3</sup>. The irrigations were set to daily apply gross irrigation depths of  $\approx 8$  mm (as commonly used by farmers when rice is cropped under center pivot in Southern Brazil), or a depth of  $\approx 16$  mm under the alternate irrigation treatment (AI). The soil water data were downloaded and analyzed twice a week. A higher water depth was applied on the next irrigation whenever the soil water content dropped below the established threshold ( $\theta_{FC}$ ).

## 2.4 CROP OBSERVATIONS

Plant emergency was counted when 50% of the prophyll from the coleoptile had emerged, at stage S3, according to the Counce et al. (2000) scale. Plant height was measured with a millimeter ruler from the soil surface to the last collared leaf on the main stem. Three plants per plot were selected and targeted at the V2 stage (collar formed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> leaf on the main stem), and measurements were performed from V2 to maturity (R9). Measurements were taken every week from plant emergency to panicle exertion, the R3 stage (Counce et al. 2000), and in two weeks intervals thereafter.

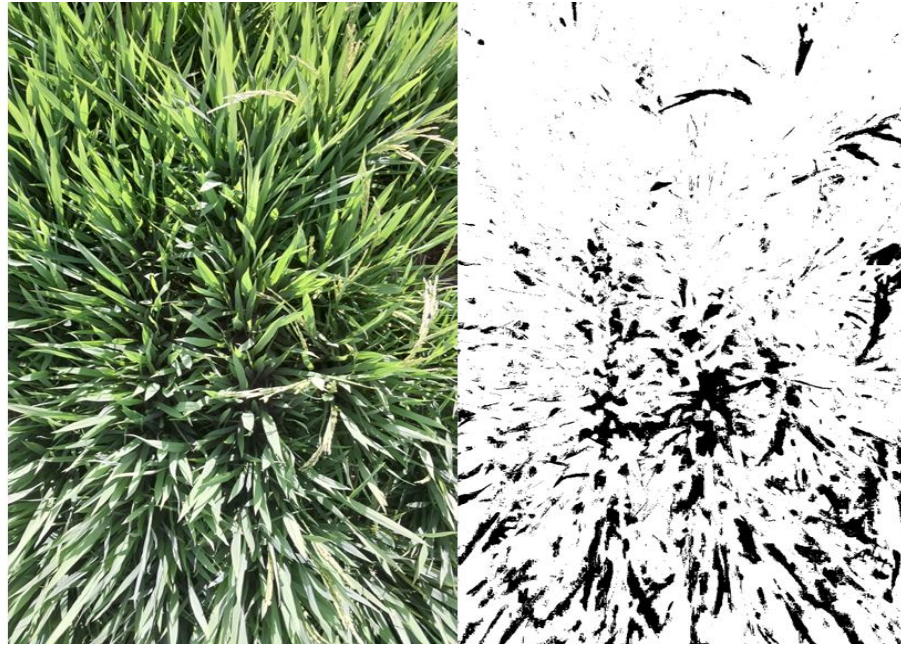
The fraction of ground covered by green crop vegetation was determined from photos taken in the center of each plot. The camera was installed upon a tripod, 1.50 m above the canopy, tilted at  $90^\circ$  from the horizontal, to achieve the maximum possible visualization within the plot and minimize external effects on the plotting area. The field of view was 1.00 m wide and 1.00 m long, covering five seeding rows. The image size was 2290 x 4080 pixels, in JPEG file format (Joint Photographic Experts Group), with an 8 MB size for each image. The images were taken between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. to avoid the influence of the shadow of the canopy on days with clear sky. The images were imported into the Android Version of the Canopeo Matlab app described by Patrignani and Ochsner (2015). The Canopeo uses the RGB (red-green-blue) image system for analyzing and classifying all pixels in the image. The analyses of the pixels follow the ratios of R/G and B/G (Liang et al. 2012) as well as the excess green index (Chen et al. 2010). The result is a binary image where white pixels correspond to a green canopy, according to the selection criteria, while black pixels correspond to a non-green area (Figure 2). Thus, the fraction of green-covered space ( $f_c$ ) ranges from 0 (no green canopy) to 1 (100% of green cover), according to:

$$R/G < P_1 \text{ and } B/G < P_2 \text{ and } 2G-R-B > P_3 \quad (1)$$

where  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  are parameters that typically have values close to 1 with pixels that are predominantly in the green bands ( $\sim 500\text{-}570$  nm), while  $P_3$  is the parameter that sets the minimum excess of green vegetation. The default parameters of  $P_1$  and  $P_2$  were set at 0.95, while the  $P_3$  was set of 0.20.



A)  $f_c = 0.35$

B)  $f_c = 0.85$ 

**Fig. 2** Examples of fraction of ground cover ( $f_c$ ), with measurements performed at (a) 09/12/2022 and (b) 04/02/2023.

The growing period of aerobic rice was estimated using the cumulative growing degree days method (CGDD), as proposed by McMaster and Wilhelm (1997), using a base threshold temperature of 12°C (Sánchez et al. 2014; SOSBAI 2018), and the upper temperature threshold of 36 °C (Gao et al. 1992).

Root development and distribution were analyzed at the R9 stage using the soil profile method (Böhm 1979). Trenches were open vertically across three plant rows (0.50 x 0.50 m); spatulas were used to expose the root system carefully. A frame of 0.50 x 0.50 m with a grid of 0.05 x 0.05 m mesh in nylon threads were fixed at the lateral of the trench. Photographs were then taken to analyze the root distribution on the soil profile. Only a few roots were found deeper than 0.35 m in the irrigated and rainfed treatments in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 growing seasons. Root distribution was not evaluated during the 2022/23 crop season.

### 2.5 CROP HARVEST AND GRAIN YIELD

After reaching the R9 stage (Counce et al. 2000), the crop was manually harvested with a sickle. In the first two cropping seasons, an area of 2.55 m<sup>2</sup> (5 rows x 3 meters) was harvested in the center of each plot. In the 2022/23 growing season, an area of 4.012 m<sup>2</sup> (8 rows x 2.95 m) was harvested and mechanically threshed. In the 2020/21 and 2021/22 crop seasons, the crop was harvested when seed moisture was 15-16%. In the 2022/23 growing season, the grain moisture content at harvest ranged from 14 to 20%. Canopy green percentage at harvest was approximately 60% on the DI plots and less than 40% on the RF and the AI irrigated plots. The



grain moisture for each plot was further converted to 14% using an automatic semi-portable DICKEY-john GAC500 XT® device (Dickey-john Corp., Auburn, IL, USA) representing the actual crop yield ( $Y_a$ ).

Aiming at comparing the irrigation scheduling strategies two water productivity indicators were computed: the irrigation water productivity (ratio between  $Y_a$  and the total irrigation) and the water use productivity (ratio between  $Y_a$  and the corresponding water use) as defined by Pereira et al. (2012).

### 2.6 Modelling the soil water balance with the SIMDualKc model

Real-time irrigation management requires that the soil water balance (SWB) is computed daily for the plant root system depth to detect soil water depletion in this layer. The SWB equation used in the SIMDualKc model (Rosa et al. 2012) is:

$$D_{r,i} = D_{r,i-1} - (P_i - RO_i) - I_i - CR_i + ET_{c,act,i} + DP_i \quad (2)$$

where  $D_{r,i}$  and  $D_{r,i-1}$  are, respectively, the soil water depletion in the root zone at the day  $i$  and at the end of the previous day  $i-1$  (mm),  $P_i$  is the precipitation (mm),  $RO_i$  is the runoff (mm),  $I_i$  is the net irrigation depth that infiltrated in the soil (mm),  $CR_i$  is the capillary rise (mm) when there is a water table close to the surface, which did not occur in this application;  $DP_i$  is the water percolation through the root zone bottom (mm). The  $ET_{c,act,i}$  is the actual crop evapotranspiration (mm); from irrigation to rainfed, in different cropping conditions.

The simulation of the SWB requires a set of inputs:

- (i) daily meteorological data to compute  $ET_o$ , ( $\text{mm dia}^{-1}$ ), precipitation (mm), minimum relative humidity ( $RH_{\min}$ , %) and wind speed observed at 2 m height ( $U_2$ ,  $\text{m s}^{-1}$ ).
- (ii) physical and water holding characteristics for each soil layer (Table 2), initial values for the thickness of the soil evaporation layer ( $Z_e$ , m) and the readily and total evaporable water (REW and TEW, mm); and the soil moisture at sowing (expressed as % of TAW).
- (iii) Initial values for the parameters of algorithms used to estimate runoff, with CN from Allen et al. (2007), and deep percolation  $a_{DP}$  and  $b_{DP}$  following Liu et al. (2006).

### 2.7 STATISTICAL INDICATORS, PARAMETRIZATION, AND CALIBRATION PROCEDURES

The calibration and validation of SIMDualKc model for the SWB simulation of the sprinkler irrigated aerobic rice were performed using independent data sets. The calibration used the daily irrigated treatment of the 2020/21 while the other data sets were used for validation procedure. The calibration consisted of searching the parameters that minimized the



errors of the simulation, i.e., the deviation between model simulated daily soil water content (SWC) and the field observed SWC. The optimized/calibrated parameters included the basal crop coefficients for the initial, mid-season and end-season stages ( $K_{cb\ ini}$ ,  $K_{cb\ mid}$  and  $K_{cb\ end}$ ), as well as the soil water depletion fraction for no stress ( $p$ ) at the same stages ( $p_{ini}$ ,  $p_{mid}$ ,  $p_{end}$ ). The initial  $K_{cb}$  and  $p$  values used were those suggested values by Pereira et al. (2020b). The initial values for CN and the DP parameters were those obtained by Petry et al. (2023) in a study conducted at the same site.

A trial-and-error (TaE) procedure was used, firstly focusing the  $K_{cb}$  and  $p$  values aiming to minimize the differences between the available soil water observed and simulated by the model, as proposed by Pereira et al. (2015). Simultaneously, graphs were plotted to support performing a qualitative analysis observing whether there were trends or biases of over or under-estimation by the model and when they occurred. The goodness-of-fit indicators referred below were computed for each step computation and used to assess the optimization procedure. After the errors in estimation got quite smaller, the TaE procedure was applied to adjust the soil evaporation, deep percolation, and the curve number parameters. Then, after the related minimization, the TaE was applied to all parameters until errors decreasing were much smaller, likely non-noticeable.

The goodness-of-fit indicators used were computed from the pair of observed and predicted values, respectively  $O_i$  and  $P_i$ , (where  $i=1, 2, \dots, n$ ), and whose means are  $\bar{O}$  and  $\bar{P}$ . The indicators used to assess the model accuracy were those described by Moriasi et al. (2007) and Pereira et al. (2015, 2020b):

- (i) The regression coefficient ( $b_0$ ) of a linear regression through the origin between observed and predicted values. A  $b_0$  close to 1.0 indicates that the model is able to reproduce the observed data.
- (ii) The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of the ordinary least squares regression between  $O_i$  and  $P_i$ , with  $R^2$  describing the proportion of the variance in measured data that are explained by the model;
- (iii) The root mean square error (RMSE), with values ranging between 0.0 and a positive value expressed in the same units of the analyzed variable, which should be as small as possible;
- (iv) The normalized RMSE (NRMSE, %), which is the ratio of the RMSE to the mean of the observed data, and which target value should preferably be smaller than 10%;
- (v) The modeling efficiency (EF, dimensionless), proposed by Nash and Sutcliffe (1970), that indicates the relative magnitude of the residual variance compared to the variance of the measured data.

Obtaining positive EF values close to 1.0 should be the target; zero or negative values mean that the variance of estimated residuals is similar to the variance of the measured data, so implying that there is no gain and it is likely better to use the average of the observed values instead of those obtained in the simulation.

In addition, the results were submitted to a mathematical assumptions test model. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the grain yield data was performed using the F test. If significant, the factors mean were subjected to a Tukey's test with a 5% probability of error using the statistical package SISVAR (Ferreira 2011).

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Crop growth stages and cumulative growing degree days

Temperature is one of the most relevant factors determining rice shoots and root growth. Therefore, growth and development of rice are strongly related with growing degree days (GDD). The length of the growth stages was determined throughout all growing seasons from sowing to harvest (Table 3) as a function of cumulative GDD (CGDD). Rice is sensitive to low temperatures during the cycle, particularly during the initial stage and anthesis. Therefore, the sowing date must be planned to avoid the occurrence of low temperatures during germination, since the minimum critical temperature for *Oryza sativa* is 11.3 °C. ( $\pm 1.1$  °C) (Sanchez et al 2014); differently, for the sub-specie *indica*, the mostly used in Brazil, the minimum temperature for that stage is 10 °C (Yoshida 1981; Sanchez et al. 2014). In the current study, a base temperature of 12°C was used as this is the critical sub-temperature for most stages, particularly for leaf and panicle initiation and during flowering. The observed CGDD for germination ranged from 70 to 72 °C over the three growth seasons. The minimum temperature during the seedling stage was 13.3°C in the 2021/22 growing season, 15.9°C in 2020/21 and 13.1°C for 2022/23. As reported by Krishnan et al. (2013) low temperatures and their fluctuations within the day affect the germination percentage in aerobic rice, slowing its process when the temperature drops below the range of 7-11°C. Contrarily, germination can be faster with temperatures above 20°C. Rapid germination is essential for crop establishment, but it is not significant for the final stand. As observed in the field, the germination/emergence stage spanned for almost thirty days, which is on the range of those reported by Sosbai (2018) for rice sown through November in southern Brazil.

The duration of the different stages was quite similar for the DI and AI treatments (Table 3). Differently, the beginning of the crop growth stage was delayed in 58 °C of CGDD (5 days) in the 2020/21 crop season for the RF treatment, mainly due to the unfavorable soil moisture

during the seedling and crop establishment periods. Due to water stress during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 growing seasons, the start of the mid-season was delayed for RF. Senescence started early in the RF plots (Table 3) due to soil water stress.

All treatments were harvested on the same date for logistic purposes because plots were manually threshed. Rice seed moisture content should be ranging 15 to 22% for hand threshing to prevent rice yield reduction (Nalley et al. 2016). The R9 stage (physiologic maturity), when the entire panicle became brown, was observed when CGDD was 1604 °C (135 days) and 1584 °C (133 days) in the 2021/21 and 2021/22 growing seasons for the IRGA 424 RI, a medium cycle cultivar, while the early maturity cultivar IRGA 431 CL reached physiologic maturity with 1490 °C, 1539 °C, and 1572 °C (125, 128, and 125 days) during the 2020/21, 2021/22, and 2022/23 growing seasons.

**Table 3** The beginning of the aerobic rice growth stages for each crop season, and cumulated growing degree days (CGDD, °C) from sowing to harvest, for all experiments.

Crop Season	Treatment	Sowing date	FAO crop stages (phenology stage*)			
			Start Crop Development (at V3/V4)	Start Mid-season (at VF/R0)	Start Late season (at R8)	Harvest (after R9)
2020/21	Irrigated	07/11/2020	253	733	1411	1730
	Rainfed		311	779	1386	1730
2021/22	Irrigated	12/11/2021	216	727	1527	1713
	Rainfed		216	834	1534	1713
2022/23	Irrigated	09/11/2022	235	671	1339	1675

\* according to the Counce et al. (2000) scale; CGDD values were estimated using 12 °C as base temperature and 36 °C as cut-off temperature.

### 3.2. Crop characteristics

Crops characteristics, such as crop height (h) and the fraction of ground cover ( $f_c$ ), are presented as means of both cultivars (IRGA 424 RI and IRGA 431 CL) for 2020/21 and 2021/22 in Table 4 and Figure 3. Those means are used because differences between cultivars did not exceed 3%. Both plant height and  $f_c$  varied little between the DI and AI treatments over the three years and both were higher than those of the RF treatment (Table 4) since it was often water stressed. Maximum plant height was observed at the R7 stage for the irrigated treatments ( $\pm 1400$  CGDD;  $\pm 120$  DAS). Similar findings were reported by Reavis et al. (2021). Plants were slightly higher during the 2020/21 and 2021/22 growing seasons than in 2022/23. This is likely related to the cultivar since early cultivars are often smaller than those of medium cycle (Sosbai 2018) as observed for the cultivar IRGA 431 CL in 2022/23. Consequently,  $f_c$  was also slightly smaller during the latter growing season compared to the previous ones. The h results align with those obtained by Spanu et al. (2009) with aerobic rice in Italy, which

attained a maximum plant height of 0.83 m in treatments where the soil moisture was maintained above field capacity. In Southern Brazil, Avila et al. (2015) reported mean final plant heights of 0.77 m and 0.78 m for the AWD and CF irrigation, respectively. Moratiel and Martínez-Cob (2013) reported a crop height ranging between 0.6-0.7 m in a semi-arid climate in Spain for a three years experiment. Under a lateral-move sprinkler system, Pinto et al. (2020) reported a decrease in plant height when soil water tension increased from 10 to 40 kPa. Thus, while literature values for  $f_c$  were not available, those for  $h$  indicate that high values are attained when there is no water stress.

**Table 4** Plant height ( $h$ ) and fraction of soil covered ( $f_c$ ) of aerobic rice for the three treatments and a three-year experiment.

Treatments	Observations		Crop stages		
			Crop Development	Mid-season	Late season
2020/21					
DI	72	$h$ (m)	0.11 (0.07) – 0.28 (0.06)	0.38 (0.05) – 0.81 (0.05)	0.83 (0.03) – 0.74 (0.04)
		$f_c$	0.10 (0.01) – 0.74 (0.01)	0.84 (0.09) – 0.93 (0.00)	0.86 (0.00) – 0.70(0.00)
AI	72	$h$ (m)	0.11 (0.02) – 0.23 (0.02)	0.32 (0.03) – 0.74 (0.00)	0.81 (0.03) – 0.77 (0.04)
		$f_c$	0.12 (0.01) – 0.72 (0.00)	0.83 (0.00) – 0.93 (0.00)	0.88 (0.00) – 0.74 (0.00)
RF	72	$h$ (m)	0.10 (0.01) – 0.19 (0.04)	0.22 (0.02) – 0.47 (0.02)	0.49 (0.03) – 0.43 (0.02)
		$f_c$	0.10 (0.01) – 0.38 (0.09)	0.48 (0.01) – 0.79 (0.01)	0.76 (0.01) – 0.45 (0.05)
2021/22					
DI	72	$h$ (m)	0.08 (0.02) – 0.41 (0.05)	0.48 (0.05) – 0.80 (0.05)	0.78 (0.04) – 0.68 (0.05)
		$f_c$	0.12 (0.02) – 0.77 (0.04)	0.84 (0.03) – 0.95 (0.02)	0.82 (0.01) – 0.69 (0.03)
AI	72	$h$ (m)	0.08 (0.01) – 0.41 (0.05)	0.48 (0.02) – 0.81 (0.05)	0.78 (0.04) – 0.68 (0.05)
		$f_c$	0.12 (0.02) – 0.77 (0.03)	0.79 (0.04) – 0.92 (0.02)	0.79 (0.01) – 0.68 (0.01)
RF	72	$h$ (m)	0.10 (0.02) – 0.29 (0.02)	0.33 (0.02) – 0.49 (0.02)	0.47 (0.03) – 0.41 (0.03)
		$f_c$	0.10 (0.03) – 0.52 (0.04)	0.54 (0.01) – 0.70 (0.07)	0.65 (0.05) – 0.35 (0.05)
2022/23					
DI	54	$h$ (m)	0.16 (0.02) – 0.38 (0.03)	0.39 (0.03) – 0.72 (0.03)	0.75 (0.03) – 0.72 (0.02)
		$f_c$	0.12 (0.04) – 0.61 (0.09)	0.64 (0.03) – 0.92 (0.06)	0.88 (0.04) – 0.64(0.04)
AI	54	$h$ (m)	0.18 (0.02) – 0.37 (0.03)	0.38 (0.03) – 0.75 (0.04)	0.75 (0.03) – 0.71 (0.03)
		$f_c$	0.11 (0.04) – 0.56 (0.10)	0.61 (0.04) – 0.92 (0.06)	0.88 (0.06) – 0.64(0.02)

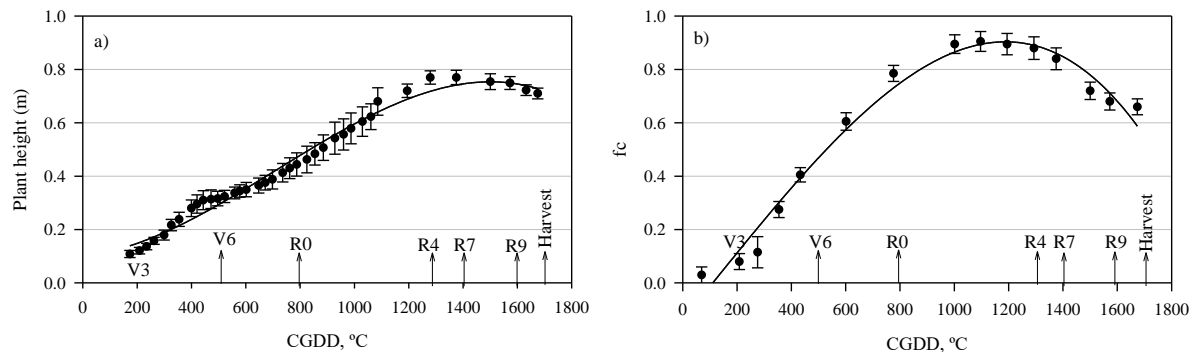
NOTE: The values of plant height and the fraction of soil cover are means of both cultivars for each treatment within each crop stage. Standard deviations are in brackets

Plant height peaks occur between the R6 and R7 stages when the panicle starts to gain weight, while  $f_c$  peaks are attained at flowering/pollination and decrease slightly thereafter (Figure 3). From an  $f_c = 0.10$  to  $f_c = 0.70$  by the beginning of the mid-season,  $h$  and  $f_c$  increased linearly immediately after the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> nitrogen top-dressing in the plant tillering stage. Warmer days ( $T_{max} > 35^\circ\text{C}$  and  $T_{min} > 13^\circ\text{C}$ ), combined with a high availability of solar radiation ( $R_s > 23 \text{ MJ m}^2 \text{ day}^{-1}$ ) favored the overall shoot growth and the increase in  $h$  and  $f_c$ . The  $f_c$  showed a good correlation with plant height.

During the three-year field observations, the canopy did not fully shade the ground. In the 2021/22 growing season, a maximum  $f_c$  of 0.95 was observed around flowering/pollination (R3/R4) (Table 4). The top leaves of the rice are erect, narrow, and arranged in a shape that is constantly overlapping, favoring light penetration to the deeper canopy layers. However, as reported by Li et al. (2021), while this leaf arrangement increases light absorption, and favors photosynthesis and transpiration processes, it also may favor soil evaporation and soil surface temperature.

Shorter plants in aerobic rice are often associated with variations in soil temperature throughout the day (Liu et al. 2018). In paddy rice, the layer of water on the soil surface provides a heat buffer, improving nutrient use efficiency, plant growth, and biomass accumulation. A less variable soil temperature such as that produced by flooding irrigation, is more important during microsporogenesis, and is primarily protective against lower temperatures. Clerget et al. (2014, 2016) reported that under aerobic conditions less developed plants were observed due to reduced leaf growth and reduced length compared with plants under flooding irrigation.

The observed  $f_c$  values are in good agreement with  $f_c$  values up to 0.90 reported by Moratiel and Martínez-Cob (2013) in a study on sprinkled irrigated rice. The results are also in agreement with values reported by Pereira et al. (2021) regarding update parameters for aerobic rice, namely maximum values of  $h$  and  $f_c$ .



**Fig. 3** Dynamics of the crop height (a) and the fraction of ground covered by the green canopy (b) of aerobic rice (cultivar IRGA 431CL) during the 2022/23 growing season in southern Brazil.

### 3.3 – Calibration and validation of *SIMDualKc* and determination of the basal crop coefficients

The calibration process, described in section 2.6, followed the process reported by Pereira et al. (2015). The initial and calibrated values relative to the crop, soil evaporation, runoff, and deep percolation are presented in Table 5. The  $K_{cb}$  curve obtained by simulating the SWC was adjusted to the climate. The daily irrigated treatment from the 2020/21 growing season was used to calibrate the model while all other data sets, relative to irrigated and rainfed treatments

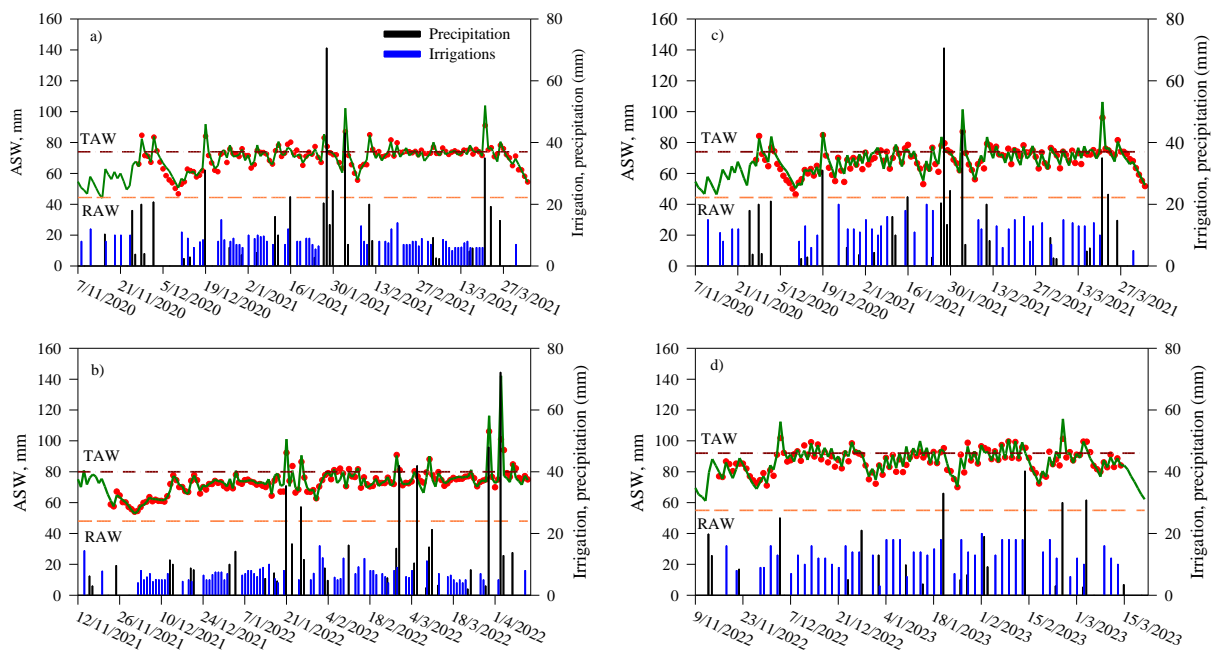
in the three growing seasons, were used in the validation process. The standard calibrated  $K_{cb}$  ini,  $K_{cb}$  mid and  $K_{cb}$  end values are those presented in Table 5. The  $K_{cb}$  values adjusted to the climate for both DI and AI were 0.15, 1.08 ( $\pm 0.01$ ) and 0.80 ( $\pm 0.01$ ), respectively, and are similar to the standard ones reported by Pereira et al. (2021).

**Table 5** Initial and calibrated values of the parameters of the SIMDualKc model.

Parameters	Initial, default	Calibrated values	Source of parameters initial values
<i>Crop parameters</i>			
$K_{cb}$ ini	0.15	0.15	Pereira et al. (2021)
$K_{cb}$ mid	1.10*	1.10	Pereira et al. (2021)
$K_{cb}$ end	0.7	0.85	Pereira et al. (2021)
Depletion factor (p)	0.35ASW	0.40TAW	Pereira et al. (2021)
<i>Soil evaporation</i>			
TEW (mm)	49	30	
REW (mm)	12	10	Soil characteristics
$Z_e$ (m)	0.15	0.10	
<i>Deep percolation</i>			
$a_{DP}$	353**	345	Petry et al. (2023)
$b_{DP}$	-0.022**	-0.022	Liu et al. (2006)
Runoff (CN)	75	75	Allen et al. (2007)

$K_{cb}$  = basal crop coefficients for initial ( $K_{cb}$  ini), mid-season ( $K_{cb}$  mid) and end season ( $K_{cb}$  end);  $Z_e$  = depth of the soil evaporable layer; TEW = total evaporable water; REW = readily available water; CN = curve number;  $a_{DP}$  and  $b_{DP}$  are the parameters of the percolation equation.

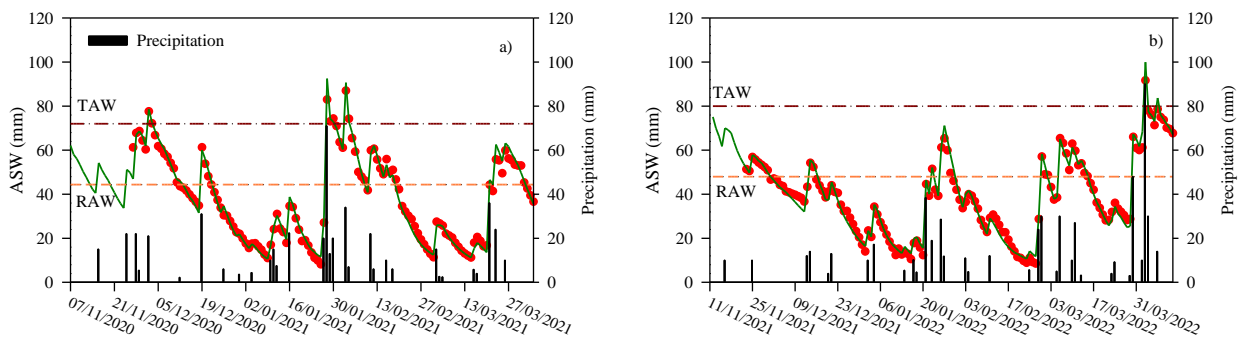
The daily dynamics of the available soil water (ASW) observed and simulated are presented in Figure 4 for: (a) the calibration with DI treatment in 2021/22, (b) the DI in 2022/23, validation, and (c and d) for AI respectively in 2020/21 and 2022/23. All cases evidence an excellent fitting.



**Fig. 4** Observed (●) and simulated (—) available soil water (ASW, mm) relative to the treatments :(a) DI, calibration, in 2020/21, (b) DI, validation, in 2021/22, (c) AI, validation, in 2020/21, and (d) AI, validation, in 2022/23. Irrigation (I) and precipitation.

Due to an adequate irrigation scheduling, the observed ASW remained close to  $\theta_{FC}$  for all cases, with ASW deviating from TAW in some periods due to higher climatic demand relative to the irrigation water input. This was the case of the DI strategy in 2021/22 (Fig. 4b). Among all growing seasons, the soil water content fluctuated only from  $0.31 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}$  to  $0.35 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}$  for the irrigated treatments. The more significant oscillation in soil moisture observed in that growing season for DI, which may have been partly due to the delayed start of irrigation. Moreover, no water stress was observed in the irrigated treatments as the ASW was kept near TAW. Nevertheless, it could be better for all treatments to start irrigation earlier and to use more  $1 \text{ mm d}^{-1}$  as application depth.

Figure 5 shows the observed and simulated values of ASW for the RF treatment in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 growing seasons (the RF treatment was not applied in 2022/23). The ASW dynamics during the season evidence that precipitation has been much insufficient for satisfying the crop water requirements. The lack of rainfall made ASW to drop below RAW, reaching very low values during the crop development and the beginning of the mid-season during the 2020/21 season, and most of the time in the 2021/22 crop season. Nevertheless, model simulations performed very well. Sporadic peaks of the soil water were observed following precipitation, but ASW rarely rose above TAW. Most of the time, ASW remained below the RAW threshold in both growing seasons. This evidenced the inadequacy of rainfed rice in southern Brazil despite the high total precipitation.



**Fig. 5** Observed and simulated available soil water (ASW, mm) relative to the rainfed treatments during the growing seasons of 2020/21 (a) and 2021/22 (b).

The SIMDualKc model adequately reproduced the observed ASW throughout all growing seasons (Fig. 4 and 5). The goodness-of-fit indicators (Section 2.7) for all ASW simulations are presented in Table 5. They confirm excellent agreement between observed and simulated ASW

values, with regression coefficient values ( $b_0$ ) close to 1.0, which indicates high similarity between predicted and observed data. The high values of the determination coefficient ( $R^2$ ), ranging from 0.80 to 0.98, suggest that the model could explain most of the variance in the observations. Likewise, the modeling efficiency was high, with EF values  $> 0.69$ , indicating that the variance of the residuals was elsewhere, much smaller than the variance of the observed ASW data. Consequently, the estimation errors were small, with an RMSE ranging from 2.4 to 4.40 mm, and representing less than 7% of the average observed ASW (i.e.  $\text{NRMSE} \leq 7\%$ ). The results of the present study are comparable with those obtained with the SIMDualKc model in Brazil, e.g., Martins et al. (2013) for maize, Paredes et al. (2018) for bermudagrass, and by Petry et al. (2023) for soybean. Excellent results were also obtained elsewhere, for example by Paredes et al. (2017) for pea, Liu et al. (2022) for maize, Cancela et al. (2015) for vineyards, and by Ramos et al. (2023) for several tree orchards.

**Table 6** Goodness-of-fit indicators relative to the simulation of the available soil water for all cases.

Treatments	$b_0$	$R^2$	RMSE (mm)	NRMSE (%)	EF
2020/21 crop season					
Daily	1.01	0.88	2.8	4.0	0.86
Alternate	1.01	0.86	3.2	4.7	0.83
Rainfed	1.01	0.98	2.7	7.0	0.98
2021/22 crop season					
Daily	1.00	0.80	4.4	6.1	0.69
Alternate	1.01	0.87	3.9	5.6	0.84
Rainfed	1.01	0.98	2.5	6.4	0.98
2022/23 crop season					
Daily	1.00	0.89	2.4	2.8	0.87
Alternate	1.01	0.84	2.9	3.3	0.80
All cases	1.01	0.89	3.1	5.0	0.86

Notes:  $b_0$  and  $R^2$  are the coefficients of regression and determination, respectively; RMSE is the root mean square error; NRMSE is the normalized RMSE; and EF is the modelling efficiency.

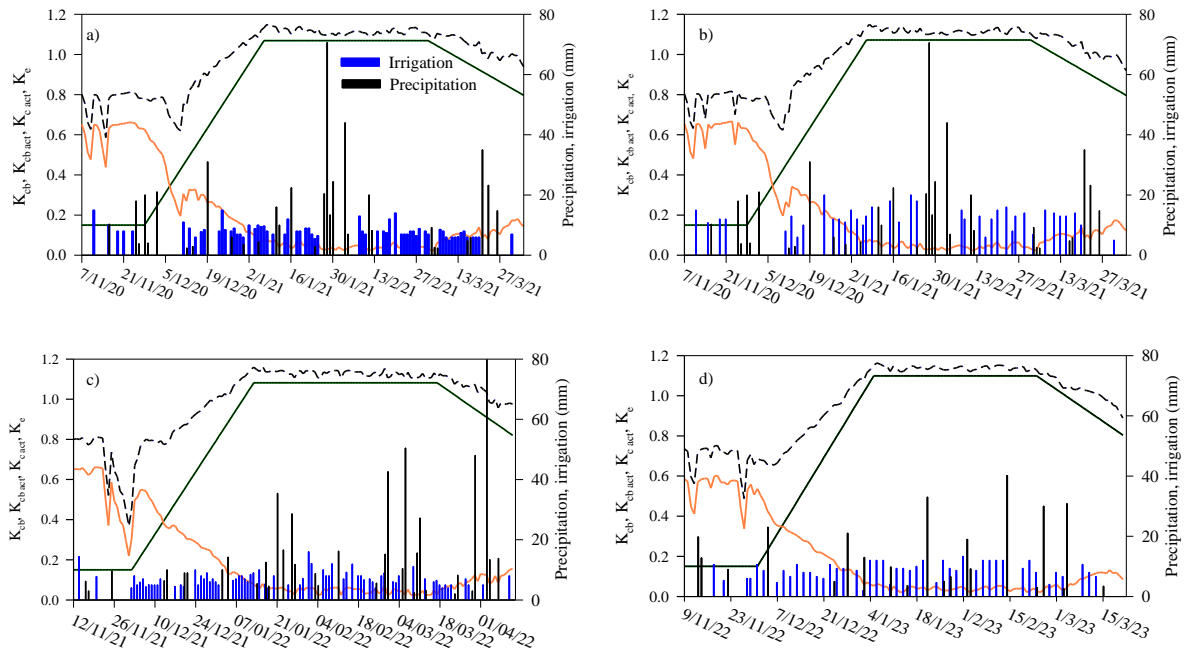
### 3.4 - ET partitioning: the basal crop coefficient and the evaporation coefficient for aerobic rice

The standard and actual basal crop coefficient curves and the soil evaporation coefficient estimated by the SIMDualKc model are presented in Figure 6. It can be seen that the  $K_{cb \text{ act}}$  was equal to the standard  $K_{cb}$  during all growing seasons for DI and AI, because no water stress occurred. The calibrated standard basal crop coefficients for initial, mid, and end seasons ( $K_{cb \text{ ini}}$ ,  $K_{cb \text{ mid}}$ , and  $K_{cb \text{ end}}$ ) were 0.15, 1.10, and 0.85, respectively. The calibrated  $K_{cb \text{ mid}}$  is only slightly higher than the one recommended by Pereira et al. (2021). The SIMDualKc model adjusted both the  $K_{cb \text{ mid}}$  and  $K_{cb \text{ end}}$  to climate as recommended by Allen et al. (1998). The actual  $K_{cb \text{ mid}}$  adjusted to local climate conditions was 1.08 ( $\pm 0.01$ ), which is lower than the one



derived from field observations under center pivot by Vorries et al. (2013) reporting a  $K_{cb\ mid} = 1.21$ . The actual  $K_{cb\ mid}$  values obtained in the current study after climatic adjustment have shown very small variations among the three seasons of field observations, with  $K_{cb\ mid}$  of 1.07, 1.08 and 1.10 for respectively 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 season and both irrigation treatments.

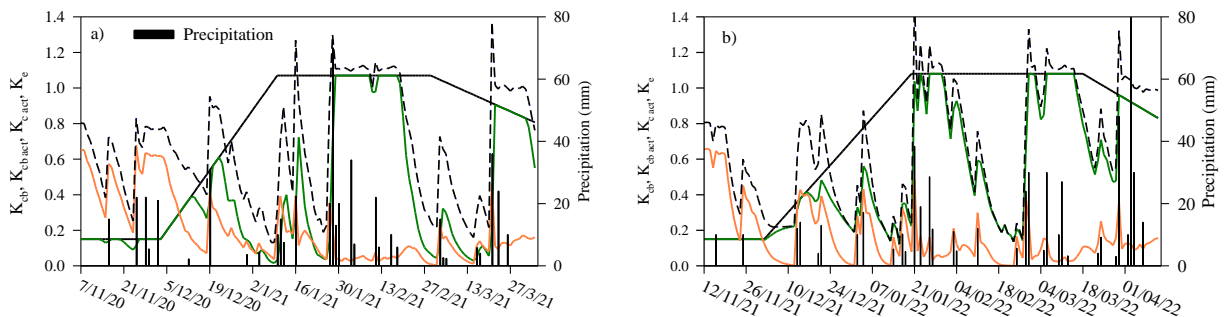
The calibrated  $K_{cb\ end} = 0.85$  is aligned with the values updated by Pereira et al. (2021).  $K_{cb\ end}$  depends on the  $f_c$  by the harvesting time. While in CF and other alternative anaerobic rice, irrigation ends by the R7 stage, with sprinkling irrigation rarely stops before the R9 stage, resulting in higher  $K_{cb\ end}$  values. The  $K_{cb\ end}$  adjusted for the local climate was  $0.8 (\pm 0.01)$ , likely reflecting slightly more humid and/or less windy conditions than under the standard climate conditions.



**Fig. 6** Daily variation of the basal crop coefficient ( $K_{cb}$ , —), actual basal crop coefficient ( $K_{cb\ act} = K_{cb}$ , - - -), actual crop coefficient ( $K_{c\ act}$ , ···) and evaporation coefficient ( $K_e$ , —), for the daily irrigated treatment (a) in 2020/21 (calibration), (c) daily irrigated 2021/22 season, (b) alternate irrigated in 2020/21, and (d) alternate irrigated in 2022/23 season. Also depicted the applied irrigations (|, mm) and precipitation (|, mm).

The calibrated  $K_{cb\ ini} (0.15)$  was smaller than the value modeled by Vorries et al. (2013) under the center pivot in Missouri, USA ( $K_{cb\ ini} = 0.20$ ) but higher than the one reported by Alberto et al. (2014) in dry-seeding rice ( $K_{cb\ ini}$  of 0.05 and 0.08). The green vegetation is sparse during the emergency and seedling stages (Fig. 2), resulting in low crop transpiration and small  $K_{cb\ ini}$ . As expected,  $K_e$  was higher through all crop growth stages for both irrigated treatments (Fig. 6).

The rainfed rice showed very different dynamics of the crop coefficients curve along the growing season for 2020/21 and 2021/22 (Figure 7). The actual  $K_{cb}$  values varied greatly during all crop growth stages, except the initial because it nearly coincides with the  $K_{cb\ ini}$ , which is 0.15.  $K_{cb\ act}$  variation indicates that SWC was insufficient to maintain the crop transpiration rate at its potential. During the 2021/22 growing season, the soil water stress delayed the mid-season by 107°C of CGDD (7 days) compared to the irrigated treatments, which was attributed to water stress during the previous stages. The actual  $K_{cb\ end}$  for rainfed rice were 0.64 and 0.8, respectively for 2020/21 and 2021/22, due to rainfall occurring previously to the end-season. Results demonstrate that, despite average precipitation in southern Brazil is high its variability leads to large periods of water stress (Fig. 7).



**Fig. 7** Daily variation of the basal crop coefficient ( $K_{cb}$ , —), actual basal crop coefficient ( $K_{cb\ act}$ , - -), actual crop coefficient ( $K_{c\ act}$ , —) and evaporation coefficient ( $K_e$ , —), for the rainfed rice (a) in 2020/21 season and (b) in 2021/22 season. Also depicted the precipitation ( | , mm).

### 3.5 – The effect of mulch on the soil evaporation and its coefficient ( $K_e$ )

Aerobic rice, dry seeding, and intermittent irrigation can save up to 30% of water relative to continuous flooding (Jabran et al. 2014). Soil management practices are commonly used in irrigation in southern Brazil aimed at improving water use and soil physical properties (Souza et al. 2016; Moraes et al. 2016). Mulch likely is the best approach to reduce soil evaporation and decreasing  $K_e$ . In the current study, rice was sown on a thick layer of black oat mulch (> 3.0 Mg ha<sup>-1</sup>). Following the study by Martins et al. (2013), the model was parameterized to simulate the impacts of the organic mulch on  $E_s$ . Mulch density and fraction of soil surface covered with the mulch were inputted to SIMDualKc and it was assumed that for each 10% of soil surface covered with the organic mulch corresponds to a 5% reduction in the soil water evaporation (Allen et al. 1998; Rosa et al. 2012; Odhiambo and Irmak 2012). This estimation leads to decrease  $K_c$  and  $K_e$  but not  $K_{cb}$ . The model therefore computed a 50% reduction of soil evaporation for all growing seasons, which reduction was updated in the model throughout the crop seasons taking into consideration the degradation of the organic mulch. This allowed improving the  $K_c$  partition. For the 2020-21 season, it result  $K_e = 0.57 (\pm 0.04)$  for DI and AI

initial stage, dropping to  $K_e = 0.05$  in the mid-season, as shown in Fig. 2 and represented in Figs 6 and 7. A slight increase during the late season was observed (Fig. 6 and 7) due to crop senescence. However, the average  $K_e$  at the initial stage was smaller, 0.49 in 2020/21 and 0.29 in 2021/22, reflecting the interannual differences in rainfall and irrigation (Fig. 6 and 7).

### 3.6 – *The single crop coefficient for aerobic rice*

Previous studies with rice under sprinkler irrigation (Borja Reis et al. 2018; Pinto et al. 2020) focused on the relationship between water use and grain yield but did not derive crop coefficients. Since  $K_{c\ ini}$  depends on factors such as rainfall and irrigation during the initial period, soil management, mulch, soil moisture, and a combination of meteorological conditions that influence evaporation (Allen et al. 1998),  $K_{c\ ini}$  were distinct by about 10% over the three years of experiments for the irrigated treatments (Table 7) due to differences in rainfall and irrigation. These  $K_{c\ ini}$  are slightly lower than those reported for sprinkler irrigated rice by Alberto et al. (2011, 2014) in Philippines ( $K_{c\ ini}$  ranging from 0.81 to 0.95), and by Moratiel and Martínez-Cob (2013) in Spain ( $K_{c\ ini}=0.92$ ). Spanu et al. (2009), in a study in Sardinia, Italy, reported a  $K_c$  of 0.90 for the period from emergency to end of tillering. The smaller  $K_{c\ ini}$  values in the current study are likely due to the effects of mulch which reduced  $K_e$  and, therefore,  $K_c$ . In contrast, Choudhury et al. (2013) reported  $K_{c\ ini} = 0.62$  for furrow irrigated rice in India, which smaller values may be due to differences in irrigation. The values in the current study are in the range of the  $K_{c\ ini}$  values 0.67 to 1.14 reported for dry-seeding rice by Diaz et al. (2019), for a site at 100 km from ours, where the higher  $K_{c\ ini}$  correspond to the wetter years.

The actual  $K_{c\ mid}$  in the current study ranged between 1.12 and 1.14 (Table 7). These values are comparable to the standard  $K_{c\ mid}$  reported for sprinkler irrigation by Pereira et al. (2021), and in the range of values (1.04-1.15) reported by Alberto et al. (2014). It is also close to  $K_{c\ mid} = 1.06$  reported by Moratiel and Martínez-Cob (2013) for sprinkler aerobic rice, and to  $K_{c\ mid}$  of 1.16 reported by Choudhury et al. (2013) for aerobic rice with furrow irrigation. The  $K_{c\ mid\ act}$  for rainfed rice was much lower (0.82) likely because the crop was highly affected by water stress namely in the mid-season (Figure 5 and 7), that led to smaller  $h$  and lower  $f_c$  (Table 3).

The  $K_{c\ end}$  values for sprinkler-irrigated rice in the current study ranged from 0.92 to 1.02, which values varied as with the SWC at end-season. Values are close to the standard value  $K_{c\ end} = 0.95$  reported by Pereira et al. (2021). The observed higher values, result from irrigation until rice maturity (R9) and precipitation events just before harvest (Figure 6). The  $K_{c\ end\ act}$  values for rainfed rice (0.76) were much lower than those of the irrigated treatments during the

late season of 2020/21 but larger in 2021/22 ( $K_{c\text{ end act}} = 0.98$ ) due to differences in SWC at that time.

**Table 7** Single average crop coefficients relative to all irrigation treatments of aerobic rice during the three growing seasons.

Seasons	Treatments	Crop growth stages				
		Initial	Crop development	Mid-season	Late season	End-season
2020/21						
	Daily	0.72	0.72 – 1.12	1.12	1.12 – 0.94	0.94
	Alternate	0.77	0.77 – 1.12	1.12	1.12 – 0.92	0.92
	Rainfed	0.63	0.63 – 0.82	0.82	0.82 – 0.87	0.76
2021/22						
	Daily	0.68	0.68 – 1.13	1.13	1.13 – 0.97	0.97
	Alternate	0.67	0.67 – 1.13	1.13	1.13 – 0.96	0.96
	Rainfed	0.46	0.46 – 0.82	0.82	0.82 – 0.98	0.98
2022/23						
	Daily	0.71	0.71 – 1.14	1.14	1.14 – 1.02	1.02
	Alternate	0.70	0.70 – 1.14	1.14	1.14 – 1.02	0.89*
	All irrigated	0.71	0.71 – 1.13	1.13	1.13 – 0.97	0.97
	All rainfed	0.54	0.54 – 0.82	0.82	0.82 – 0.87	0.87

\* lower value because the last irrigation was not performed

### 3.7 – ET partitioning and soil water balance components

The components of the soil water balance are presented in Table 8. The potential crop evapotranspiration ( $ET_c$ ) estimated by the SIMDualKc model was similar for the experiments under sprinkler irrigation over the three years. The seasonal  $ET_c$  averaged  $697 \pm 16$  mm, while the  $ET_{c\text{ act}}$  for rainfed conditions averaged  $453 \pm 3$  mm. Mean daily  $ET_c$  values were 4.5, 4.7, and 5.2 mm  $\text{dia}^{-1}$ , respectively for the 2020/21, 2021/22, and 2022/23 growing seasons. The  $ET_c$  mainly depended on  $ET_o$ , since meteorological conditions determine the climatic demand of the atmosphere and  $K_c$  values were similar since no water stress occurred. In contrast,  $ET_{c\text{ act}}/ET_c$  for the rainfed treatments were 0.69 and 0.67 respectively for 2020/21 and 2021/22 due to water stress (Fig. 5).

Despite the numerous wetting events, from both precipitation and irrigation,  $E_s$  of irrigated treatments accounted for only about 20% of the  $ET_c$  (Table 8), likely due to the mulch control of soil water evaporation. The  $E_s/ET_{c\text{ act}}$  in the rainfed treatments were higher, 30% and 24% in 2020/21 and 2021/22 seasons, respectively, likely because mulch effects were smaller due to a lower canopy coverage. A much higher  $E_s/ET_c$  of about 50% was reported by Alberto et al. (2014) for aerobic irrigated rice without mulch. Mean  $E_s/ET_c = 33\%$  was reported by Diaz et al. (2019) for a six-year CF rice.

The non-beneficial water use ratio (NBWUR) relating DP+RO to the sum of precipitation and irrigation remained lower than 35% for all cases over the three years of the study. Seasonal runoff accounted for 7-11% of precipitation on the irrigated treatments while it represented 3-10% in the rainfed treatment; the lower RO values in the rainfed rice were due to lower available water, thus less REW. The occurrence of RO is due to poor construction of bunds and non-laser controlled levelling that led to a slope of 2% as well as to adopting surface drainage for controlling wetland vegetation. For the southern Brazil, Ávila et al. (2015) reported much higher RO values, representing 40% and 28%, respectively for CF and AWD cropping systems due to lack of precise levelling.

Most of the NBWUR was due to DP, which accounted for 6-18% of seasonal irrigation, with the lower values observed in the 2021/22 season in the AI treatment. DP in rainfed rice accounted for 9-26% of seasonal precipitation. The DP values of the current study are much lower than those in the for the flooding method, e.g., Bouman et al. (2007) reported that DP was 45% of the total water input (precipitation and irrigation) for an area with shallow water table depth (WTD), while DP was 70% when the WTD was lower to 2.0 m. Ávila et al. (2015) reported field-measured losses by DP in the lowlands of Southern Brazil accounting for 14% and 17% for CF and AWD, respectively. These low values refer to a soil with very low permeability while soil in the current study had a median to low permeability.

**Table 8** Field water balance components in sprinkler irrigated and rainfed rice computed with the SIMDualKc model for the 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 growing seasons.

Treatments	P	I	DP	RO	NBWUR	$\Delta$ ASW	ET <sub>c act</sub>	T <sub>c act</sub>	E <sub>s</sub>	E <sub>s</sub> /ET <sub>c act</sub>
	(mm)				(%)	(mm)		(mm)		(%)
2020/21 growing season										
Daily irrigated	484	523	310	33	33	-1	671	527	143	19
Alternate	484	482	265	36	30	-1	672	529	143	19
Rainfed	484	0	62	13	17	42	451	316	135	30
2021/22 growing season										
Daily irrigated	585	514	332	51	35	12	728	580	148	20
Alternate	585	474	270	64	33	14	727	580	147	20
Rainfed	585	0	53	58	27	-39	452	343	109	24
2022/23 growing season										
Daily irrigated	300	614	227	0	25	7	694	552	141	20
Alternate	300	621	241	0	30	10	690	552	138	20

Notes: P = precipitation, I = irrigation, DP = deep percolation, RO = runoff; NBWUR = non-beneficial water ratio;  $\Delta$ ASW = variation in available soil water; ET<sub>c act</sub> = actual crop evapotranspiration, T<sub>c act</sub> = actual crop transpiration; E<sub>s</sub>= soil water evaporation; E<sub>s</sub>/ET<sub>c act</sub> = soil water evaporation ratio.

### 3.8 – Assessing water use and grain yield for sprinkler and rainfed rice

The total yield of harvested grain obtained with the different irrigation strategies and both rice cultivars is shown in Table 9. The results show that the highest grain yield was obtained during the 2022/23 season (close to 10,000 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> for the cultivar IRGA 431 CL with irrigation every other day), the driest year over the three-years of field experiments (Table 9), which is likely associated with better environmental conditions, namely solar radiation and air temperature along the season (Figure 1).

**Table 9** Grain yield of aerobic rice under different water managements.

Irrigations strategies	2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023
	Grain Yield (kg ha <sup>-1</sup> )				
	IRGA 424 RI	IRGA 431 CL	IRGA 424 RI	IRGA 431 CL	IRGA 431 CL
Daily	7616 (±604) aA	8025 (±285) aA	6041 (±740) aA	6452 (±784) aA	9918 (1932) A
Alternate	6502 (±531) bB	7407 (±152) aA	5060 (±544) aA	6758 (±928) aA	10404 (951) A
Rainfed	518 (±102) cC	744 (±168) cB	0	0	-

Means followed by the same capital letters in the columns are not significantly different ( $P < 0.05$ ) and the same lowercase letters in the row for each season are not different by Tukey's test ( $P < 0.05$ ).

Duarte Jr. et al. (2021) argues that the potential rice yield under continuous flooding could reach nearly 14,000 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>; however, due to weed control and climatic conditions, these levels are very difficult to achieve in commercial field conditions. The yield achieved in the current study was constrained by the use of rice cultivars are well adapted to flood irrigation but not proved to aerobic conditions. The climatic conditions could also have contributed to not reaching the potential rice yield. For example, the extreme temperatures during anthesis, where  $T_{max}$  reached 39.3°C, may have resulted in a lower yield during the 2021/2022 growing season (yield below 6,500 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>). The contrasting high and low temperatures at panicle initiation (R0 stage), may also have contributed to lower yield. Furthermore, from late February to early March 2022 (R2 stage), soil moisture settled below  $\theta_{FC}$  (Fig. 5), which may have also contributed to the increase in spikelet sterility as earlier referred by Kato and Hatsura (2014).

The results in Table 9 show different productivity between the cultivars, with IRGA 431 CL (7161±701 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) generally performing better than IRGA 424 RI (6305±1061 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>); nevertheless, these differences were not significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, there is evidence that IRGA 431 CL adapts better to aerobic conditions as the shoot and root growth pattern could be maintained similar to conditions when flooded irrigation was applied (results not shown). Furthermore, due to the high water and heat stress observed during the mid-season, the RF

treatment did not produce any yield in 2021/22 (Fig 6), likely because the panicle formation was heavily affected (R0 stage) and grain yield too.

No statistical differences were observed between the irrigation strategies (DI and AI) because both strategies were very similar in terms of daily average irrigation and soil water content (SWC) threshold. Similar findings were reported by Kadiyala et al. (2012). Yield in 2021/22 may also have been affected by the lack of rainfall at the R0 stage and consequent decrease in nitrate uptake from the third topdressing N fertilization performed at this stage. These results contrast with those reported by Aramburu et al. (2022) for the same cultivars under solid set sprinkler irrigation but keeping soil water content between saturation and field capacity, thus adopting a threshold higher than that of the current study.

On the one hand, the productivity obtained in our experiments compares well with the productivity reported under sprinkler irrigation in southern Brazil (Table 10), especially considering the 2022/23 growing season (Table 9). The better yield performance in the studies by Pinto et al. (2020) and Aramburu et al. (2022) can be related to soil and moisture conditions, as these studies were conducted on Typic Albaqualf soils (Soil Survey Staff 2022), and soil moisture was maintained near saturation. The results are also in the range of those reported by Clerget et al. (2014) under monsoon climate conditions, but significantly higher than yields reported by Alberto et al. (2014), also in a monsoon climate zone. Likely, considering results in literature, the adopted SWC threshold in the current study was low. As shown in Table 10, AWD irrigation performed better than sprinkler irrigation on the hydromorphic soils in southern Brazil. Nevertheless, Carracelas et al. (2019) reported a productivity similar to ours when adopting the AWD method in hydromorphic soils. These conflicting results could be related to factors such as weed and disease control and nutrient availability under aerobic rice. These differences may be related to the use of rice cultivars that are not well adapted to aerobic conditions (Farooq et al. 2023). According to Kato et al. (2006), the use of rice cultivars adapted to flood irrigation under aerobic conditions in tropical/subtropical climate zones leads to lower yields than in temperate climate zones.

The results show that the rice grain yield was in the range of the one farmer's traditional flooding systems in Brazil and Uruguay obtain, i.e., around 8,000 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> (CONAB, 2023). Even in non-tropical environments, the yield differences from aerobic rice to AWD and CF systems reported in the literature are relatively small compared to the results obtained in the current study.

Disagreements can be observed when comparing the irrigation water productivity (WP<sub>Irr</sub>) with water use productivity (WP<sub>WU</sub>) obtained in our study with the results in the literature for

rice under sprinkler irrigation. The lower  $WP_{Irr}$  in our research, compared to those reported by Pinto et al. (2020) and by Aramburu et al. (2022), may be related to soil hydraulic characteristics and less to irrigation management. Standing water was not observed in our study due to the median texture of the topsoil. This is in contrast to the studies in which soil moisture was kept near saturation and the soil is typically hydromorphic, as in the studies cited above.

Compared to the AWD, the  $WP_{Irr}$  for sprinkler irrigation in our study was similar to that reported by Carracelas et al. (2019) in Uruguay (Table 10) but slightly higher than the values reported by Borja Reis et al. (2018) for the Brazilian lowland savannah. Among CF cases, Avila et al. (2015) found similar  $WP_{Irr}$  in the same environment as ours but on a hydromorphic soil. Because irrigation depth varied minimally with sprinkler and AWD (Table 10), better  $WP_{Irr}$  values are attributed to higher grain yield rather than to water, suggesting that other agronomic practices besides mulched soil, also need to be employed to keep well-drained upland. Some factors to improve farmer's crop yield through sprinkler irrigation are cultivars, that should be adapted to aerobic conditions, early sowing (i.e., from mid-October in southern Brazil), better planting density (Carracelas et al. 2023) and a higher irrigation threshold. Other examples for CF presented in Table 10 show lower  $WP_{Irr}$ , mainly because very large water depths were used.

A comparison of the results of the  $WP_{WU}$  with some studies in the literature shows that the values are close by, with the exception of the high  $WP_{WU}$  reported by Pinto et al. (2020) and Aramburu et al. (2022), which rank among the 10% highest yields for lowland areas in Rio Grande do Sul state. A lower  $WP_{WU}$  is reported for CF, indicating that high water use is traditional in flooded rice cropping systems. The total water input in our research (irrigation + precipitation) was approximately 10,000 m<sup>3</sup>, while in the comparative studies with CF (Table 10), the total water use averaged 17,000 m<sup>3</sup>. The total water input under CF varied between 11,700 and 14,300 m<sup>3</sup> in southern Brazil (Avila et al. 2015) and between 13,000 and 21,000 m<sup>3</sup> in Uruguay (Carracelas et al. 2019), all much above the one in the current study.

**Table 10** Literature reported studies developed for rice under different irrigation methods with corresponding reported on grain yield, seasonal irrigation water input and irrigation water productivity ( $WP_{IRRI}$ ).

(continua)

Local	Irrigation System	Grain Yield Irr (kg ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Irr (mm)	P <sub>n</sub> (mm)	WP <sub>IRRI</sub> (kg m <sup>-3</sup> )	WP <sub>WU</sub> (kg m <sup>-3</sup> )	Authors
Santa Maria, RS, Brazil	Sprinkler	7610 (DI)	523	535	1.46	0.72	Current study
		7226 (AI)	482	535	1.50	0.71	
Capão do Leão, RS, Brazil	Sprinkler	8811	300	385	2.94	1.30	Pinto et al. (2020)
Santa Maria, RS, Brazil	Sprinkler	9821	413	572	2.38	1.00	Aramburu et al. (2022)



**Table 10** Literature reported studies developed for rice under different irrigation methods with corresponding reported on grain yield, seasonal irrigation water input and irrigation water productivity (WPIRRI).

							(conclusão)
Santa Maria, <b>RS</b> , Brazil	Flooded	8657	616	710	1.41	0.65	Ávila et al. (2015)
Santa Maria, RS, Brazil	Flooded	12188	787	572	1.55	0.90	Aramburu et al. (2022)
Santa Maria, RS, Brazil	AWD	8584	385	710	2.23	0.78	Ávila et al. (2015)
Santa Maria, RS, Brazil	AWD	12142	570	572	2.13	1.06	Aramburu et al. (2022)
Lagoa da Confusão, TO, Brazil	Flooded	8667	1267	1070	0.68	0.37	Borja Reis et al. (2018)
	AWD	8500	825	1070	1.03	0.45	
Los Baños, Phillipines	Sprinkler	5300	600	601	0.88	0.44	Alberto et al. 2014
Los Baños, Phillipines	Sprinkler	7570	855	370	0.89	0.62	Clerget et al. (2014)
Uruguay	Flooded	9191	1133	565	0.81	0.54	Carracelas et al. (2019)
	AWD	7855	683	565	1.15	0.63	

Notes: I<sub>ri</sub> = irrigation depth; P<sub>n</sub> = effective precipitation; WP<sub>IRRI</sub> = irrigation water productivity; WP<sub>WU</sub> = water use productivity.

Other alternatives, such as AWD, may bring better results. However, this technique requires farmers to have good knowledge about how to operate this system and a lot more manpower, which availability is decreasing in rural areas. AWD and CF are critical in soil preparation prior to planting and may cause severe damage to soil physical and hydraulic properties, as reported by Parfitt et al. (2017) and Goulart et al. (2020). Additionally, more energy and mechanization are required for lowland areas used for rice, which are not naturally flat but require laser levelling. Alternatively, sprinkler irrigation can increase crop yield using cultivars better adapted to aerobic conditions, adjusting plant density, sowing dates and adopting an improved irrigation threshold.

## 5. Conclusions

The results of this first application of the FAO dual crop coefficient approach to aerobic rice to assess crop evapotranspiration and water use revealed appropriate. The sprinkler irrigation treatments were established aiming to maintain soil moisture close or above to field capacity but the experiment failed in this theme. A rainfed treatment was also implemented. Independent soil moisture data sets were used to calibrate and validate the soil water balance SIMDualK<sub>c</sub> model and to derive both the actual dual and single crop coefficients (K<sub>cb act</sub> and K<sub>c act</sub>). The model, after proper calibration, showed high accuracy in simulating ASW for all treatments in the three experimental seasons, and can further be used to support decision-making in irrigation scheduling.

The standard  $K_{cb}$  values were 0.15, 1.10 and 0.85, for the initial, mid and end-season, respectively. The  $K_{cb}$  values were derived from the calibration of the SWB model SIMDualKc against field measured SWC. The  $K_{c\ act}$  values for sprinkler irrigated rice were higher than for the rainfed rice with large differences observed in the mid-season stage ( $K_{c\ act\ mid} = 1.13$  vs 0.82). The use of mulch from crop residues was able to control soil evaporation with  $E_s$  accounting for approximately 20% of the ET in the irrigated treatments. Differently, in the rainfed treatment,  $E_s$  increased to 24-30% of  $ET_{c\ act}$ , which was due to lower crop development, thus to a much lower fraction of ground cover and plant height. The rainfed rice yielded very poorly, thus allowing to conclude that this strategy should not be adopted by farmers.

Grain yield decreased by 23% compared to the average rice crop yield under flooding in southern Brazil, possibly due to not adopting aerobic cultivars, lower temperatures during microsporogenesis and changes caused by aerobic conditions, particularly in N uptake. Further research should investigate N management under sprinkler irrigation.

Water saving of up to 40% maybe achieved when using sprinkler irrigation. Water lost by RO was low and may be reduced with care in bunds construction and maintenance and precise land levelling. Deep percolation was also well controlled because irrigation rates were small. The mulch positively impacted water-saving, as soil evaporation was low throughout the growing season. The  $WP_{Irr}$ , ranging 1.07 kg m<sup>3</sup> to 1.68 kg m<sup>3</sup>, was slightly higher than the ranges reported in the literature, apart from the high-yielding rice systems in laser-leveled hydromorphic lowland areas in southern Brazil. However, when considering the total water use by precipitation and irrigation,  $WP_{WU}$  was within the range of results reported for sprinkler and AWD but higher than for rice cultivated under CF.

Despite the high-water savings achieved in our study, future research should address crop and soil management practices to improve aerobic rice yield, namely the use of cultivars adapted to aerobic conditions, improving fertility management, and liming. In addition, studies should focus on the effectiveness of the aerobic rice production system in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which could lead to mitigate impacts of climate change, as well as other agronomic practices that could improve the sustainability of this new rice agroecosystem. A main issue is to carefully assess the best soil moisture threshold and irrigation depths. Moreover, it is also required to assess the strategies using the economic water productivity ratio as indicator, thus considering the full costs of production and the full value of yields, i.e., allowing to perceive the economic viability of each strategy.

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#### **4. CAPÍTULO II - PARÂMETROS DE CRESCIMENTO, PRODUTIVIDADE E ANÁLISE ECONÔMICA DO ARROZ IRRIGADO POR ASPERSÃO**

#### **GROWTH PARAMETERS, PRODUCTIVITY AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF SPRINKLER IRRIGATED RICE**

**(Paper submitted to Revista Ciência Agronômica)**

**RESUMO** - A avaliação da viabilidade econômica do arroz irrigado por aspersão é importante para a tomada de decisão mais assertiva, de forma a obter o maior custo-benefício desse sistema, o que inclui a avaliação da adaptabilidade, rendimento de grãos e de engenho do arroz. O objetivo desse estudo foi o de avaliar os parâmetros de crescimento, da viabilidade econômica, da produtividade da água e da qualidade de grãos do arroz irrigado por aspersão. O experimento foi conduzido à campo na Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (UFSM), em Santa Maria/RS. O delineamento experimental utilizado foi de blocos ao acaso, bifatorial em faixas, com 4 repetições. O fator A representou três manejos de irrigação (irrigação diária, alternada e sem irrigação) e o fator B foi constituído de duas cultivares de arroz (IRGA 424 RI e IRGA 431 CL). Parâmetros morfológicos da cultura foram avaliados ao longo do ciclo da cultura. O custo operacional foi calculado de acordo com a média da região, enquanto o custo da irrigação incluiu o custo da aplicação da lâmina e a manutenção do sistema. A irrigação por aspersão aumenta a eficiência do uso da água, contudo reduz o acúmulo de matéria seca. A cultivar IRGA 431 CL destaca-se por reduzir o uso de água e melhorar a produtividade da água de irrigação sem afetar a produtividade de grãos, enquanto a IRGA 424 RI mostra maior produtividade e lucro com irrigação diária.

**Palavras-chave:** Terras altas. Sustentabilidade. Uso da água. Qualidade de grãos. Balanço agrícola.

**ABSTRACT** - Evaluating the economic viability of sprinkler-irrigated rice is important for more assertive decision-making in order to obtain the greatest cost-benefit from this system, which includes evaluating the adaptability, grain yield and yield of the rice. The aim of this study was to evaluate the growth parameters, economic viability, water productivity and grain quality of sprinkler-irrigated rice. The experiment was conducted in the field at Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (UFSM) in Santa Maria/RS. The experimental design used was a randomized block design, with four replications. Factor A represented three irrigation managements (daily irrigation, alternating irrigation and no irrigation) and factor B consisted of two rice cultivars (IRGA 424 RI and IRGA 431 CL). Morphological parameters of the crop

were assessed throughout the crop cycle. The operating cost was calculated according to the average for the region, while the cost of irrigation included the cost of applying the blade and maintaining the system. Sprinkler irrigation increases water use efficiency, but reduces dry matter accumulation. The IRGA 431 CL cultivar stands out for reducing water use and improving irrigation water productivity without affecting grain yield, while IRGA 424 RI shows greater productivity and profit with daily irrigation.

**Key words:** Highlands. Sustainability. Water use. Grain quality. Agricultural balance.

## 1 INTRODUÇÃO

O Brasil cultivou 1479,6 mil hectares de arroz na safra de 2022/23, sendo 303 mil hectares de sequeiro (CONAB, 2023). Este tipo de cultivo apresenta baixa produtividade em comparação ao arroz irrigado por inundação, pois geralmente é cultivado em áreas recém abertas, sobretudo no Cerrado (LACERDA e NASCENTE, 2021) e o atendimento de sua demanda hídrica é dependente das precipitações que ocorrem ao longo do ciclo de cultivo (FUKAI, MIRTHELL, 2022). Na Fronteira Oeste no estado do Rio Grande do Sul muitos produtores estão adotando o método de irrigação por aspersão no cultivo de arroz, sendo denominado também de arroz aeróbico. A prática de aspersão no cultivo de arroz necessita ser avaliada do ponto de vista do crescimento da planta, da produtividade e do retorno econômico.

Aumentar a produção de grãos e manter a sua qualidade, reduzindo ao mesmo tempo a quantidade de água utilizada, são grandes desafios para o setor orizícola em todo o mundo. Assim, produtores estão sendo desafiados a adotarem práticas de irrigação que reduzam o consumo da água, como o cultivo do arroz aeróbico, e manter a rentabilidade por volume de água utilizado (CHAMPNESS et al., 2023). A aspersão se torna um método interessante em áreas não sistematizadas e/ou com declividade superior a 2% (PARFITT et al., 2017). Segundo PINTO et al., 2016 o método de irrigação por aspersão busca atender à necessidade hídrica da cultura do arroz e diminuir as perdas que ocorrem no método por inundação. Em estudos conduzidos com aspersão, Pinto et al. (2018) observaram redução no uso de água entre 18 e 35% e também, que a umidade deve ser mantida próxima a capacidade de campo. Em pesquisas conduzidas em arroz sob aspersão, Scivittaro e Parfitt (2017) indicam uma redução de 40% no uso da água em relação à inundação. Assim, a irrigação por aspersão economiza água e pode ser um método capaz de ser adotado pelos produtores.

Uma das formas de validar a adoção da irrigação por aspersão é estimar a produtividade da água, avaliação econômica e da renda de engenho. Várias pesquisas têm avaliado a produtividade da água para diferentes manejos de irrigação utilizados na cultura do arroz, entre eles o de irrigação contínua, irrigação intermitente e irrigação por molhamento e secamento alternado (ALBERTO et al., 2020).

A utilização da aspersão é destacada por Stevans et al. (2012), que ressaltam a introdução desse sistema em áreas não tão apropriadas para o uso da inundação, ou que exijam elevado uso de máquina e trabalho para a construção de curvas de nível e manejo da água nessas condições. Com relação ao rendimento de grãos, o arroz pode ser produzido também em áreas de terras altas, sem inundação, com rendimentos condizentes com aqueles de terras baixas

(VORIES et al., 2013). No entanto, faz-se necessário realizar estudos abordando a viabilidade econômica da irrigação por aspersão em ambiente de terras altas.

A contabilidade de custos é uma técnica para identificar, aferir os custos dos produtos e/ou serviços de forma precisa para que se possa tomar uma decisão. Além dos custos de produção refletirem o processo decisório do produtor, a eficiência econômica e a gestão do empreendimento, também são indicadores relevantes do sucesso da atividade rural, pois quanto menor o custo de produção, maior será a rentabilidade do produtor (SANTOS, 2017).

Os custos da irrigação por aspersão são relacionados aos custos de bombeamento, somado ao custo da água e manutenção dos equipamentos, para sistemas de irrigação já instalados (TURCO et al., 2009). No Brasil, não há tarifação da água para irrigação, resumindo o custo para irrigar em gasto realizado para a aplicação da lâmina e manutenção dos equipamentos utilizados no sistema. De acordo com Almeida (2019), a energia elétrica consumida em sistemas de irrigação por pivô central está atrelada ao bombeamento e ao acionamento dos motores elétricos das torres. Este custo é variável conforme a demanda contratada, as taxas referentes ao uso do sistema, a bandeira tarifária e os impostos Estaduais e Federais. Além disso, no custo de produção incidem os custos com fertilizantes, máquinas agrícolas, benfeitorias, operações agrícolas, consumo de combustível, impostos, licenças e agroquímicos.

Portanto, o estudo dos fatores econômicos do sistema de produção é importante para demonstrar a viabilidade econômica de uma prática adotada em uma propriedade. Assim, o presente estudo teve como objetivo avaliar os parâmetros de crescimento, produtividade de grãos e da água e a viabilidade econômica do cultivo de arroz irrigado por aspersão.

## **2 MATERIAL E MÉTODOS**

O experimento foi conduzido à campo nos anos agrícolas de 2020/2021 e 2021/2022, em área experimental do Sistema Irriga na Universidade Federal de Santa Maria, Santa Maria - RS, situada em Latitude de 29°41'24" S e Longitude de 53°48'42" W com altitude de 105 m. O clima da região é do tipo "Cfa" subtropical úmido, sem estação seca definida e com verões secos, segundo classificação de Köppen-Geiger (KOTTEK et al., 2006). O solo é classificado como Argissolo Vermelho Distrófico arênico (EMBRAPA, 2006).

### **2.1 DELINEAMENTO EXPERIMENTAL**

O delineamento experimental utilizado foi um esquema bifatorial 3x2, em faixas, com

quatro repetições, em parcelas com dimensão de 4,10 m x 12 m. Foram testados três tratamentos de irrigação: (i) irrigações brutas diárias de ~ 8 mm; (ii) irrigações brutas alternadas de ~16 mm, visando manter conteúdo de água no solo próximo da capacidade de campo e; (iii) sem irrigação. As irrigações eram realizadas quando ocorriam precipitações. As cultivares de arroz utilizadas foram a IRGA-431 CL e IRGA-424 RI.

A semeadura ocorreu aos sete e doze dias do mês de novembro de 2020 e de 2021, respectivamente, na densidade 112 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> de sementes, para ambas as cultivares, em espaçamento de 0,17 m entre linhas. A adubação de base foi conforme indicação da análise de solo e a de cobertura foi de um total de 160 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> de nitrogênio, sendo dividida em 90 kg de N ha<sup>-1</sup> aplicados no início do perfilhamento (estádio V3), 40 kg de N ha<sup>-1</sup> no estágio V6 e 30 kg de N ha<sup>-1</sup> na diferenciação da panícula (estádio R1). Foram aplicados 300 kg da fórmula 5-20-20 por hectare. Os demais tratamentos culturais foram realizados conforme as recomendações técnicas da pesquisa (SOSBAI, 2018). As irrigações foram realizadas por um sistema de aspersão convencional. As lâminas de irrigação aplicadas no experimento foram utilizadas para estimar o custo de irrigação com a utilização do equipamento pivô central.

## 2.2 PARÂMETROS DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DA CULTURA

A altura de plantas foi determinada com uma régua graduada em cm, em forma de T medindo-se a partir do solo até o ápice do limbo foliar da folha bandeira no estágio R9. A área foliar foi determinada de forma destrutiva, a partir da coleta de cinco plantas por unidade experimental, medindo-se o comprimento e largura de cada folha da planta mãe nos estádios V6, V8 e R4, conforme os estádios descritos por Counce et al. (2000). O produto das medidas de seu comprimento e largura, multiplicadas pelo coeficiente de 0,75 (CARLESSO et al., 1998). O índice de área foliar (IAF) foi calculado pela razão entre a AF de cada planta pela superfície ocupada pela mesma planta.

As plantas coletadas para o IAF foram utilizadas para a determinação da massa seca de raízes e da massa seca de parte aérea. Estas plantas foram pesadas e acondicionadas em sacos de papel, posteriormente levadas para estufa de circulação forçada de ar, a uma temperatura de 65°C por um período de 72 horas.

## 2.3 PRODUTIVIDADE E QUALIDADE DE GRÃOS

A colheita foi realizada de forma manual em ambas as safras, 7 de abril de 2021 (ano I) e 14 de abril de 2022 (ano II), onde colheu-se 2,55 m<sup>2</sup> de cada parcela experimental e com isto

a produtividade de grãos foi determinada a partir do peso resultante desta dentro de cada parcela experimental.

O rendimento de engenho de grãos do arroz foi determinado através do beneficiamento de quatro amostras com 100 g de grãos de arroz em casca retirados de cada tratamento, as quais foram processadas em testadora de grãos de arroz da marca Zaccaria, modelo PAZ<sup>-1</sup>. Os grãos brunidos (polidos) foram pesados e o valor encontrado é considerado como rendimento de benefício, sendo estes resultados expressos em porcentagem. Os grãos brunidos foram colocados no *Trieur* e a separação dos grãos é processada por 30 segundos. Assim, os grãos que permaneceram no *Trieur* foram separados, no que resulta no rendimento de grãos inteiros, sendo os demais considerados como grãos quebrados e ambos expressos em porcentagem.

As frações de engenho avaliadas foram: grão inteiro, que é o grão descascado e polido que apresenta comprimento igual ou superior a três quartos do comprimento mínimo da classe que predomina; grão quebrado, que é o pedaço do grão de arroz descascado e polido que apresentar comprimento inferior a três quartos do comprimento mínimo da classe que predomina; renda do benefício: percentual de arroz beneficiado e polido, resultante do beneficiamento do arroz em casca.

## 2.4 ANÁLISE ECONÔMICA

A produtividade da água, também conhecido como eficiência de uso da água (WP, kg m<sup>-3</sup>) é definido como a razão entre o rendimento real ou atual (Ya) e a água utilizada em m<sup>3</sup> correspondente a essa produção. Ela pode ser analisada por três pontos de vista: produtividade total da água (WP<sub>T</sub>), produtividade da água de irrigação (WP<sub>irrig</sub>). Cada uma das frações da produtividade da água foi determinada pelas Equações a seguir:

$$WP_T = \frac{Ya}{TWU} \quad (1)$$

$$WP_{Irrig} = \frac{Ya}{IWU} \quad (2)$$

WP<sub>T</sub>= Produtividade da água total (Kg m<sup>-3</sup>), WP<sub>irrig</sub>= Produtividade da água de irrigação (Kg m<sup>-3</sup>), Ya= produtividade de grãos (Kg ha<sup>-1</sup>), TWU= total de água utilizada (m<sup>3</sup>), IWU= água de irrigação usada (m<sup>3</sup>). Os dados da lâmina total irrigada e precipitação durante o ciclo da cultura, nos dois anos de cultivo foram baixados da estação climatológica do INMET localizada na Universidade Federal de Santa Maria (UFSM).

Análise econômica foi estimada através da determinação da receita bruta e o lucro operacional da propriedade agrícola. Para isso foram levantadas os gastos e equipamentos

envolvidos no cultivo em R\$/hectare de arroz sob plantio direto, de acordo com o manejo realizado no experimento. O custo operacional da lavoura levou em consideração os gastos com combustível, corretivos, fertilizantes, agroquímicos, enquanto o custo da irrigação englobou a energia elétrica, e a quantidade de água aplicada.

A determinação do valor do litro do combustível foi realizada com base no levantamento da Agência Nacional de Agência Nacional do Petróleo, Gás Natural e Biocombustíveis, a partir dos dados de 2022 chegando-se ao valor de R\$5,52 reais. A cotação do arroz foi determinada através dos dados obtidos da base de dados do site do CEPEA- ESALQ no período de 01/01/2021 à 31/12/2022, a cotação determinada para o ano de 2021 foi de R\$80,25 reais e para 2022 foi de R\$78,78 reais.

Para a realização do estudo da viabilidade econômica da propriedade foram considerados as seguintes operações agrícolas (Tabela 1): depreciação de infraestrutura e maquinário, distribuição de calcário, passagem de rolo faca para manejo das plantas de cobertura, três aplicações de herbicida (uma antes do plantio, outra no ponto de agulha e em V3/V4), duas aplicações de fungicida e inseticida e a colheita. Os gastos de combustível em cada operação foram feitos com base em artigos científicos.

**Tabela 1** Custos com combustíveis, lubrificantes e peças para realização das operações agrícolas.

Operação	Combustível (litros)	R\$/ha
Rolo Faca	5,0	27,6
Pulverização	8,0	44,16
Plantio	12,8	70,66
Adubação de cobertura	8,07	44,54
Colheita	22,75	125,58
Lubrificantes e peças	45,02	45,02
	Total	357,56

Os custos com fertilizantes, sementes e agroquímicos foram baseados no manejo adotado na realização dos experimentos, estão descritos nas Tabelas 2 e 3 a seguir.



**Tabela 2** Custos com corretivos, fertilizantes e sementes.

Produto	R\$/unidade	R\$/ha
Calcário	110,00	550,00
Adubo (5-20-20)	81,50	489,00
Sementes IRGA 424 RI	125,00	312,20
Sementes IRGA 431 CL	138,00	386,40
Ureia comum	139,00	973,00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>R\$2710,60</b>

**Tabela 3** Custos com defensivos agrícolas.

Produto	Custo unitário (R\$)	Total por hectare (R\$/ha)
Óleo Mineral	18,00/litro	18,00
Glifosato	30,89/litro	185,34

(continua)

**Tabela 4** Custos com defensivos agrícolas

Produto	Custo unitário (R\$)	Total por hectare (R\$/ha)
Basagran 600	98,00/litro	117,60
Clincher	172,50/litro	258,75
Mancozebe	19,71/quilo	98,54
Engeo Pleno S	9,65/litro	5,8
<b>Total</b>		<b>R\$684,03</b>

(conclui)

## 2.5 CÁLCULO DO CUSTO DA ENERGIA ELÉTRICA

Foram considerados custos variáveis os gastos com energia elétrica para o bombeamento, a demanda energética do sistema de irrigação e o custo da lâmina irrigada. Os cálculos dos custos com energia elétrica foram realizados a partir da escolha de um pivô central, que possui uma área de 46,34 hectares, motor de 100 cvs e eficiência do motor 90%.

A demanda energética foi estimada através da Equação 3 (BISPO, 2009):

$$D(kWh) = \frac{(Pn * 0.736 * h * IC)}{\eta} \quad (3)$$

Onde D é demanda em kWh, Pn é potencial nominal em cv, h é horas de operação, IC é o índice de carregamento e  $\eta$  é a eficiência do motor (90%). Para motores elétricos em operações agrícolas se utiliza um IC de 75%.

Após a realização do cálculo, Equação 5, chegou-se à demanda de 61,33 kWh. Utilizou-se como referência o valor de demanda contratada descrito na Tabela 4 adaptada de Reis et al. (2021). Com estas informações chegou-se o valor para demanda contratada para uso do pivô central de R\$ 1343,13 para uso do pivô.

**Tabela 5** Valor de demanda contratada referente a empresa CPFL no ano 2021.

Período de consumo	Mês					
	Nov/20	Dez/20	Jan/21	Fev/21	Mar/21	Abr/21
	Demanda (kW)					
Fora de ponta	21,6	21,6	21,6	21,6	21,6	21,6
Ponta	71,4	90,3	95,9	121,5	115,5	122,5

A unidade consumidora foi classificada como sendo pertencente ao grupo A e ao subgrupo A4. Para a realização do custo tarifário adotou-se a bandeira tarifária verde e o posto tarifário Fora de Ponta.

Depois de calcular a demanda contratada foi determinado o consumo energético, para motores maiores que 25 cvs, do motor do pivô através da equação proposta por Carvalho (2000):

$$\text{Consumo (kWh)} = 2.64 + 0.8 * \text{potência}(cv) \quad (4)$$

Substituindo-se o valor da potência do motor na Equação 4 obteve-se o consumo de 82,64 kWh, este valor foi usado para o cálculo do gasto com energia elétrica para o funcionamento do pivô.

A seguir foi realizado o levantamento do custo energético com base em dados obtidos da ANEEL 2023 e em tarifa praticada pela concessionária RGE (CPFL) praticada no ano de 2023, apresentado na Tabela 5.

**Tabela 6** Tarifas incidentes na unidade consumidora para o Grupo A, subgrupo A4, para bandeira verde fora de ponta de acordo com a ANEEL e com a concessionária RGE do grupo CPFL em R\$/kWh.

Grupo	Subgrupo	Bandeira	Tributo	Valor
A	A4	Verde (FP)	TUSD	94,21
			TE	276,25
			ICMS	17%
			PIS/PASEP	1,12%
			COFINS	5,22%

Onde TSUD é a tarifa de uso do sistema de distribuição; TE é a taxa de energia; ICMS é o imposto sobre circulação de mercadorias e prestação de serviços; PIS é o imposto para o programa de integração social e COFINS é a contribuição para a seguridade social.

O custo com energia elétrica foi calculado com base nas Equações 5 e 6 (BARREDA, 2023):

$$TUSD = \left( \frac{\text{R\$}}{\text{kWh}} \right) = \left[ \frac{\text{Tarifa sem imposto}}{1 - (\text{PIS} + \text{COFINS})} \right] \frac{1}{1000} \quad (5)$$

$$TE = \left( \frac{\text{R\$}}{\text{kWh}} \right) = \left[ \frac{\text{Tarifa sem imposto}}{1 - (\text{PIS} + \text{COFINS}) \times (1 - \text{ICMS})} \right] \frac{1}{1000} \quad (6)$$

O valor de demanda contratada foi de R\$21,90 por kWh (Tabela 5). Com a soma dos resultados das Equações 5 e 6 chegou-se à tarifa de R\$ 0,46 por kWh. A determinação do gasto em kWh feito através da Equação:

$$\text{Custo energia} = t * \text{consumo} * \text{Taxa} \quad (7)$$

Onde: Custo com energia é o valor gasto pelo motor do conjunto moto-bomba para aplicar a lâmina bruta de irrigação; t = tempo gasto para aplicar a lâmina de irrigação; Consumo é o quanto o motor gasta em kWh para funcionar; Taxa é a taxa cobrada pela concessionária por kWh.

Após determinar o custo do consumo de conjunto moto-bomba somou-se ao custo da demanda contratada determinando-se o custo com energia mensal. Este valor foi dividido pela lâmina aplicada e determinou-se o valor gasto por mm irrigado. Também foi determinado o valor da demanda contratada dividido pelo número de irrigações resultando no valor da demanda por irrigação.

A receita bruta (RB) foi determinada pela multiplicação da produtividade em sacas por hectare e o valor de comercialização (VC) da saca (Equação 8). O Lucro operacional foi feito para um agricultor que utiliza apenas recursos próprios (sem financiamento), Equação 9, sendo calculado pela diferença entre o total de entradas e o Custo Total (CT). A cotação do arroz foi determinada através dos dados obtidos da base de dados do site do CEPEA- ESALQ no período de 01/01/2021 à 31/12/2022, a cotação determinada para o ano de 2021 foi de R\$ 80,25 reais e para 2022 foi de R\$ 78,78 reais.

$$RB = produtividade (scs ha^{-1}) * VC \quad (8)$$

$$LO = RB - CT \quad (9)$$

Onde RB é a receita bruta; VC é o valor comercial; LO é o lucro operacional; Custo total (CT) é o gasto total necessário para a realização de todas as atividades.

## 2.6 ANÁLISE ESTATÍSTICA

Os resultados obtidos para as diferentes variáveis repostas foram submetidos a análise da variância (teste F) e havendo significância será aplicado o teste Tukey, para a comparação de médias, ambos com 5% de probabilidade de erro, utilizando o software Sisvar.

## 3 RESULTADOS E DISCUSSÃO

### 3.1 INDICE DE ÁREA FOLIAR

Os valores de índice de área foliar pouco diferiram entre os manejos de irrigação para os dois anos de cultivo. Na Tabela 6 são apresentados os valores do índice de área foliar (IAF) nos estádios V6, V8 e R4.

**Tabela 7** Valores índice de área foliar (IAF) (m<sup>2</sup> m<sup>-2</sup>) referentes as cultivares IRGA 424 RI e IRGA 431 CL, durante os anos agrícolas de 2020/21 e 2021/22 em diferentes estratégias de manejo de irrigação (MI).

Safras	Manejo de irrigação	IAF (m <sup>2</sup> m <sup>-2</sup> )					
		IRGA 424 RI			IRGA 431 CL		
		V6	V8	R4	V6	V8	R4
2020/21	Diário	1.0 <sup>ns</sup> NS	3.5 <sup>ns</sup> A	8.8 <sup>ns</sup> A	1.1A	3.0A	8.6A
	Alternado	1.0 <sup>ns</sup>	2.9 <sup>ns</sup> A	8.2 <sup>ns</sup> B	1.2A	3.2A	9.7A
	Sequeiro	1.1 <sup>ns</sup>	1.6 <sup>ns</sup> B	5.8bC	0.9B	2.0B	7.4aB
	CV (%)	12.5	23.9	7.7	12.2	23.9	7.7
2021/22	Diário	0,96 <sup>ns</sup> NS	3,32 <sup>ns</sup> NS	8.57 <sup>ns</sup> NS	1,1NS	2,97NS	8.77NS
	Alternado	0,94 <sup>ns</sup>	3,36 <sup>ns</sup>	8.12b	1,12	3,11	9.23a
	Sequeiro	-	-	-	-	-	-
	CV (%)	14,67	23.99	5,92	14,09	23.99	5,92

\*Médias seguidas de mesma letra não diferem entre si pelo teste de Tukey em nível de significância 5% de probabilidade de erro. NS e ns: Não significativo pelo teste de Tukey ( $p < 0,05$ ). Médias seguidas de mesma letra maiúscula para as estratégias de irrigação e minúsculas entre as cultivares (horizontal) não diferem entre si pelo teste Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro.

Não se observou diferenças estatísticas nos manejos de irrigação para o IAF entre as cultivares nos estádios V6, V8 e R4, já no manejo de irrigação em sequeiro no estádio R4 a

cultivar IRGA 431 CL apresentou maior IAF. Alvarez et al. (2012) encontraram IAF máximo de  $5,8 \text{ m}^2 \text{ m}^{-2}$  aos 83 DAE para as cultivares adaptadas ao sequeiro (Caiapó e BRS Primavera). Menezes et al. 2021, encontraram um IAF máximo de  $9,4 \text{ m}^2 \text{ m}^{-2}$  para a cultivar IRGA 424 RI sob inundação contínua (IC). No estágio R4, em 2021/22, observou-se um IAF 11,9% maior para a IRGA 431 CL na irrigação alternada (IA),  $9,32 \text{ m}^2 \text{ m}^{-2}$ , em relação a IRGA 424 RI,  $8,21 \text{ m}^2 \text{ m}^{-2}$ , indicando uma maior plasticidade dessa cultivar, tanto para o manejo alternado de irrigação, como para o estresse hídrico severo. O menor índice de área foliar do tratamento sequeiro no estágio R4 se deve ao menor crescimento das plantas, isto ocorreu devido a ausência ou baixos volumes pluviais até a metade do ciclo. Isto foi observado por Nguyen et al. (2009), indicando que o arroz é extremamente sensível à pequenas reduções na umidade do solo.

### 3.3 MASSA SECA DA PARTE AÉREA

Na tabela 7 são apresentadas a massa seca da parte aérea de plantas para as duas cultivares avaliadas, nos estádios V6, V8 e R4 para os diferentes manejos de irrigação, nos dois anos de cultivo.

**Tabela 8** Massa seca da parte aérea (g planta<sup>-1</sup>) nos estádios V6, V8, R4 das cultivares IRGA 424 RI e IRGA 431 CL nas safras 2020/21 e 2021/22.

Safras	Manejo de irrigação	Massa Seca da parte aérea (g planta <sup>-1</sup> )					
		IRGA 424 RI			IRGA 431 CL		
		V6	V8	R4	V6	V8	R4
2020/21	Diário	0.69 <sup>ns</sup> NS	1.2 <sup>ns</sup>	3.4aA	0.72NS	1.63A	2.7bA
	Alternado	0.71 <sup>ns</sup>	1.3 <sup>ns</sup>	3.5aA	0.68	1.5AB	2.5bA
	Sequeiro	0.67 <sup>ns</sup>	0.9 <sup>ns</sup>	1.1 <sup>ns</sup> B	0.70	1.0B	1.2B
	CV (%)	2.6	24.8	10.8	2.6	24.8	10.8
2021/22	Diário	0.84 <sup>ns</sup> NS	1.86 <sup>ns</sup> A	4,00 <sup>ns</sup> NS	0.86NS	1.78A	3.83NS
	Alternado	0.85 <sup>ns</sup>	1.94 <sup>ns</sup> A	3.68 <sup>ns</sup>	0.84	1.77A	3.60
	Sequeiro	0,83 <sup>ns</sup>	1,04 <sup>ns</sup> B	-	0,81	0,94B	-
	CV (%)	2.71	18,44	7,74	2,71	18,44	7,74

\*Médias seguidas de mesma letra não diferem entre si pelo teste de Tukey em nível de significância 5% de probabilidade de erro. NS e ns: Não significativo pelo teste de Tukey ( $p < 0,05$ ). Médias seguidas de mesma letra maiúscula para as estratégias de irrigação e minúsculas entre as cultivares (horizontal) não diferem entre si pelo teste Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro.

A massa seca da parte aérea (MS) não diferiu entre os tratamentos irrigados e cultivares, no ano de 2020/21. No ano agrícola 2021/22, a cultivar IRGA 424 RI teve maior massa seca (MS) da parte aérea em R4, em relação a cultivar IRGA 431 CL, o que está relacionado ao maior IAF e altura de plantas. A MS da parte aérea em R4 para o tratamento de sequeiro foi

menos de 30% da MS da parte aérea de plantas irrigadas. Crusciol et al. (2012) obteve uma produção média de 2,34 g planta<sup>-1</sup> de massa seca da parte aérea em cultivo de plantas de arroz em vaso, muito próximo ao observado na Tabela 7 no estádio R4. Oh-e et al. (2007) observaram um valor médio de 2,43 e 1,7 g planta<sup>-1</sup> no florescimento, em dois anos consecutivos de observações, valores que se aproximam dos aqui verificados, sobretudo no ano 2020/21. Aramburu et al. (2022) observaram para o cultivo de arroz sob aspersão em várzea no estádio R4 valores em torno de 2,96 g planta<sup>-1</sup> próximos aos da Tabela 7, em arroz sob aspersão em terras baixas, mantendo a umidade do solo próximo a saturação. As plantas de arroz cultivadas sob aspersão apresentaram crescimento semelhante ao observado em outros trabalhos.

### 3.4 MASSA SECA DE RAÍZES

A massa seca de raízes nos estádios iniciais V6 e V8 não diferiram entre os manejos de irrigação e cultivares e estão apresentadas na Tabela 8.

**Tabela 9** Massa seca de raízes (g. planta<sup>-1</sup>) das cultivares de arroz irrigado IRGA 424 RI e IRGA 431 CL nos anos agrícolas 2020/21 e 2021/22.

2020/21						
IRGA 424 RI			IRGA 431 CL			
	V6	V8	R4	V6	V8	R4
g planta <sup>-1</sup>						
Sequeiro	0,58 <sup>ns</sup>	0,76 <sup>ns</sup>	0,74 <sup>nsB</sup>	0,58 <sup>ns</sup>	1,10	0,90 <sup>B</sup>
Alternado	0,57 <sup>ns</sup>	0,82 <sup>ns</sup>	1,28 <sup>bA</sup>	0,60	1,03	1,67 <sup>aA</sup>
Diário	0,65 <sup>ns</sup>	0,76 <sup>ns</sup>	1,49 <sup>nsA</sup>	0,60	1,06	1,39 <sup>A</sup>
CV%	9,49	26,04	14,11	9,49	26,04	14,11
2021/22						
IRGA 424 RI			IRGA 431 CL			
	V6	V8	R4	V6	V8	R4
g planta <sup>-1</sup>						
Sequeiro	0,64 <sup>ns</sup>	1,08 <sup>ns</sup>	0,72 <sup>nsB</sup>	0,69 <sup>ns</sup>	1,02 <sup>ns</sup>	0,87 <sup>B</sup>
Alternado	0,61 <sup>ns</sup>	1,17 <sup>ns</sup>	1,24 <sup>bA</sup>	0,64	1,09	1,66 <sup>aA</sup>
Diário	0,61 <sup>ns</sup>	1,09 <sup>ns</sup>	1,45 <sup>nsA</sup>	0,61	1,20	1,40 <sup>A</sup>
CV%	9,44	21,39	14,11	2,47	19,05	9,27

\*Médias seguidas de mesma letra não diferem entre si pelo teste de Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro. NS e ns: Não significativo pelo teste de Tukey ( $p < 0,05$ ). Médias seguidas de mesma letra maiúscula na coluna e minúscula na linha (cultivares) não diferem entre si pelo teste Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro.

A massa seca de raízes nos estádios iniciais V6 e V8 não diferiram entre os manejos de irrigação e cultivares (Tabela 8). Essa não diferenciação ocorreu porque os dois manejos de

irrigação proporcionaram um fornecimento adequado de água, corroborando com os resultados de Jiang et al. (2022), que não verificaram diferenças entre o número de raízes aos 45 dias após a semeadura entre o arroz inundado e o arroz de sequeiro. No estágio R4, houve diferença entre os tratamentos irrigados (ID e IA) e o tratamento sequeiro. Nesta fase a planta está mais dependente das condições hídricas e da ausência de precipitação pluviométrica, correspondente a fase de maior consumo de água. Estas condições resultam em menor crescimento da parte aérea e do sistema radicular no tratamento sequeiro. Aramburu et al. (2022) observaram 1,49 g. planta<sup>-1</sup> de massa seca de raízes em R4 em irrigação por aspersão no ambiente de várzea, valores esses muito próximos aos observados neste estudo. Holzschuh et al. (2009) obtiveram massa seca de raízes de 0,69 g planta<sup>-1</sup> aos 38 DAE (equivalente ao estágio V6) para a cultivar IRGA 417 o que corrobora com os observados neste experimento e para o mesmo estágio na safra 2021/2022.

### 3.5 PRODUTIVIDADE DE GRÃOS, PRODUTIVIDADE DA ÁGUA E PRODUTIVIDADE DA ÁGUA IRRIGADA

A produtividade de grãos, produtividade da água e produtividade da água irrigada, para as duas cultivares e dois anos agrícolas são apresentados na Tabela 9.

**Tabela 10** Rendimento de grãos (Kg ha<sup>-1</sup>), lâmina bruta irrigada (mm), precipitação, produtividade da água (WP) e da água irrigada (WP<sub>IRRI</sub>), para duas cultivares de arroz em dois anos agrícolas.

Estratégias de irrigação	Rendimento de grãos (Kg ha <sup>-1</sup> )		Irrigação (mm)	Precipitação (mm)	WP (Kg m <sup>-3</sup> )		WP <sub>IRRI</sub> (Kg m <sup>-3</sup> )	
	IRGA	IRGA			IRGA	IRGA	IRGA	IRGA
Cultivar	IRGA	IRGA			IRGA	IRGA	IRGA	IRGA
	424 RI	431 CL			424 RI	431 CL	424 RI	431 CL
2020/21								
Diário	7616aA	8025aA	532	484	0.79	0.75	1.51	1.43
Alternado	6502bB	7407aA	490	484	0.67	0.76	1.33	1.47
Sequeiro	518cC	744cB	0	484	0.10	0.15	0	0
2021/22								
Diário	6041aA	6452aA	514	585	0.38	0.54	0.83	1.15
Alternado	5060aA	6758aA	474	585	0.56	0.58	1.25	1.30
Sequeiro	0	0	484	585	0	0	0	0

\*Médias seguidas de mesma letra não diferem entre si pelo teste de Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro. NS e ns: Não significativo pelo teste de Tukey (p < 0,05). Médias seguidas de mesma letra maiúscula na coluna e minúscula na linha (cultivares) não diferem entre si pelo teste Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro.

Os resultados mostram que o maior rendimento de grãos foi obtido durante a safra 2020/21 em torno de 8.000 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> para a cultivar IRGA 431 CL com a irrigação diária, no ano

mais seco durante os dois anos de experimento a campo (Tabela 9), o que está provavelmente associado a melhores condições ambientais.

O rendimento no sequeiro foi afetado pelo déficit hídrico, uma vez que, o total de precipitações foi insuficiente para atender o requerimento hídrico durante o ciclo (>1016 mm). As condições climáticas também podem ter contribuído para não se atingir o rendimento potencial do arroz. Segundo o CONGRESSO BRASILEIRO de ARROZ IRRIGADO, 2005 o arroz irrigado demanda hídrica varia de 1037 a 1728 mm. O rendimento de grãos foi menor no ano de 2021/22; embora o total de precipitações foi maior nessa safra, a má distribuição impactou o rendimento, principalmente do arroz de sequeiro. A lâmina de água aplicada, tanto no manejo ID como no IA, juntamente com a menor ocorrência e distribuição irregular das precipitações (< 60 mm até o início da fase intermediária). A ocorrência de temperaturas elevadas no estádio da antese durante esse ano agrícola também pode ter afetado o rendimento. A produção de grãos apresentada na tabela 10 foi semelhante aos 5900 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> reportados por Clerget et al. (2016). Entretanto, sob aspersão (convencional) Aramburu et al. (2022) observaram 9000 kg ha<sup>-1</sup> rendimentos superiores, o que pode estar relacionado às características do terreno e um limiar de umidade no solo superior ao utilizado no atual estudo.

Tanto a WP e WP<sub>IRRI</sub> foram maiores no ano de 2020/21. Menores valores de WP e WP<sub>IRRI</sub> em 2021/22 estão relacionados ao menor rendimento obtido nesse ano. A menor WP obtida no sequeiro deve-se ao rendimento, muito inferior aos tratamentos irrigados. A WP<sub>IRRI</sub> foi superior a WP, em ambos os anos agrícolas, indicando um incremento de 50% no rendimento por m<sup>3</sup> de água aplicada via irrigação. Os resultados evidenciam que, em anos de baixa precipitação, tanto a WP como a WP<sub>IRRI</sub> podem ser potencializadas, desde que a demanda hídrica da cultura seja atendida, sobretudo nos estádios mais críticos ao déficit. Resultados semelhantes foram encontrados por Carrelhas et al. (2019), que obtiveram WP com irrigação intermitente (aeróbico) entre 0,71 kg/m<sup>3</sup> 0,62 kg/m<sup>3</sup> usando o sistema de molhamento e secagem alternada, observaram 33% de economia de água em relação a IC, entretanto, a redução no rendimento foi da ordem de 15%. No mesmo estudo, os autores encontraram aumento na WP<sub>IRRI</sub> variando entre 23 e 68%, quando menores alturas de lâmina foram aplicadas em diferentes fases do ciclo.

### 3.5 RENDA DE ENGENHO

O rendimento de engenho para as diferentes estratégias de irrigação, em dois anos agrícolas, é apresentado na Tabela 10.



**Tabela 11** Tabela da percentagem de renda de benefício, percentual de grãos inteiros e percentual de grãos quebrados nos anos agrícolas 2020/21 e 2021/22.

Manejo	IRGA 424 RI			IRGA 431 CL		
	Benefício (%)	Inteiros (%)	Quebrados (%)	Benefício (%)	Inteiros (%)	Quebrados (%)
2020/2021						
Diário	71,0 NS ns	64,9 NS ns	6,1 NS ns	70,8 NS	65,2 NS	5,6 NS
Alternado	70,0 ns	64,0 ns	6,0 ns	69,8	63,9	5,95
CV (%)	2,75	3,42	11,37	2,75	3,42	11,37
2021/2022						
Diário	68,35 B b	62,48 NS b	5,5 NS ns	70,47 NS a	64,22 NS a	6,25 NS
Alternado	69,3 A ns	63,0 ns	6,25 ns	69,85	63,62	6,22
CV (%)	2,64	1,31	11,91	2,64	1,31	11,91

\*Médias seguidas de mesma letra não diferem entre si pelo teste de Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro. NS e ns: Não significativo pelo teste de Tukey ( $p < 0,05$ ). Médias seguidas de mesma letra maiúscula na coluna e minúsculas na linha não diferem entre si pelo teste Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro.

Não se observou diferença para as duas estratégias de irrigação e cultivares entre a renda de benefício (grãos inteiros e grãos quebrados), no ano agrícola 2020/21. Em 2021/22, entretanto, a renda de benefício foi afetada pelos manejos de irrigação para a cultivar IRGA 424 RI. A cultivar IRGA 431 CL se mostrou superior em comparação a cultivar IRGA 424 RI, estes resultados corroboram com Müller et al. (2021) que verificaram um maior percentual de grãos inteiros e de renda na cultivar IRGA 431 CL em comparação a cultivar IRGA 424 RI. De acordo NASCIMENTO et al., 2022 a produção de arroz sob irrigação por pivô central em seu estudo apresentou rendimento de 67% de grãos inteiros no ano 2012/13 e 74% de grãos inteiros no ano 2013/14, resultados esses que corroboram os do atual estudo, para os manejos diário e alternado.

### 3.6 CUSTO OPERACIONAL

O custo operacional e os custos com a aplicação da lâmina são apresentados nas Tabelas 11 e 12, para os anos agrícolas 2020/21 e 2021/22, respectivamente, nos tratamentos de irrigação diária, alternada e sequeiro.

**Tabela 12** Lâmina Bruta de irrigação (mm), custo total de lâmina de irrigação em R\$ mm<sup>-1</sup> ha<sup>-1</sup> e custo total com irrigação (R\$ ha<sup>-1</sup>) nos anos agrícolas 2020/21 e 2021/22.

Safras	Manejes de irrigação	Lâmina Bruta (mm)	Custo total lâmina de irrigação (R\$ mm <sup>-1</sup> ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Custo total com irrigação (R\$ ha <sup>-1</sup> )
2020/2021	Diário	665	1,46	970,9
	Alternado	612	2,00	1225
2021/2022	Diário	642	1,50	963,75
	Alternado	592	2,06	1220,55

**Tabela 13** Custo de operacional, custo de irrigação e custo total em reais por hectare (R\$ ha<sup>-1</sup>) nos anos agrícolas 2020/21 e 2021/22.

(continua)

Safras	Manejo de irrigação	Cultivares					
		424RI			431CL		
		CO (R\$ ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Custo Lâmina (R\$ ha <sup>-1</sup> )	CT (R\$ ha <sup>-1</sup> )	CO (R\$ ha <sup>-1</sup> )	Custo Lâmina (R\$ ha <sup>-1</sup> )	CT (R\$ ha <sup>-1</sup> )
2020/2021	Diário		970,9	5717,75		970,9	5878,8
	Alternado	4746,85	1225	5971,85	4915,05	1225	6135,6
	Sequeiro		-	4746,85		-	-

**Tabela 14** Custo de operacional, custo de irrigação e custo total em reais por hectare (R\$ ha<sup>-1</sup>) nos anos agrícolas 2020/21 e 2021/22.

(conclui)

2021/2022	Diário		963,75	5791,95		963,75	5953
	Alternado	4821,05	1220,55	6046,05	4989,25	1220,55	6209,8
	Sequeiro		-	4821,05		-	-

O custo operacional é afetado pelo custo dos insumos e mão-de-obra. Para Sorriso/MT, a CONAB divulgou um custo de R\$ 5363,02 para a safra 2021/22. Para a safra 2022/23, o custo de produção para Balsas (Maranhão) foi de R\$ 6151,10, sendo semelhantes aos valores dos gastos médios apontados neste estudo. Na safra 2022/23, o custo de produção levantado pela CONAB para Cachoeira do Sul foi de R\$ 14429,98, enquanto o Instituto Rio-Grandense do Arroz (IRGA) estimou um custo de produção para o arroz irrigado no sistema cultivo mínimo de R\$ 15496,86, na safra 2021/22, que significa um gasto 37% maior que a média dos valores do manejo de irrigação diário. A redução dos custos em lavoura de arroz aeróbico para o arroz por inundação está relacionada a diminuição das operações de preparo do solo, construção de taipas e mão de obra.

Os custos da irrigação (custo da energia para a aplicação da lâmina + manutenção do equipamento) encontram-se na Tabela 11. O custo da lâmina irrigada foi aproximadamente 27% menor para o manejo com irrigação diária, em relação ao alternado. Embora a lâmina bruta acumulada tenha sido semelhante, o maior tempo de irrigação para aplicar a lâmina no manejo alternado elevou o custo do mm irrigado. O custo da energia elétrica foi de R\$ 0.46 kWh<sup>-1</sup>, no Rio Grande do Sul, o custo médio do mm irrigado com energia elétrica é de R\$ 0.50 kWh<sup>-1</sup>, indicando que os valores obtidos nesse trabalho se enquadram naqueles praticados pela maioria das operadoras de energia elétrica no RS. Ramos et al. (2012) considerou um custo de água de US\$ 1,25 mm ha<sup>-1</sup>, que convertendo em reais, por uma cotação de R\$4,99 em 2024, corresponde a R\$6,24 reais, muito maiores que os encontrados para esse trabalho.

### 3.6 LUCRO OPERACIONAL

O lucro operacional do cultivo do arroz sob aspersão é apresentado na Tabela 13. A redução no lucro operacional no ano de 2021/22 está relacionada mais ao rendimento e preço do produto, que ao aumento do custo operacional, indicando a relação direta entre preço e rendimento.

**Tabela 15** Lucro operacional da propriedade em R\$ nas safras 2020/21 e 2021/22 por hectare.

Safras	Manejo de irrigação	Cultivares	
		424RI	431CL
2020/2021	Diário	R\$ 6133,76Ans	R\$ 5403,20A
	Alternado	R\$ 3486,83Bb	R\$ 4864,23Aa
	Sequeiro	R\$ -5137,37Cns	R\$ -5063,77B
		CV% 36,28	
2021/2022	Diário	R\$ 3226,94Ab	R\$ 2325,55NSa
	Alternado	R\$ 111,09Bb	R\$ 2139,81a
	Sequeiro	-	-
		CV(%) = 18,94	

\*Médias seguidas de mesma letra não diferem entre si pelo teste de Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro. NS e ns: Não significativo pelo teste de Tukey ( $p < 0,05$ ). Médias seguidas de mesma letra maiúscula na coluna e minúscula na linha (cultivares) não diferem entre si pelo teste Tukey em nível de 5% de probabilidade de erro.

Martins (2018) obteve lucro operacional de R\$ 2038,33/ha com o arroz de sequeiro em Selvíria (MS). Este valor é semelhante ao observado para a cultivar IRGA 431 CL no ano 2021/2022. Na safra 2020/2021 o tratamento em sequeiro obteve lucro operacional negativo, tal resultado está de acordo com o observado por Pascoaloto (2021), pois obteve um lucro

operacional negativo no primeiro ano de cultivo do arroz de sequeiro devido à baixa precipitação (324 mm) ao longo do ciclo.

Para as condições do RS, Fagundes et al. (2021) obtiveram, em Pelotas – RS, LO negativo em 2019/20 (R\$-168,76) e positivo em 2020/21 (R\$1433,60), para o arroz irrigado por aspersão, valores esses que são 58% inferiores ao encontrados no atual trabalho.

#### **4 CONCLUSÃO**

A irrigação por aspersão aumenta a eficiência do uso da água, porém, reduz o acúmulo de matéria seca na parte aérea e nas raízes.

A cultivar IRGA 431 CL proporciona uma redução no uso de água e maior produtividade da água de irrigação, sem prejudicar a produtividade de grãos da cultura, em comparação a cultivar IRGA 424 RI.

As plantas do tratamento sequeiro apresentaram um crescimento inferior ao das observadas nos tratamentos ID e IA.

O lucro operacional do arroz de sequeiro foi negativo e não apresentou produtividade no ano agrícola de 2021/22, evidenciando que o produtor deve adotar um o método de irrigação em anos secos.

A cultivar de arroz IRGA 424 RI apresentou maior produtividade de grãos e lucro operacional no manejo de irrigação diário em ambas as safras.

A cultivar de arroz IRGA 431 CL não apresentou diferença significativa entre o manejo diário e alternado de irrigação quanto ao lucro operacional.

## 5 REFERÊNCIAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS

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