

Document Title: <b>Description, AN, Calibration of ECH2O probes with 5V excitation</b>		Part # and Rev. <b>13399-01</b>	
Rev.	Description	Revision By	Date

**Production Filename:** 13399 (In Product Library)

**Path to Working Files:** DecaDoc\Application Notes\Master

**Dimensions:** 8.5 inch wide, 11 inch tall

**Material:** Paper, 92 Bright White or better, 75g/m<sup>2</sup> or heavier

**Colors:** Color Print on White

**Printer:** HP Color LaserJet 8550-PS

**Finish:** None

**Adhesive:** None

**Special Notes:** Illustrations are Ref Only \*\* Not to Scale \*\* (Shown page 1 of 2)



Application Note

Calibration of ECH<sub>2</sub>O Probes with a 5 V Excitation

Colin S. Campbell, Ph.D.

**Introduction**  
Excitation voltages for reading ECH<sub>2</sub>O probes can vary from 2 to 5 V. However, the ratio of output to input voltages changes from about 10 to 40% Full Scale (FS) with a 2.5V excitation to 10 to 35% FS with 5V excitation. Therefore, the output is not quite ratio-metric. Early in our experimenting, we determined that we would provide extensive support for the 2.5V calibration, as it seemed widely useful and only limited support to other voltages. However, as we have calibrated the probes in different soil types, we have collected some data at 5V and provide it here as a reference.

**Observations**  
All calibrations were conducted according to the method set out in our ECH<sub>2</sub>O calibration application note (<http://www.deca.com/appnotes/echoanal.pdf>). A range of soil types were tested to show how the probe was affected by differences in soil texture. An in-depth discussion of ECHO response to texture, salinity and water content, as well as calibration data for 2.5V is available in another application note (<http://www.deca.com/appnotes/echoanalysis.pdf>).

**ECH<sub>2</sub>O 20 cm Probes:** Comparing data from the 2.5V (in echo\_analysis.pdf) and 5V calibrations (Fig. 1) indicates there may be slightly higher variability in the 5V calibration with respect to soil type compared to 2.5 V, but it may not be enough to matter.

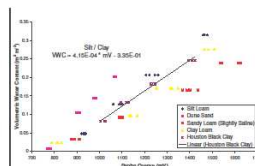


Fig. 1. ECH<sub>2</sub>O 20 cm probe calibration with 5V Excitation

Fig. 1. also shows the calibration equation that can be used to convert millivolts (mV) into VWC ( $WWC = 4.15E-4 * mV - 0.335$ ). This equation will work well for fine textured soils. For soils with significant amounts of sand (sandy loam to sand) as well as soils that have saturation extract electrical conductivities of (ECs) greater than -1 dS/m, we strongly recommend a soil specific calibration.

**ECH<sub>2</sub>O 10 cm Probes:** ECH<sub>2</sub>O 10 cm calibration curves are shown in Fig. 2. Two calibration lines are provided, one for fine textured soils and the other for very low EC sand. We observed that as EC increased in the sand up to -0.3 to 0.5 dS/m, the calibration slope decreased and the regression line became more similar to the fine-textured soil. As EC increased beyond that, calibration slopes continued to decrease. Because of this, we strongly recommend a soil-specific calibration for all coarse textured soils. The standard calibration for probes in fine textured soils is