

Stock water planning

Have you got enough stock water?

The *Stock Water Supply Risk Assessment Tool* has been created to help you monitor your risk of running short of stock water at key times of the year. The tool has been designed to only take 10–15 minutes and to use data you are likely to already know.

To complete this tool, enter information on:

- 1 Your herd size and milking shed (to calculate your water use). This includes number of: milking cows, replacement heifers, calves, bulls and dry cows
- 2 Based on the table supplied, enter your dairy shed's water use
- 3 On-farm storage length, width, depth and volume (dams and tanks).

From this, you will have created a days of water graph which summarises your water storage and use. The graph demonstrates the number of days of water you have in storage on the first day of each month.

The data is used to estimate, from the first day of each month, how many days water supply you have available if there was no further effective rain for that month.

The estimate is only based on your on-farm storage and does not consider sources you may be able to access like springs, pumping from waterways or bores. This tool will help you see when these alternative supplies will be most important. It can also give you an indication of the amount of water that your farm requires from these sources.

Decreasing farm water use

To decrease farm water use, you need to look at water use in the dairy shed (since reducing stock water consumption by a significant amount is neither desirable nor possible). In the shed, the two largest uses of water are yard cleaning and milk cooling. The major water savings possible in these areas comes from re-use of this water.

KEY MESSAGES

You can't cut back cattle water requirements – you either need to save more in the dairy shed, or increase your storage

On average, a milking cow needs at least 155 litres of water per day, and more in the warmer months



Increasing supply and storage

The long term solution to a shortage of stock water is very likely to be to increase farm water supply or on-farm storage.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For the *Stock Water Supply Risk Assessment Tool* or for more information on drinking water access and quality, please visit feed.dairyaustralia.com.au