Enhance farm profitability, cattle health and waterway health

What can I do?

Keeping stock out of waterways, wetlands and boggy areas is a great first step you can take to improve waterway health and stock drinking water quality:



- · Provide off stream water to livestock
- Fence and revegetate along waterways and wetlands
- Establish in paddock shade and shelter for stock to minimise stock camps along waterways.

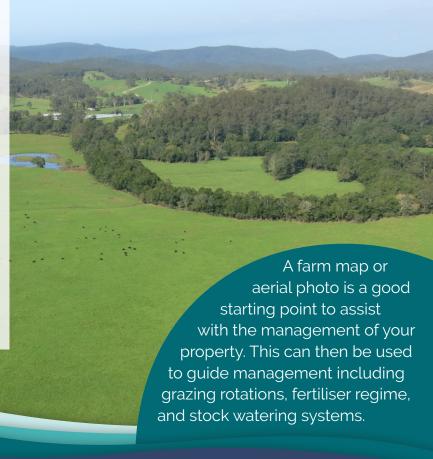
Did you know?

- Studies show that clean water increases weight gain of cattle.
- Stock can lose up to ½ kg/day when drinking muddy water
- Even without planting, fencing off riparian zones can reduce faecal coliforms by 35% in streams. Vegetated riparian buffers of 4 metres can achieve up to a 95% reduction in faecal bacteria inputs.
- Wetlands are like the kidneys of the landscape; they clean our water, slow the flow of water and reduce flood peaks.
- On a 27° day, unsheltered dairy cows have up to 26% less milk production than shaded stock.

Planned grazing reaps rewards for productivity and water quality

Planning the movement of livestock involves assessing the amount of pasture and allowing a sufficient rest period between gazing events. It improves animal production and soil structure.

- · Aim for 100% groundcover, 100% of the time
- Allow sufficient time between grazing events for the plants to regenerate leaf area and root biomass
- Leave a residual pasture height of at least
 5cm at the end of a grazing period to optimise
 regrowth and maintain plant root systems
- Design paddocks to suit the topography of the land



Fertiliser practices that match inputs to outputs retain nutrients for optimal pasture growth

- Soil test regularly to assist you to maintain nutrient levels like phosphorus, nitrogen, potassium and sulphur in the optimum range.
- 2. When using nitrogen based fertilisers, apply the day you move stock out of the paddock
- 3. Base fertilizer application rates on pasture needs and growing seasons
- 4. Know the nutrient content of poultry litter; it's not always the same.
- 5. Apply fertiliser with at least 5-10 cm stubble to help hold it in place for plant usage.
- 6. Use split applications: little and more regularly rather than single large applications
- 7. Leave a grassed area where fertiliser isn't applied between waterways, seeps and swampy areas
- 8. Avoid application when there is a risk of runoff and when soils are saturated with water.
- 9. Store fertiliser away from river flats and drainage lines.

Did you know?

- Nitrogen not taken up by the plant 0-14 days after application is lost to the environment and to your 'back pocket'
- Nutrients applied in excess of plant needs, achieves minimal additional pasture yield
- Planned grazing improves animal production per hectare, whilst improving soil structure and infiltration rates of rainfall.
- In a 10 year study of 5 catchments, it was found that With increasing intensification of farming, where best management practices were used (stock exclusion from waterways, planned grazing and nutrient/fertiliser budgeting) less nutrients leached into waterways.





