

# DAIRY

Many dairy farmers have already made significant water efficiency gains in recent times. Here's how to improve water use on your dairy farm.



### Evaluate your water use

This will help you determine where the most water is used on your farm and identify leaks and losses, such as through evaporation or seepage. Preventing water loss is the easiest, most cost effective and least work intensive way to save water.

Hunter Water can provide advice on installing sub-meters and real time monitoring to help evaluate your water use.

Once you understand how it is being used, you can begin to develop a strategy to save it. If you can measure it, you can manage it.

### Whole farm planning

Efficient grazing practices, effective irrigation design and scheduling are important elements of good farm management.

'Whole farm planning' can improve overall efficiency. It involves looking at your farm layout, water supply, and potential opportunities for water conservation based on the particular conditions of your farm site.

There are also courses available in whole farm planning. To find a course, check with your local TAFE.





## Saving irrigation water

You can do this by:

- developing an Irrigation and Drainage Management Plan for the whole farm
- monitoring soil moisture levels to prevent over-watering
- building an on-site water storage facility so that gravity fed water can be stored when it is not needed
- preventing leakage from distribution channels
- using sprinkler irrigation systems instead of flood irrigation
- installing a drainage system that collects runoff water for re-use
- engaging a certified irrigation designer (visit [irrigationaustralia.com.au](http://irrigationaustralia.com.au) for more information).

## Saving water in dairy sheds

Saving water in your dairy sheds requires only small changes that can have a large impact on overall water use:

- Sweep floors and alleys before washing down to greatly reduce the amount of water needed.
- Yards and floors should be sloped to facilitate easy solids removal.

- Periodic automatic flushing of the yards during milking will make the clean-up quicker and easier.
- Consider collecting water from the roof for the plate cooler system or washing the floor of the shed.
- Plate cooler water can be supplied from rainwater tanks and either recycled through a storage tank, or used for wash down.
- Use a high pressure hose to clean more quickly, thoroughly and with less water.
- In the washing down of sheds after milking, nutrient-rich wastewater is created. Reuse of this wastewater (e.g. applying to pasture) can potentially save 96 per cent of the water and 98 per cent of the nutrients in the wastewater.

## Saving water in business

Visit [hunterwater.com.au/savewater](http://hunterwater.com.au/savewater) for more water saving tips for your business



[hunterwater.com.au](http://hunterwater.com.au)