

SUSTAINABLE DAIRYING: WATER ACCORD

A commitment to New Zealand to enhance the overall performance of dairy farming as it effects freshwater through continuous improvement and partnership

What NZ Expects from Dairying

1. Dairy farms will exclude dairy cattle from significant waterways and significant wetlands.
2. Riparian planting will occur where it would provide a water quality benefit.
3. The crossing of waterways by dairy cows will not result in degradation of those waterways.
4. Dairy farmers will manage Nitrogen (N) and Phosphorus (P) loss from dairy farming systems, acknowledge the need to manage within nutrient loss limits and pursue continuous improvement in nutrient use efficiency.
5. Dairy farms will comply with regional council effluent management rules and/or resource consent conditions.
6. Effluent systems installed on dairy farms will be fit for purpose and able to achieve 365-day compliance with applicable rules.
7. Dairy sheds will use no more water for wash down and milk cooling than that necessary to produce hygienic and safe milk.
8. Irrigation systems will be designed and operated to minimise the amount of water needed to meet production objectives.
9. New dairy farms establish and operate using best practice at the outset to minimise potential negative consequences on water values and interests and comply with all relevant plan rules/consent conditions.

What does that mean for a dairy farmer?

Mandatory stock exclusion from streams on the milking platform

A permanent fence must be used to exclude dairy cattle from:

- Rivers, streams and springs over 1 metre wide and 30cms deep
- All lakes
- Wetlands (if they are identified by your regional council in its regional plan as being significant)

In addition, farmers are *encouraged* to:

- Exclude stock from all wetlands and smaller streams where practical
- Apply these stock exclusion practices on any land used for grazing dairy cows off the milking platform.

Mandatory stock crossings

All points on a waterway where cows cross and return more than twice per month must be either bridged or culverted.

Riparian Planting

All dairy farms must prepare a riparian management plan that sets out where riparian planting is to occur. Planting is to be completed by 2030.

Nutrient Management

Each year farms must supply their respective dairy company with information that will allow for the modelling (using Overseer) of N loss and the N conversion efficiency and will commit to enhancing N management performance when demonstrated to be in lower performing cohort of peers.

Effluent Management

All effluent systems must be capable of being compliant with the relevant regional council rules and/or their resource consent.

Water Use

All farms must:

- Comply with all regional rules controlling water takes.
- Install water meters by the dates required by their respective dairy companies (dates yet to be set).

What are dairy companies and DairyNZ doing?

All **dairy companies** have committed to the Accord. They all have taken on responsibility for ensuring the on-farm practices specified above occur. How that is done is up to individual companies. Companies will also arrange for nutrient loss modelling, arrange for assessment of effluent systems and set timelines for introduction of water meters.

DairyNZ has also signed the Accord. It has committed to develop riparian planting guidelines, develop an audited nutrient management system for use by dairy companies, develop industry capacity in effluent management and a range of similar initiatives to ensure this Accord can be implemented successfully – many in partnership with other industry players and communities.