

Fact sheet 2: maximising water

Capturing & storing more water

Issues

- lower rainfall and run-off leading to low water supplies
- increased evaporation
- seepage and leaks from dams
- increasing cost of mains water

Actions

- calculate your farm water needs and match to your capture and storage capacity (see DPI fact sheets in 'resources')
- map existing water supplies & water use points—can water be redistributed to where it is needed?
- identify best performing catchments—can those dams be enlarged?
- construct new dams in good catchments (will need permit)
- install rainwater tanks to catch water from all available roofspace
- consider installing a bore (no licence currently required for stock & domestic use; building licence may be needed)
- consider topping up fresh water supplies with saline water
- consider water conditioners for saline water
- consider evaporation and seepage control products (BCLN Fact sheet 3)



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Costs to consider (*approximate, as at May 2009*)

- whole farm planning: *available through BCLN*
- excavators: min \$150 per hr
- bore (depends on soil type): min \$150 per metre
- pumps (electric/petrol/diesel): range from \$500-5,000
- pumps (solar/wind): min \$3,500
- water tank: min \$2,500 (20,000l)



Photo: Greg O'Brien, DPI

Benefits

- more secure water supplies
- cleaner water supplies
- reducing evaporation can help secure your water storages and free up water for the environment

Resources & Links to other information

- Thomas case study (BCLN)
- BCLN Fact sheet 3 (Evaporation & seepage)
- DPI fact sheets (www.dpi.vic.gov.au; ph 136 186; customerservice@dpi.vic.gov.au):
 - How much water do I need?
 - Finding a dam site
 - Soil materials for farm dam construction
 - Construction and maintenance of dams
- Water efficient farming (www.dairyextension.com.au, - ph 5624 2222)
 - Water efficient farming case studies
 - How to measure water usage in the dairy
- www.irrigationfutures.org.au
- www.readyreckoner.ncea.biz