

Planning Your Farm Water Storage: An Overview

Identifying water storage facilities that you will need is important when carefully planning the water resources required by your rural property or farm. It requires a good understanding of your water sources and their proximity to where you need the water.

Careful planning will ensure your water is efficiently stored and easily accessible at the right locations on your property all year round.



Different Water Sources

How you store your water depends upon your sources. These can be broadly categorised into four groups:

1. **Rain sources** – includes clean rainwater collected from rooftops and other surfaces into a rainwater tank, as well as excess water and run-off from paths, roads and other surfaces into a stormwater tank.
2. **Surface water sources** – water that pools on the surface of the earth, such as dams, lakes, rivers and creeks.
3. **Groundwater sources** – underground water aquifers accessed by boring a hole down to the water table and then pumping it out as needed for irrigation and/or storing in bore water tanks.
4. **External water sources** – water that is piped in from a mains water supply or an agreed remote water source, or water trucked in transport tanks to be stored on your property.

Types of Water Storage

When it comes to storing water on your property there are three main options:

1. **Water storage containers** including rainwater tanks, stormwater tanks, bore water tanks, stock water tanks and troughs.

2. **Private dams** that have naturally formed or are purpose-built on your land to capture and store rain and surface water sources.
3. **Waterways** such as creeks on the property that can be pumped from and stored in water storage tanks.

Best Quality Water and Storage

Your source of your water supply and its storage can mean additional maintenance and/or testing before it is fit for household use, stock consumption or irrigation purposes.

The purest and safest source of water besides a mains water supply is water captured as it falls from the sky – rainwater. Unlike other water sources, the water quality of rainwater:

- is not polluted from running across ground surfaces (like stormwater)
- has no salinity issues, contamination concerns from animals and pesticides or evaporation issues (like surface water sources)
- has no need for microbiological and chemical testing to ensure it is fit for use (like bore water).

Given the high quality and versatility of rainwater it arguably the best water source for farming. This makes stock water tanks that are dedicated to collecting rainwater a valuable addition. Add into the equation stormwater tanks and you can also harvest lesser quality water runoff that can be treated and used for different purposes.

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