

LIVESTOCK WATER-SAVING TIPS

The following points will help manage water use when watering livestock, especially important in drought conditions. Although livestock water volumes may be small, reducing losses will help reduce pumping costs or keep water in a reservoir, as well as reduce the chance of stream water flows being over drawn.

1. YOUR WATERING METHOD

- Using Watercourses** – direct access to watercourses may reduce water quality
– this could reduce the use of the water for livestock and downstream users
– where appropriate, consider a managed access, as outlined in:
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/publist/500series/590303-1.pdf>

Goal – for direct watercourse access, manage for the least impact to water quality

- Using A Water System** – a water system can reduce water waste and have the least impact on quality
– size systems for the livestock watering requirements, as outlined in:
<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/publist/500series/590302-1.pdf>

Goal – when choosing a water system, size it for the herd requirements

- Hauling Water** – water may need to be hauled in emergency or severe drought conditions
– choose hauling tanks, methods, etc, that reduce water loss
– for non-lactating livestock, hauling water every other day can reduce intake by 25% without ill effects

Goal – when hauling water, manage for low water losses

2. HOW YOU OPERATE IT

- Pressure** – ensure the system pressure is correct (high pressure can increase chance of leakage)
– pressure should match the water control method (such as a float valve)

Goal – ensure proper pressure of water systems

- Trough Level** – set float levels to allow about 50mm (2 inch) freeboard on troughs
– this will reduce spillage over the trough sides

Goal – minimize water loss from spillage

- Leaks** – repair any leaks to conserve water (e.g., look for ‘perpetual wet spots’)

Goal – minimize water loss from leakage

3. LINKS TO OTHER INFORMATION

MAFF Various Factsheets are available on the MAFF website that assists in designing, selecting and installing both summer and winter livestock watering systems, as listed at:
http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/publist/Water.htm#livestock_water

PFRA Praire style dugout information:
http://www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/drought/info/livestock_e.htm

Laying pipe on pastures by plowing it in:
http://www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/water/pipespsh_e.htm

Sulphur toxicity water quality concerns:
http://www.agr.gc.ca/pfra/drought/info/sulphate_e.htm

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Water use and drought strategies:
<http://www.montana.edu/wwwpb/ag/drought1.html>

For further information on related topics, please visit our website

Resource Management Branch

www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt

Linking to our

[Publications and Conceptual Plans](#)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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