

How fencing off your farm dam can benefit livestock production



Fencing off a farm dam requires time and investment, so why do it? The evidence for the benefits of fencing is in, with university research confirming that fencing off dams will improve farm productivity through cleaner water, healthier stock and less algal blooms.

Benefits to water and stock:

- Fenced dams have lower levels of nitrogen and lower turbidity, factors which can contribute to algal outbreaks, reduced palatability and animal health issues.¹
- Fenced dams have significantly lower E. coli counts and fewer thermotolerant (faecal) bacterial coliforms. A massive 65% of unfenced dams had coliform counts that exceeded guidelines for water quality for stock, according to research done by Sustainable Farms and ANU.¹
- Fenced dams support more waterbug species and greater numbers of individual waterbugs than unfenced dams. Waterbugs and certain other species indicate good quality water.¹
- Research from the ANU shows there may be substantial net economic benefits from renovating dams in poor condition to improve water quality.²

Benefits of using troughs rather than dam water:³

- Improved water quality
- Stock prefer to drink out of a trough
- Stock will drink more water from a trough than a dam, eat more dry food and gain more weight
- Pasture utilisation can be increased



References

1. [Sustainable Farms - Why enhance a farm dam?](#)
2. [Increased livestock weight gain from improved water quality in farm dams: A cost-benefit analysis](#)
3. [Stock perform better when drinking from troughs](#)