REDUCING BACTERIA WITH BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR LIVESTOCK

WATER HARVESTING CATCHMENT
NRCS CODE 636

Jennifer L. Peterson, Extension Program Specialist, Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Larry A. Redmon, Professor and State Forage Specialist, Texas AgriLife Extension Service
Mark L. McFarland, Professor and State Soil Fertility Specialist, Texas AgriLife Extension Service

Description:
A facility for collecting and storing precipitation to provide water for livestock, fish and wildlife, recreation, or other purposes.

Benefits to Producer:
- Reduces herd health risks associated with livestock standing in muddy areas, such as foot disease and injuries due to unstable footing.
- Provides clean source of water for livestock.
- Decreases herd injuries associated with cattle climbing steep and unstable stream banks.
- Improves water quality by reducing sediment, nutrient, bacterial, organic, and inorganic loading to the stream.
- Reduces stream bank destabilization and associated erosion due to trampling and overgrazing of banks.
- During drought, when surface water sources are dry, an alternative water source provides the water necessary for beef cattle producers to remain in business.

Bacterial Removal Efficiency:
- Water harvesting catchments are primarily designed to control and reduce runoff. Water quality is enhanced by reducing water flow across impervious surfaces and waste areas thereby minimizing pollutant loads (sediment, nutrients, bacteria, organic matter) to surrounding water bodies.
- Water harvesting catchments can be used in conjunction with other practices such as fencing, filter strips, and heavy use area protection. These practices have been shown to reduce concentrations of bacteria.

Other Benefits:
- Reduced salt concentrations in soil which can be detrimental to vegetative growth.
- Can be adapted for use as domestic water supply in rural areas.
- Reduced utility bills.
- Decreased stormwater runoff volumes and peak runoff flow rates in urban areas.
- Reduced sedimentation and increased flood mitigation.

Estimated Installation Costs:
- Check with your local NRCS Service Center.

Practice Life Span:
- 15 years

Available Cost-Share Programs:
- EQIP (up to 75% cost-share).

For More Information:
- Contact your local County Extension Agent, Soil and Water Conservation District (http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us/swcds)
or the Natural Resources Conservation Service (http://www.usda.nrcs).

- Read publication E-450, Rainwater Harvesting for Livestock. which can be found on the Texas AgriLife Extension Bookstore Website: https://agrilifebookstore.org/