

Water use in the paddock

Name: _____

Water is very important to cattle and sheep farming in Australia. It is needed for the health of the animals and it supports healthy pastures and vegetation.

Watch the 'Water Management, Cattle in the Kimberleys' video (your teacher can help you find this) and read the information below, then answer the questions on pages 2 and 3. You may need to research further to find answers to some questions.

Australia's cattle and sheep farmers, the feedlots and the processing facilities know that water is a critical, but precious, resource that needs to be used wisely throughout the supply chain:

- On a farm, water is used mainly for animal drinking water.
- In feedlots, water is used for animal drinking, feed processing and managing wastewater.
- The processing sector uses a lot of water, mostly for food safety and hygiene during operations.

So how much water does it take to produce beef and lamb?

A study by the University of New South Wales, found that it takes between 103 and 540 litres to produce 1 kilogram of meat. Most of this is the water that the cattle and sheep drink. Sixty to 70 per cent of their body weight is water, so to stay healthy they need to drink.

This water is mostly from 'blue water' sources that may otherwise not be available for human use, including:

- dams
- rivers
- bores
- creeks
- town water supplies



1. How much water does it take to produce one kilogram of beef or lamb?

2. Name two ways that water is used in feedlots.

1) _____

2) _____

3. In which area is water used for food safety and hygiene? Circle your answer.

Farm Feedlot Processing

4. Why do cattle and sheep need so much water to stay healthy?

5. Which of the following is not a 'blue water' source? Circle your answer.

Dam Ocean Creek Bore

6. What is the name of the station in the video and where is it located?

7. What animals do you see on the land in the video?

8. What is a billabong (you will need to research further to answer this question)?



9. Who relies on the billabong?

10. Why does the farmer fence off the river?

11. Why is it a problem to let cattle access the river banks?

12. Which animals nest on the flood plains during wet season?

13. In what other ways do you think farmers save water on their farms?
