

## Dairy Effluent Management Assistance Project

The Dairy Effluent Management Assistance Project assisted 28 dairy farms over the project duration. This is 23% of the non-compliant dairies identified in the original audit. This equates to approximately 6000 head of cattle and satisfied project requirements with over 60% of all dairy farms in the catchment currently complying with industry guidelines.

Successful grant applicants have also agreed to monitor the overall effectiveness of these new systems in an attempt to accurately quantify the anticipated reduced level of nutrient accession into adjacent waterways, whilst also recording any other associated project benefits.

### The Property and it's History

Gary, Linda and Jason Rozynski run an active dairy farm just outside Imbil in the Cooloola Shire. This third generation dairy farm has been in the family since 1945.

Their 160-hectare property adjoins the Imbil State Forest and is bordered by Yabba Creek, a major tributary to the Mary River. Approximately 280 head of milkers are run on the property, and the milking yards are approximately 800 metres from the watercourse.



Above: Gary Rozynski, landholder

### Problems Faced by the Landholder

Prior to obtaining the Dairy Effluent Grant, Mr Rozynski described the area below his dairy as "boggy and unusable." This area was not only wasted grazing land, but was also a headache to manage because cattle often became bogged.

The Rozynski's farm had other issues to address. The degradation of the banks along Yabba Creek threatened to erode away valuable grazing land. In an attempt to alleviate this problem, Mr Rozynski excluded stock by fencing off the creek.

### Why undertake a grant project?

The Rozynski family has received a Dairy Effluent Assistance Management Project Grant and a Voluntary Riverbank Restoration Grant. His intentions for the Dairy Effluent Grant were twofold. He wanted to make use of this 'unusable' land and also open up unimproved land for grazing.

In fact, his intentions were three fold, as he is also required to meet Quality Assurance standards and the Queensland Dairyfarmers Organisation environment guidelines.

Prior to obtaining the Riverbank Restoration Grant Mr Rozynski carried out a number of gully stabilisation projects, which are now fully stabilised. He has also planted shelterbelts in his irrigation paddocks.

As Mr Rozynski had already fenced off the creek his next intention was to install off-stream watering points. However, he did not have the financial resources to carry out the work without assistance. A Riverbank Restoration Grant was sought, as Mr Rozynski was reluctant to allow stock direct access to Yabba Creek, thereby increasing creek bank erosion and animal disease.

Above: Dairy holding yard **Right:** Effluent pond



Above: Wastewater from dairy piped down to effluent pond



## What are the solutions?

The cattle are generally confined in the dairy holding yards for 2 hours per day (before and after milking), and around 4500 Litres of washdown is accumulated here per day. The water used to clean down the dairy yards would normally be lost or sent into a 'boggy' area of the farm. However with an effluent management system, this nutrient rich liquid can be recycled.

The Dairy Effluent project consisted of a 'Trap-Sump-Pump-Traveller' system. The washdown from the yards passes through a solid trap, which is necessary to remove large amounts of gravel in the effluent. The liquid is then piped underground to the collecting pond and from there the effluent is distributed through the existing irrigation system over approximately 5 acres of the grazing yards.

This effluent pond storage system allows for effluent to be stored and disposed of when conditions are suitable, or when Mr Rozynski can allocate time to this type of work. Accumulated sludge in Mr Rozynski's pond needs to be removed on a regular basis as required to prevent encroachment on the storage capacity for effluent.

This work was conducted at a cost to the landholder of \$10 224 of in-kind labour and materials, along with a grant of \$3 000 from the Dairy Effluent Scheme.

## What are the benefits?

As the dairy effluent system has only been in place for a short time, the full potential of the system has not been realised yet. Mr Rozynski said, "the immediate benefits could be seen on the paddock below the dairy, which is no longer boggy and can be used for grazing".

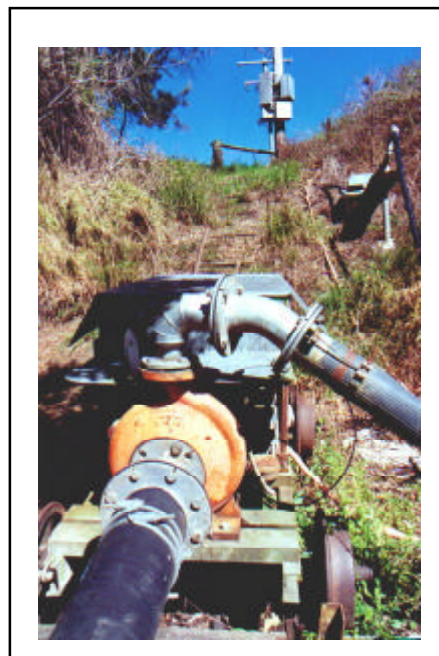
It is expected that reduced fertiliser use will result in savings in the future, however this has not been evident yet.

The provision of riverbank fencing and alternative off stream watering points has reduced mortality from misadventure. The streambank fencing has encouraged natural regeneration, thus reducing farmland loss from bank and gully erosion.

Benefits to the community along Yabba Creek will come from reduced algal blooms as a result of the reduced nutrients entering the waterway.



**Above:** Fencing to exclude stock from creek bank  
**Left:** Off stream watering points  
**Below:** Water pump



## Further Information

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