



Water Wise

Watersheds are important sources of fresh water, whether the water is used on a dairy farm or in homes and schools in rural, suburban, and urban communities. Learn how you can join dairy farmers in protecting your watershed.



1. Reduce

WHAT DAIRY FARMERS DO

Dairy farmers are experts at practicing water conservation. Over the past 60 years, they have reduced the amount of water used to produce each gallon of milk by 65 percent. That's thanks to improvements like watering systems that let cows drink whenever they want so there is almost no waste!



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Turn off faucets tightly to avoid wasteful drips.
- Take short showers rather than baths.
- Run full loads for washing machines and dishwashers.
- Install low-flow showerheads.
- Turn water off when brushing teeth or soaping hands.

2. Re-use

WHAT DAIRY FARMERS DO

Milk from a cow is warm, about 101°F. To cool the milk for processing, dairy farmers use a *plate cooler*. Cold water passes through the plate cooler in one direction and absorbs heat from the warm milk as it passes in the opposite direction. Dairy farmers re-use this water as drinking water for their cows, who prefer warm water. The warmed water is also used for misting cows with a fine spray, cleaning farm equipment, and washing away manure and debris.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Wash fruits and veggies in a pan of water that can be re-used to water plants instead of rinsing them under running water.
- Pour the old water from your pet's water dish onto a plant before refilling it.
- Pour leftover bottled water onto a plant before recycling the bottle.

3. Recycle

WHAT DAIRY FARMERS DO

Water used to wash away manure and debris goes to a *separator*, which removes the water from the solid waste. That water is used to fertilize farm fields. It contains important nutrients that help crops grow while using less groundwater. The solids are recycled for cow bedding.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Use the cooled water from cooking veggies or pasta to water plants.
- If you play in the water sprinkler in the summer, be sure the spray is also hitting the lawn or gardens, and not concrete surfaces.
- Plant a rain garden. See www.cbf.org/document-library/education-resources/rain_garden_guide-web6fb5.pdf to learn more.
- Suggest to your parents or guardians that they divert greywater (gently used water from sinks, showers, tubs, and washing machines) from polluting the watershed by using it to water home gardens or plants.

Local milk is available 365 days a year.



AMERICAN DAIRY ASSOCIATION

