



Sustainable Milk Plans - Upper Karapiro



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This DairyNZ project involves implementing sustainable milk plans on 700 dairy farms in the Upper Karapiro to enable a better environmental outcome.

The aim of this project is to have all dairy farms in Upper Karapiro catchment to have, and to implement, auditable Sustainable Milk Plans that set targets and time-bound individual actions that, once achieved, will result in demonstrable reductions of the nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment and faecal material loads in the Waikato River and improvements in water use efficiency on farm.

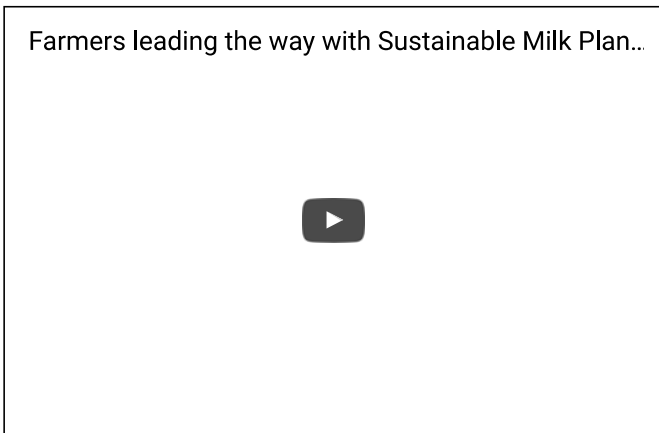
The 700 dairy farms in the Upper Karapiro catchment are significant contributors to the loads of nutrients, sediment and faecal material loads in the Waikato River. They also constitute a significant proportion of water users in the catchment. Therefore, efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River through reductions in contaminant loads and water use will necessarily require substantive change on farms throughout the Upper Karapiro catchment.

The dairy industry is already investing heavily at a national level in a range of programmes to address its environmental impacts. An example of this is DairyNZ's Primary Growth Partnership programme and Fonterra's 'Every Farm, Every Year' effluent improvement programje. However, there is a need to accelerate the pace of environmental improvement in the Upper Karapiro catchment in response to increasing expectations from iwi, regulators, industry and the community.

In meeting these expectations, we recognise that amongst the 700 farms we will be working with a variety of management and business structures. Furthermore, the current environmental performance of these farms is also highly variable as regional council monitoring and industry benchmarking exercises have shown. The changing performance expectations will challenge many farmers and the dairy industry recognises that they will need substantial support to achieve the changes necessary to meet community expectations.

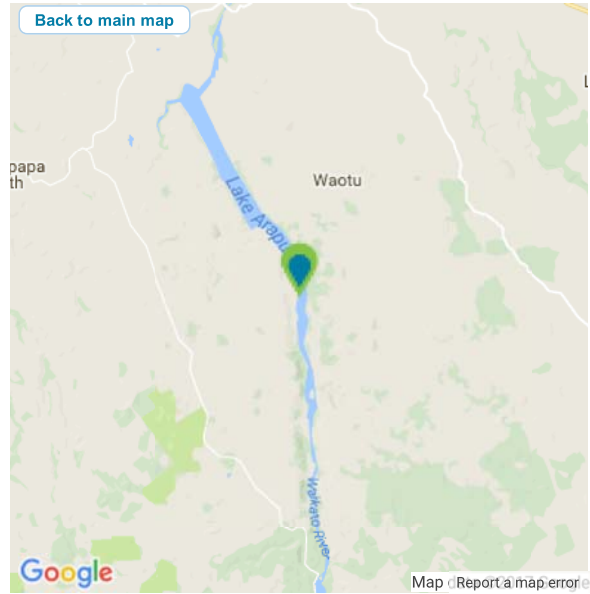
This project proposes to improve the environmental performance of all dairy farms in the Upper Karapiro catchment by December 2014 through the delivery and implementation of auditable Environmental Management Plans (EMPs). These plans will contain defined targets which reflect regulatory and industry standards around effluent management and nutrient losses associated with the catchment's dairy farms. Where current performance falls short of the targets, farmers will be given support to develop and implement a time-bound plan which identifies actions in relation to those areas where improvement is required.

Watch the video:



This project received funding from the Waikato River Authority (WRA 11-019)

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