

# Livestock with Access to a Watercourse

## Issues

When livestock have access to a watercourse, the long-term effect tends to be negative for both the livestock and the watercourse.



Livestock are more likely to experience health concerns due to poor water quality, including:

- increased disease, such as:
  - foot rot,
  - black leg and
  - mastitis (udder infections) and
- decreased weight gain.

Fields and watercourses are impacted by increased:

- bank erosion,
- riparian vegetation loss,
- aquatic sedimentation and
- fecal contamination which can lead to *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) outbreaks.



## Solutions

The best solution for preventing livestock from accessing a watercourse is through the installation of exclusion fencing and provision of an alternative water source.

## Benefits

The exclusion of livestock from a watercourse is beneficial for both livestock and the environment. Expected benefits include:



- livestock experience fewer health issues and increased weight gain,
- streambanks are less likely to erode,
- watercourses have less fecal contamination and lower bacterial and sedimentation loads and
- fish, freshwater mussels and other aquatic organisms benefit from improved water quality.

### For more information:

OMAFRA Livestock Access to Watercourses Factsheet  
Types of Livestock Fencing  
Water Systems for Beef Cattle

Contact us if you would like to learn more about exclusion fencing and alternative water sources.

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