

Water.

A **Farming Fortnight** resource.



Farming Fortnight is an annual LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) initiative, connecting young people with more sustainable farming & food production.



Find a farm to visit in June on **Open Farm Sunday!**

Key questions.

Why is water important?

How is water used on farms?

How does improving water management support a sustainable approach to farming?

Key concepts.

The importance of water in agriculture:

Water is essential for all life and plays a crucial role in farming. It is used for irrigation, drinking water for livestock, processing food, and cleaning equipment. Efficient [water management](#) ensures sustainable food production and protects the environment.

Water conservation on farms:

Farmers use various strategies to reduce water use and protect water quality. These strategies include [rainwater harvesting](#), which involves collecting and storing rainwater for later use, improving soil structure to increase water retention, using drip irrigation (delivering water directly to plant roots), and creating buffer strips (vegetated areas that filter runoff before it reaches water sources).

Managing runoff & water quality:

Farms can [manage water runoff](#) by planting cover crops (to prevent soil erosion), constructing ponds or wetlands (to slow down water flow), and reducing fertiliser use (to prevent water pollution). Sustainable water management improves resilience to droughts and floods.



Instructions.

Water Conservation Pledges (30 minute activity)

Brainstorm ideas on how to conserve water at home and school. Each pupil writes a pledge outlining how they will save water.

Watch this video for inspiration: [Water Conservation Video](#).

You could also:

Complete a Water Audit and Compare Conservation Strategies:

Conduct a water audit at your school, identifying areas of high water use and marking high-wastewater areas in red on a school map.

Split the class into two groups: one focusing on water conservation at home and school, and the other on conservation strategies used on farms.

Compare findings and discuss similarities and differences between the two approaches.

Make it simpler.

Design a poster promoting water conservation to display in high-wastage areas in school.

Create a rainwater collector and use the stored water to irrigate plants on the school site.

Make it harder.

Investigate flood management with these case studies:

[Flood Management in the Fens](#)

[Flood Management in the Somerset Levels](#)

Explore the impact of climate change on water resources:

[Water and Climate Change - Primary](#)

[Water and Climate Change - Secondary](#)

Case study: [Smart irrigation technology at Tiptree Farms.](#)

What is the role of smart technology in irrigation?

(Answer: Smart irrigation systems use advanced technology to monitor and control water usage on farms efficiently.)

How do sensors help in water conservation?

(Answer: Sensors measure moisture levels in the soil, ensuring that plants receive the exact amount of water they need, minimising waste and improving sustainability.)

How does this irrigation system reduce water waste?

(Answer: Water is applied directly to plant roots in micro-pulses, reducing excess use. Any drained water is collected, filtered, and recycled for reuse.)

Why is this approach beneficial to farming?

(Answer: This method enhances water efficiency, lowers environmental impact, and ensures crops get the right amount of moisture at the right time.)

