



# 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! Dairy cows in Florida can produce up to 10 gallons of milk per day.



### 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

Florida's dairy farms use fresh water for cows to drink and to sanitize and clean equipment like milk storage tanks. Farms clean barns by running water down the aisles in a similar way that people might hose off a driveway or deck. The water used to wash away manure and debris goes to a separator, which removes solid waste, leaving nutrient-rich water behind.



### 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

The nutrient-rich water is used to fertilize farm fields. It contains important nutrients that act as a fertilizer to help crops grow while using less groundwater. These crops are then harvested and used as feed for the cows. The sand is washed and recycled to be used as bedding again.



### 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](http://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.