

## National Environmental Standards

# Freshwater Feedlots and other stockholding areas

In early September 2020, central government's national direction for halting the degradation of our rivers, lakes and streams was announced.

The following came into effect:

- National Environmental Standards for Freshwater 2020 (NES-FW)
- Stock Exclusion s360 Regulations Resource Management Act (RMA)
- Measurement and Reporting of Water Takes s360 Regulations (RMA)
- National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM)

We encourage all landowners to become familiar with what is required. A good starting point for

this is the Ministry for the Environment's policies and regulations fact sheets and your industry groups.

For links to the relevant central government documents listed here head to:

**[www.horizons.govt.nz/our-freshwater-future](http://www.horizons.govt.nz/our-freshwater-future)**

Horizons Regional Council has started the process of reviewing this Essential Freshwater package.

If you use feedlots or other types of stockholding areas it is important to consider the new rules and whether you will need to apply for a resource consent.



# Why are there feedlot and stockholding regulations?

Feedlots and other stockholding areas can pose high environmental risks to freshwater if not managed well. Water quality degradation caused by these areas results from the volume and concentration of animal dung and urine (effluent), sediment loss, pugging and soil damage accumulating from holding cattle in a confined space.

When feedlots and stockholding areas are not adequately designed, managed, and/or sited, contamination can get into and pollute waterbodies as well as increase erosion.

**Stockholding areas and feedlots are permitted activities that do not require consent if at least 90% of the cattle held are under 4 months old or weigh less than 120kg.**

**These regulations apply to farms of more than 20ha in pastoral land use.**

There are three parts to this document and each are important for you to understand.

**Part 1** Important definitions

**Part 2** Compliance requirements flowchart

**Part 3** Activities and existing use rights

## PART 1: Important definitions

### Stockholding area

Is an area for holding cattle at a density that means pasture or other vegetative ground cover cannot be maintained.

Examples include:

- feedpads
- winter pads
- stand-off pads and
- loafing pads

Areas which are exempt from these regulations include:

- stockyards
- milking sheds
- wintering barns
- calf raising and
- sacrifice paddocks

### Feedlot

A feedlot is a stockholding area where cattle:

- Are kept for at least 80 days in any six month period; and
- Fed exclusively by hand or machine.

### Sacrifice paddock

A sacrifice paddock is an area where:

- Cattle are repeatedly, but temporarily contained (typically during extended periods of wet weather); and
- The resulting damage caused to the soil by pugging is so severe that paddock rejuvenation and/or over-sowing with pasture species is required.

There are no new rules that specifically cover sacrifice paddocks and they are excluded from the definition of a stockholding area. However, it is not okay to pollute waterways, even if there is no rule covering your activity.





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# PART 2:

## Compliance requirements flowchart

### Do I need a resource consent?:

- Are cattle held at a density that means pasture or other vegetative ground cover cannot be maintained e.g. feedpads, winter pads, stand-off pads, and loafing pads? (This does not include an area used for pastoral purposes e.g. stockyard, milking shed, wintering barn or sacrifice paddock).

YES

NO

**These regulations do not apply**

### Is it a feedlot?:

- Are cattle kept for at least 80 days in any six-month period? and
- Are cattle fed exclusively by hand or machine?

YES TO ALL

### Does the feedlot have?:

- A base area sealed to a minimum permeability standard of  $10^{-9}$  m/s?;
- A system of collecting and managing effluent in accordance with a rule in a regional or district plan, or resource consent?; and
- A buffer distance of at least 50m away from any water body, water abstraction bore, drain, and the coastal marine area?

NO TO ANY

### Resource consent required as a:

#### Non-complying Activity

- Immediately for new feedlots;
- By 31 March 2021 for existing lawful feedlots.



**Stockholding regulations (other than feedlots) require the area:**

- Has a base area sealed to a minimum permeability standard of  $10^{-9}$  m/s;
- Has expelled effluent being collected, stored, and disposed of in accordance with a rule in regional or district plan, or resource consent; and
- Is located at least 50m away from any water body, water abstraction bore, drain, and the coastal marine area.

NO

YES TO ALL

**Permitted Activity**

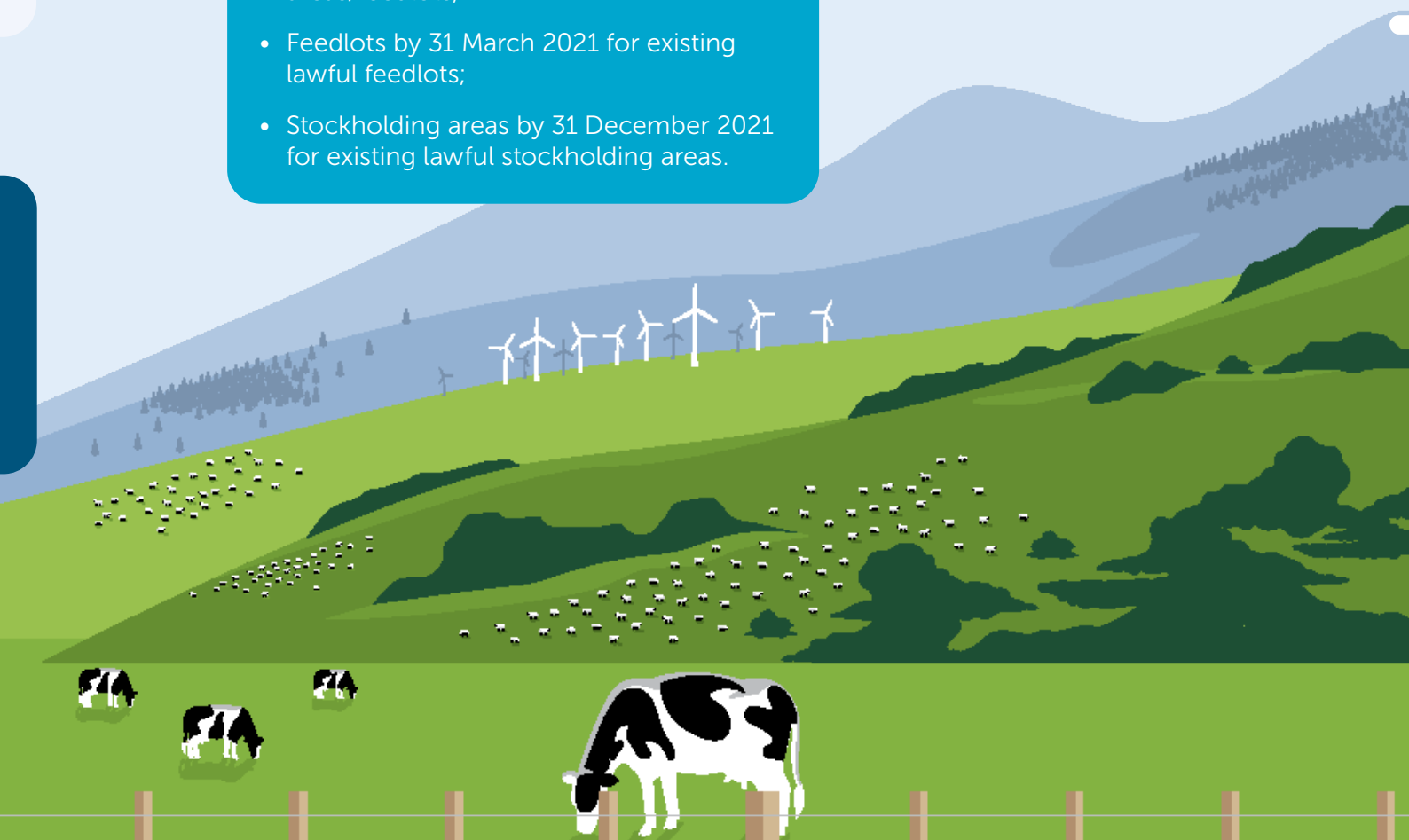
YES TO ALL

NO TO ANY

**Resource consent required as a:**

**Discretionary Activity**

- Immediately for new stockholding areas/feedlots;
- Feedlots by 31 March 2021 for existing lawful feedlots;
- Stockholding areas by 31 December 2021 for existing lawful stockholding areas.



# PART 3:

## Activities and existing use rights

Existing use rights under section 20A of the Resource Management Act allow activities that were previously permitted to continue for six months after the new rules are implemented. These existing use rights only apply where the feedlot or stockholding area already exists (as at 3 September 2020), was operating legally and where the effects will be the same or similar in character, intensity, and scale (i.e. the activity hasn't changed).

In the case that existing use rights apply (if you can not comply with all the permitted activity conditions and a consent is required) you have until 31 March 2021 to lodge an application for consent for a **feedlot** and until 31 December 2021 to lodge an application for consent for a **stockholding area**.

Where your stockholding or feedlot area was not an existing activity, or the effects will increase in character, intensity or scale, you will need to make sure you comply with all the permitted activity conditions or obtain a consent before undertaking or starting the activity.

### Horizons routine inspections

During routine inspections for all farm resource consents, Horizons Regional Council's inspecting officers will be checking if you have a feedlot or stockholding area and can advise if resource consent is required. However, you are encouraged to contact us on **0508 800 800** to ensure you obtain any necessary consents before the required dates.

### All new feedlot and stockholding areas must immediately comply with the NES-FW.

If you do require consent you can start the process immediately - you do not have to wait until your existing use rights expire or Horizons advises you to get a consent.

Note the NES-FW also allows for stockholding areas to be managed in accordance with a certified freshwater farm plan – however, these are still being developed at a national level.



# Oranga Wai | OUR Freshwater FUTURE



For more information visit [www.horizons.govt.nz](http://www.horizons.govt.nz)  
or freephone Horizons on 0508 800 800