

# Freshwater farm plans

## Where are you at with your freshwater farm plan?

Farmers in our region have made great strides over the years to clean up waterways and revive wetlands. New government regulations requiring a freshwater farm plan will help you to build on the work you are already doing to improve the health of fresh water and freshwater ecosystems in your catchment.

## What are freshwater farm plans?

Freshwater farm plans:

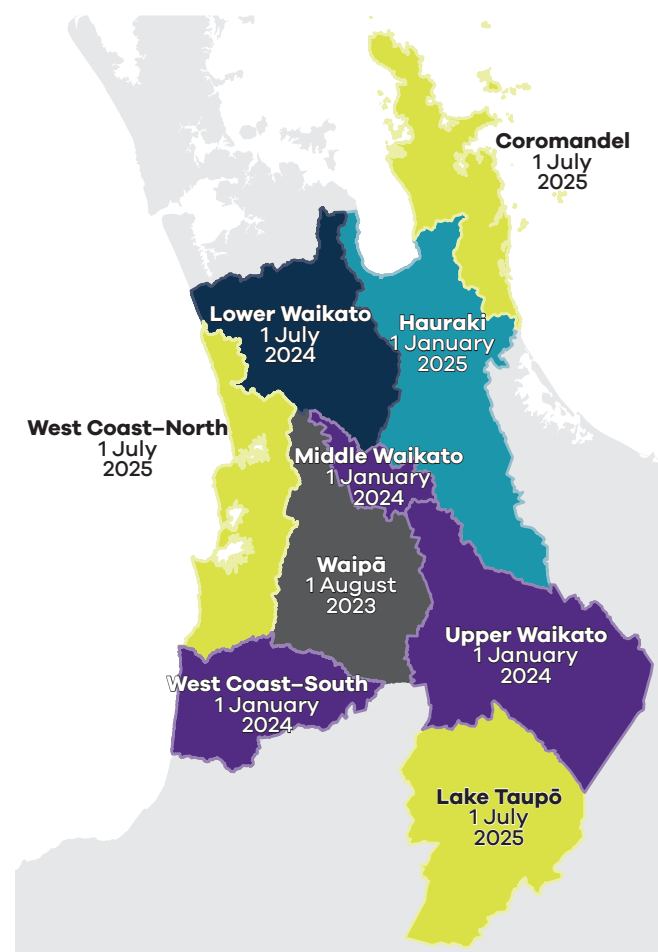
- are a practical, flexible tool for farmers and growers to identify, manage and reduce the impact of farming on the freshwater environment
- are tailored to the unique needs of the farm and its local catchment
- support the achievement of existing regulatory requirements.

## Who needs one?

All farm operators with:

- 20 hectares or more in arable or pastoral use
- 5 hectares or more in horticultural use
- 20 hectares or more of combined use.

## When is the requirement being introduced?



## When will I need to submit my plan for certification?

Farmers must submit a freshwater farm plan for certification on or before the due date for their catchment area, as outlined below.

Geographic area or catchment	Submit plan for certification by
Waipā freshwater management unit (FMU)	1 February 2025
Middle Waikato FMU	1 July 2025
Upper Waikato FMU	1 July 2025
West Coast–South	1 July 2025
Lower Waikato FMU	1 January 2026
Hauraki FMU	1 July 2026
Lake Taupō FMU	1 January 2027
Coromandel FMU	1 January 2027
West Coast–North	1 January 2027

## Find your farm

Scan the code or visit  
[waikatoregion.govt.nz/  
find-your-farm](https://waikatoregion.govt.nz/find-your-farm)  
and search your farm.



## Why are freshwater farm plans needed?

Freshwater farm plans are a legal requirement under the *Resource Management (Freshwater Farm Plans) Regulations 2023* and a key part of the Government's Essential Freshwater reforms.

The central principle of Essential Freshwater is Te Mana o te Wai – healthy fresh water supports a healthy environment, healthy communities, and a healthy economy.

The introduction of national regulations will ensure a consistent approach to farm planning, building on the good work farmers are already doing and contributing to better outcomes for both farmers and the environment.

## What's involved in developing one?

A freshwater farm plan will need to:

- identify the risks of adverse effects from farming activities on fresh water
- set out actions that avoid, remedy or mitigate those risks
- apply catchment context information to consider how your farm's natural landscape and farming activities impact the health of fresh water in your catchment.

Farm plans will also need to be certified and audited.

## How will my freshwater farm plan be used?

Only the certified action plan, administrative information and auditing information will be reported to us. We don't hold freshwater farm plans on file.

## Where do I start?



## Find out more



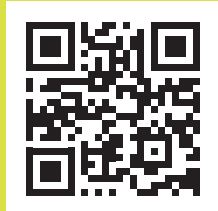
[waikatoregion.govt.nz/  
freshwater-farm-plans](https://waikatoregion.govt.nz/freshwater-farm-plans)

## Get advice

[pie@waikatoregion.govt.nz](mailto:pie@waikatoregion.govt.nz)

0800 800 401

## Access training



Training is available to develop your understanding of freshwater farm planning [wrctraining.co.nz](https://wrctraining.co.nz).

While aimed at prospective certifiers and auditors, these courses can also be accessed by farmers and farm plan developers at a reduced rate.