

Rainwater Catchers

Objective

To utilise rainfall to provide a source of clean drinking water for cattle in remote areas, where a natural water source or mains supply are not available.

Background

Grazing can be restricted on sites where a piped water supply is impractical and is exacerbated where a natural surface water source is unavailable. The consequent restriction on grazing may have negative impacts on biodiversity and wildfire resilience. Harvesting rainfall has been a traditional and effective mechanism for providing a supply of drinking water to livestock in fields where grazing would otherwise be impractical.

Site Suitability

- This action can be selected on parcels with an Eligible hectare $>$ or $=$ 0.
- This action is available on CP parcels only that will be claimed by the participant for the remainder of the ACRES contract.
- This action can only be selected on fields that have a scorecard submitted and is available on any scorecard.
- New rainwater catchers must be located on a grassy area (species-poor) or previously scrubbed area to minimise damage to existing habitats with an abundance of wildflowers or on rocky limestone pavement areas.
- This action cannot be selected within an archaeological monument buffer.

Requirements

1. The location of the rainwater catcher must be identified and marked on the map submitted. Each rainwater catcher applied for is only eligible for one NPI payment and once claimed must be retained for the remainder of the ACRES contract.
2. All rainwater catchers must be newly constructed with concrete blocks and cement. Repair of existing rainwater catchers is not available as a NPI action.
3. The tanks must be constructed with a rain catching apron in the traditional manner as shown in Picture 6 below. The minimum total area of the apron and tank is 6m^2 and the maximum total area is 12m^2 .
4. Block walls must be plastered using a sand/cement screen.

Additional Guidance

- Tank should have an adequate concrete foundation that should also form the floor of the tank. Minimum concrete depth must be 100mm.
- The side of the catching slope should be made using dry stone wall or faced with dry stone walls.
- Deviations in the standard example are possible with agreement from the CP team and would have to be outlined in any approval conditions.
- A drainage bung should be installed to allow easy emptying if the water is soiled.

- Only loose stone gathered from the site can be used in the construction; limestone pavement cannot be lifted or used for construction material.
- There should be no removal of stone from any archaeological monuments, old walls or other built structures.
- Animal escape ramps should be considered to help young mammals or birds escape to prevent fouling of the stored water.
- Only vegetation directly under the unit should be disturbed, do not disturb or remove vegetation in the surrounding area.

Picture 9: Example of Rainwater Catcher



Source: Caomhnú Árainn