

# Developing a farm map

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## Why do I need a farm map?

A farm map is a useful tool for management, planning and communication. It can assist with the day-to-day operations of the farm by providing a communication tool for staff and contractors and a useful planning tool for future developments helping to provide more accurate spatial data and hence budgets. It is also a useful tool to ensure that your operation is meeting its environmental requirements, providing good pesticide communication with neighbours, spray contractors and consultants. Developing a farm map is an important component of developing a whole farm plan, see *Whole farm planning resource sheet*.

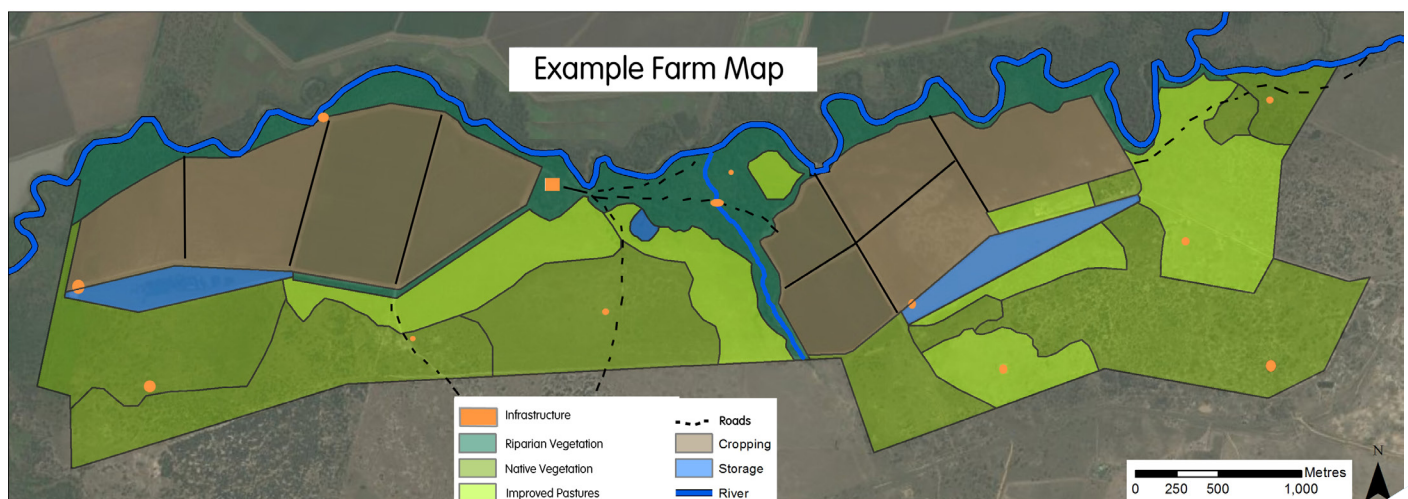
## How do I prepare a farm map?

Typically a farm map has a satellite base layer (Map 1) and shows important attributes of the farm such as the property boundary, infrastructure, cropping and non-cropping areas and significant natural features such as drainage lines and water sources. The more detailed the map is the more useful it is as a tool for management, planning and communication. Digital maps, ie. maps created using specialized computer software are more effective as they can incorporate existing precision ag data collected and used by machinery as part of your daily operations.

Assistance in accessing satellite imagery and developing a farm map is often available free through regional NRM bodies and organisations, often as part of a property planning course or sub-catchment planning with neighbouring landholders. Many private precision ag companies also provide whole farm mapping services at a cost. Alternatively a simple map may be created by printing a Google map and simply drawing the important features of your farm, either directly on the map or using an overlay system where a clear plastic sheet is used for different feature categories, refer to Appendix 1.

## What features do I put on my farm map?

Appendix 1 contains a detailed list of the type of features that can be included on a farm map and suggested symbols for each feature. This is guide only. When deciding how much information to put on your map it is important to think about how this map will help you run your business, assist with future planning and ensure you are meeting all your environmental requirements. To achieve the later is advised that sensitive areas such as natural water sources (rivers, creeks, billabongs and wetlands) and areas of remnant native vegetation are recorded on your map so they may be communicated to spray contractors or staff.



Map 1. Example of a farm map, which captures natural and built features of a farm

## Appendix 1.

### Base map/Satellite imagery

Feature	Colour or symbol
Property boundary	Black

### Overlay 1 – Infrastructure A

Feature	Colour or symbol
Fences	Black
Powerlines	Green
Phone lines	Brown
Creeks, drainage lines and floodways	Blue
Piped artesian bore	Orange
Houses	■ Black square
Sheds	□ Black square outline
Tanks	O
Stock dams	U
Diesel storage	◆
Chemical storage	★
Windmills	✶
Water testing sites – bore & river	● Blue dot

### Overlay 2 – Infrastructure B

Feature	Colour or symbol
Farm Roads	Brown
Reservoir	Blue
Irrigation cultivation paddocks	Red – code as irrigation
Cropping paddocks	Red – code as dryland
Supply channel	Blue
Tail drain	Orange
Main tail return	Green
Contour/slope	Black
Pump station	⊗
Field flow direction (length and slope)	→
Bores	●

Soil conservation works	+
Proposed infrastructure or development	‡

### Overlay 3 – Soils

Feature	Colour or symbol
Soil types (identify any areas where problems occur)	Brown / Soil Code
Soil test/monitoring sites	● Red dot
Areas of erosion risk	⊗
Contaminated sites	□

### Overlay 4 – Vegetation/Biodiversity

Feature	Colour or symbol
Vegetation types	Green/Veg Code
Vegetation monitoring sites	● Green dot

### Overlay 5 – Riparian

Feature	Colour or symbol
Riparian zone (buffer)	Blue
Wetland areas	Orange
Weeds	Green – code each different type of weeds
Eroded/sensitive areas along rivers or creeks	● Red dot

### Overlay 6 – Action Plan (Future proposed works)

Feature	Colour or symbol
Riparian	Use same symbol as in overlay 5
Vegetation	Use same symbol as in overlay 4
Weeds	Use same symbol as in overlay 5
Soils	Use same symbol as in overlay 3
Infrastructure	Use same symbols as in infrastructure overlays 1 & 2

