



 Joost Leiner - family farm



Joost Leiner



155 hectares



animal management

## INSTEAD OF DITCH WATER, USE SELF-MADE TROUGHS FOR CLEAN WATER FOR YOUR COWS

In Northwestern Germany, in a region close to the North Sea, Joost manages a dairy farm with 180 cows. The grasslands on his farm are representative for the coastal region with a lot of marshes, gley soil, and ditches which carry the water of drained grasslands. Due to its favourable conditions, grazing in this region has a long-standing tradition and it is a common practice to have the cows drink from ditches which form natural boundaries to the paddocks. In terms of animal health, however, this has always been a concern for farmers and veterinarians as parasites, such as liver fluke, remain a common problem – also for Joost and his farm. Also, Joost knows about the important role of sufficient water provision to optimize milk production, especially in summer. So, he decided to solve two problems at once and equip his 115 ha

grasslands with troughs and 2.5 km of water pipelines connected to clean municipal water. For this, he made use of discarded 1,000 L-IBC feed tanks, which had already been present on the farm, and modified them to their needs. This low-cost investment has been associated with improved animal health and productivity and allows greater flexibility in their daily grazing management. However, he often has to carry out additional maintenance work to fix leaks and broken floaters in such a large network of troughs. Joost could partially address the additional workload by implementing shut-off valves which allows to work individually at each trough.

### Farmer Interview

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xupehRi\\_kYU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xupehRi_kYU)



Photo credit: photos generated from farmer interview - Grünlandzentrum Niedersachsen/Bremen