Frequently asked questions

Q: *Can I grow fish in a concrete or plastic water-storage tank?*
A: Not economically; fish tanks are best purpose-built, as they must be shallow, drainable, have clean water (preferably filtered) and be large enough to produce economically viable quantities of fish. One tank does not make a fish farm!

Q: *Can I do aquaculture in a farm dam?*
A: Not unless the dam can be drained and managed like a farm pond. However, you can utilize a dam for cage-culture.

Q: *Does one need heavy machinery to make earth ponds?*
A: Small ponds of 10-50 square meters can be made with hand labour, however a tractor with a blade or a dam-scoop can make ponds of up to 0.25 hectare in area or larger. For large ponds, and major earthmoving, a bulldozer may be required.

Q: *Is a filtration system necessary?*
A: Extensive or semi-intensive earth ponds are generally unfiltered. Many raceway systems are flow-through with no filter. Where water volume is limited, or the fish are cultured intensively, a filter becomes vital to maintain water quality. Fish cannot be grown in small tanks (<5000 ℓ) of stagnant water without filtration or flow-through.

Q: *How much water does one need?*
A: This is a function of stocking density, food input, fish density, water quality, water replacement rate and filtration (if any). In semi-intensive ponds, a stocking density of 1 fish per m^2 water surface area is a rough guide (see Info box on page 25).

Q: *Is predator protection vital or a luxury?*
A: It is essential to have protection against animal predators as they can reduce stocks to almost nil if allowed unlimited access to the ponds or tanks. Fish farms in areas near human habitation also need protection against theft of the stock (fencing and alarms) if the fish stock can be easily stolen, which usually happens at night.