

Facial eczema spore count update

10 March 2015

Spore count data indicates that herds in the Macalister Irrigation District are now at risk of facial eczema. An outbreak has already occurred on one farm and the climatic conditions over the next few weeks will determine the risk of further facial eczema outbreaks. We are encouraging our Sentinel farms to submit samples every week, and suggesting that non-Sentinel farms should also consider having pasture samples tested.

Multiplication of facial eczema spores requires minimum temperatures above 12°C and high humidity. The above temperatures meet this requirement, and irrigation may provide the necessary moist conditions (our last significant rainfall was 15th February).

Latest observations from the Bureau of Meteorology Sale Weather Station over the last 2 weeks of February.

Date	Day	Minimum Temp (°C)	Rainfall (mm)
15	Sun	16.2	35.2
16	Mon	17.7	0
17	Tues	17.1	0
18	Wed	16.2	0.2
19	Thurs	16.4	0.6
20	Fri	15.0	0.2
21	Sat	17.7	0
22	Sun	16.3	0
23	Mon	14.1	0.2
24	Tues	15.3	1.2
25	Wed	15.0	2.4
26	Thurs	13.2	0
27	Fri	11.8	0
28	Sat	15.4	0

Macalister Irrigation District

The average spore count has dropped a little, but 8 of the 17 counts had counts of 20,000 or above.

Summary Spore Counts MID

Week beginning	Number of counts	Number zero	% Zero	Average count	Highest count
09-Feb-15	10	3	30%	4,500	10,000
16-Feb-15	17	5	29%	9,118	40,000
23-Feb	19	2	11%	32,105	200,000
2-Mar	17	3	18%	25,000	100,000



Your Levy at Work

In the last few days one farm in the Macalister irrigation District had a number of cows with photosensitisation. Blood tests on these cows showed that they were suffering severe liver damage consistent with facial eczema. Spore counts on paddocks on this farm showed that some of the paddocks contained very high numbers of facial eczema spores.

Based on this and other information, many farmers in the Macalister Irrigation District are already feeding zinc oxide to the cows. If we get another shower of rain, and conditions stay warm, there are plenty of spores about to lead to further rapid multiplication.

West Gippsland

Spore counts in West Gippsland are fairly similar to last week.

Summary Spore Counts West Gippsland						
Week beginning	Number of counts	Number zero	% Zero	Average count	Highest count	
26-Jan-15	14	10	71%	2,500	20,000	
2-Feb	0					
9-Feb	10	6	60%	2,500	10,000	
16-Feb	0					
23-Feb	10	4	40%	8,500	35,000	
2-Mar	4	1	25%	11,250	25,000	

Yarram District and South Gippsland

No spore counts were available this week.