

Facial eczema spore count update

17 March 2015

Macalister Irrigation District

Spore counts were performed on 10 paddocks this week with additional samples collected on a more frequent basis on one farm that has had clinical evidence of facial eczema.

The summary of the spore counts for the Sentinel paddocks is as follows:

<i>Summary Spore Counts MID</i>						
Week beginning	Number of counts	Number zero	%		Average count	Highest count
			Zero			
9/02/15	10	3	30%		4,500	10,000
16/02/15	17	5	29%		9,118	40,000
23/02/15	19	2	11%		32,105	200,000
2/03/15	27	3	11%		27,037	110,000
9/03/15	10	0	0%		30,500	110,000

Based on these figures, the spore counts increased rapidly between the 16th and 23rd of February and have then stayed at a fairly steady level.

With respect to spore multiplication, the periods of greatest risk occur when the humidity is close to 100% and grass minimum temperatures are above 12°C for 4 consecutive nights or more.

The following figures were taken from the daily weather observations from East Sale. While there have been 5 warm nights over this period, they have not been consecutive nights so the risk of spore multiplication is reduced.

BOM, Daily weather observations, East Sale

March	Minimum night temp.	Rainfall
1	16.0	3.4
2	7.8	0
3	12.3	0
4	10.3	0
5	11.8	2.2
6	12.5	0
7	13.2	0
8	10.9	0
9	13.4	0
10	13.9	0
11	9.7	0
12	8.5	0
13	9.0	0

These current conditions are not suitable for rapid multiplication of facial eczema spores in the MID. This is borne out by the steady spore counts over the last couple of weeks - but should the weather change, greater multiplication may occur.

For those farmers in the MID who are currently feeding zinc, the current spore counts suggest that you should continue for at least another couple of weeks, and until spore counts have dropped to lower levels and weather conditions are becoming very unsuitable for spore multiplication.

West Gippsland

Spore counts have increased somewhat over the last 3 weeks, but the number of samples submitted is relatively small. However, the counts indicate that should favourable conditions of warmth and moisture occur, there are sufficient spores about to multiply rapidly.

<i>Summary Spore Counts West Gippsland</i>						
Week beginning	Number of counts	Number zero	%		Average count	Highest count
			Zero			
9/02/15	10	6	60%		2,500	10,000
16/02/15	0					
23/02/15	10	4	40%		8,500	35,000
2/03/15	4	1	25%		11,250	25,000
9/03/15	4	0	0		21,250	50,000

Yarram District

Spore counts on Sentinel farms have decreased over the last week, however spores are still about and could multiply if suitable weather conditions occur.

<i>Summary Spore Counts Yarram</i>						
Week beginning	Number of counts	Number zero	%		Average count	Highest count
			Zero			
9-Feb	6	2	33%		8,333	15,000
16-Feb	4	3	75%		3,750	15,000
23-Feb	6	2	33%		5,833	15,000
9-Mar	6	5	83%		833	5,000

South Gippsland

No spore counts were available this week.