

Facial eczema spore count update – 9 February 2015

Maffra Irrigation District

Because spore counts had been trending upward (average spore count increasing, number of paddocks with a 0 spore count decreasing) over the last 3 weeks, we have made a concerted effort to get as many spore counts done on our Sentinel farms this week as possible.

Of 19 samples submitted this week, the number of paddocks with 0 spore counts has increased, the average spore count has decreased and the highest count has not increased any further.

Summary Spore Counts MID – last 5 weeks

Week beginning	Number of counts	Number zero	% Zero	Average count	Highest count
5/01/15	12	10	83%	1,250	10,000
12/01/15	2	1	50%	2,500	5,000
19/01/15	16	6	38%	5,000	20,000
26/01/15	12	4	33%	6,250	25,000
2/02/15	19	12	63%	2,898	25,000

Even on irrigation areas, paddocks are not particularly damp so the conditions at present may not be causing the spores that cause facial eczema to multiply. However, things can change rapidly so, we will be encouraging our Sentinel farms to submit pasture samples again this week as we would like to test as many Sentinel farms as possible again this week - watching for any sudden increase in spore counts.

West Gippsland

Pasture samples have been tested for each of the Sentinel farms in West Gippsland each week of January.

Summary Spore Counts West Gippsland - last 4 weeks

Week beginning	Number of counts	Number zero	% Zero	Average count	Highest count
5/01/15	14	14	100%	0	0
12/01/15	14	8	57%	2,143	5,000
19/01/15	14	14	100%	0	0
26/01/15	14	10	71%	2,500	20,000

The spore counts are generally fairly low, with only one paddock with a higher level.

West Gippsland is beginning to get somewhat dry and these are not conditions that are conducive to the spores of facial eczema multiplying rapidly. However, spore counts will continue to be watched closely over the next few weeks.