

## Season to Date

Showers have been intermittent and variable, for many farms soil moisture will be low despite some recent rain. Hay and silage are in full swing and even finished on some properties as the season seems to have shut off early. Hay cuts have been light on many farms, and most are hoping for some more rain.

2015 Rainfall to date (13/11/2015)				
	Albany	Bunbury	Margaret River	Serpentine
MTD	3.6mm	1.4mm	3.8mm	17.1mm
YTD	533.3mm	546.0mm	817.0mm	813.0mm

## Forage Management

Now is the perfect time to be feed sampling your hay and silage, and stacking it according to the results. As the season progresses it is good to know what your best quality feed is and be able to feed this to the animals that need it most (e.g. early lactation cows), and use your lower quality feed for those with lower energy requirements. If you're getting around 11 MJ/kg DM energy in your silage tests this is a good result, also paying attention to the crude protein content of your silage will indicate if you need to feed extra protein in the form of concentrates or not. Good quality hay should sit around 8-9 MJ/kg DM. To avoid any fire risk with hay stacks ensure hay isn't being stacked in sheds when it still contains moisture. Dry hay has a low fire risk.

## Concentrate Management

At this time of year the protein levels of pasture are starting to drop as the plant become more fibrous. Managing your transition diets is therefore crucial to ensure adequate protein levels in the ration, this may translate to increasing the amount of concentrates (such as protein meals) being fed to your herd. Also take care when adjusting rations to allow the rumen time to adapt, a large influx of rapidly fermentable grain into the rumen can result in ruminal acidosis, so it is best to make changes to the diet at a rate of around 1kg per day.

## General Management

Doing a feed budget for your herd for the coming season is a good idea at this time of year, and will allow you to judge whether or not you will need to buy in any extra fodder. Especially in the case of light hay and silage cuts.

## Animal Health

With the days starting to warm up now is a perfect time to be vigilant at checking all troughs are working correctly and stock have access to fresh water at all times. Making sure floats and pipes are all intact and not close to breaking could save you an over-flowing trough later in summer.

Being conscious of potential heat stress is important, allowing animal's access to shade and avoiding where possibly moving the herd at the hottest time of the day can minimise the risk. Dairy Australia has a best practise management guide book called "Cool Cows" which covers off this topic extensively and can be sent out to you if required, or you can visit the website: <http://www.coolcows.com.au/>.

## Upcoming events

**YDN** End of Year Dinner is on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November at Abbey Beach Resort. Contact Jessica on: [jessica@westerndairy.com.au](mailto:jessica@westerndairy.com.au) for more information.

**COCO Courses** are running in December through GSIT by Dario Nandapi. Contact Sheridan Hennig on [Sheridan.Hennig@gsit.wa.edu.au](mailto:Sheridan.Hennig@gsit.wa.edu.au) to register.

**Rumen8 Workshops** are finalised for the 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> of December depending on your region. Contact Tammy Negus for further information: [tammy.negus@gmail.com](mailto:tammy.negus@gmail.com).