

# Using soil moisture probes for seasonal preparedness

East and central Gippsland farmers are the target for a new on-farm demonstration focussed on soil moisture probes. The Producer Demonstration site (PDS) uses Gippsland's existing soil moisture probe network. It aims to help farmers understand the information it provides and use it to inform seasonal decisions.

Soil moisture probes provide valuable information on soil temperature and moisture depth that can assist with timely decisions, such as when to sow or apply fertilisers, and promote earlier spring livestock management decisions. Interest in this information is growing in response to climate variability.

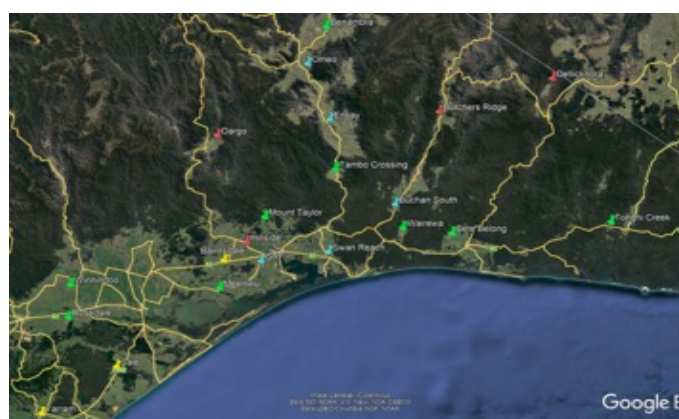
The demonstration brings together data from 17 soil probes across central and east Gippsland, providing monthly updates of soil moisture and temperature and considerations for pasture management.

Three sites across the region will also demonstrate how soil probe data can be used to make more timely decisions and the benefits will be monitored throughout the season.

The demonstration includes a series of paddock walks at the demonstration sites, and workshops to discuss and develop trigger points that assist with timely seasonal decisions and social media updates.

Installation of the soil moisture probes was supported by:

- The Australian Government National Landcare Program
- East Gippsland CMA
- TopSoils Project
- East Gippsland Landcare Network
- Far East Victoria Landcare
- Southern Farming Systems
- East Gippsland Shire
- Commonwealth Bank
- Gippsland Agricultural Group
- Agriculture Victoria.



**Figure 1:** Gippsland soil moisture probes.

We are grateful to the farmers hosting soil moisture probes on their properties for allowing their soil data to be shared in this project.

These Producer Demonstration Sites are funded by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) with input from Gippsland Agriculture Group (GAGG), East Gippsland Shire and Agriculture Victoria. Agriculture Victoria has also taken on the role of project manager.

## For further information contact:

Janice Dowe – Agriculture Victoria m: 0437 282 315 [janice.dowe@agriculture.vic.gov.au](mailto:janice.dowe@agriculture.vic.gov.au)

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