SEASONAL UPDATE WEBINAR - RECAP
October 2025

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1 Key messages & actions

- Now is the ideal time to dig in your paddocks and **learn about your soil variability**.
- **Match seasonal insights to your enterprise**: what worked last year, what needs adjusting?
- **Don't delay conversations with your agronomists or advisors** - if you haven't already, start planning and ask questions:
  - Seasonal patterns suggest an earlier cut-off in drier regions unless further rainfall boosts subsoil reserves - what does this mean for your operation?
  - Strategic fodder conservation and early irrigation decisions will be critical - what do these look like for your enterprise?

Current conditions:

- A "Goldilocks winter" (neither too wet nor too dry) has led to strong root establishment for autumn-sown crops and perennial pastures.
- Soil refill patterns vary across the state, with some regions achieving full refill and others starting the season with limited reserves.
- Pasture soil moisture uptake is ahead of the same time last year, especially in areas that received early rainfall**.**

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Regional Strategies:

- **North West –** Wet overall; sandier soils (e.g. Circular Head) are waterlogged. Strategic grazing to minimise pugging. Irrigation not yet needed for spring-sown crops.
- **East Coast & Fingal Valley** – Some refill reached, but uptake is faster than last year. Fingal has limited subsoil moisture - expect shorter summer growth. Irrigation for pastures should be underway.
- **Northern Midlands –** About a 2-week buffer compared to 2024 due to recent rain. Grass seed and clover paddocks are already using up topsoil moisture.
- **Southern Midlands, Coal & Derwent Valley** – Limited stored moisture from winter refill. Know whether soils refill top-down or bottom-up. Prioritise fodder conservation if refill is top-down.
- **Flinders & King Islands –** Following a similar trend to 2024 but with 1–2 weeks' buffer thanks to recent rain. Buffer is more pronounced in heavier soil zones.
- **North East** – Well-structured soils are wet but not waterlogged. Sandier soils that did not reach full refill require irrigation now. Watch for "coffee rock" restricting subsoil storage.

Image: "Coffee Rock" - courtesy of Jason Lynch, Pinion Advisory

2 Things to think about

Soil Moisture & Variability

- **Soil type and topography strongly affect holding capacity**:
  - Sandy soils drain quickly and risk early drying.
  - Clay soils retain more but need steady rainfall.
- Look out for **soil cracking on duplex or heavier clay** soils. Cracks result in water bypassing mid-soil layers, leaving moisture inaccessible to roots.

Fodder Conservation

- With signs of early uptake and limited subsoil buffers in many regions, **assess paddocks for silage/hay now**.
- Lock in **fodder conservation** strategies to prepare for an early finish in drier zones.

Irrigation timing

- Don't let wet patches dictate irrigation start. **Check drier parts of paddocks or use soil probe data**.

- **Use ETo and ETc** (more info available here):
  - ETo = standard evapotranspiration for reference pasture.
  - ETc = crop-adjusted demand (ETo × crop coefficient).
  - Match irrigation to crop growth stage to avoid under- or over-watering.

- **Diurnal stepping in soil moisture graphs is a key signal to start irrigating.** More info available here.

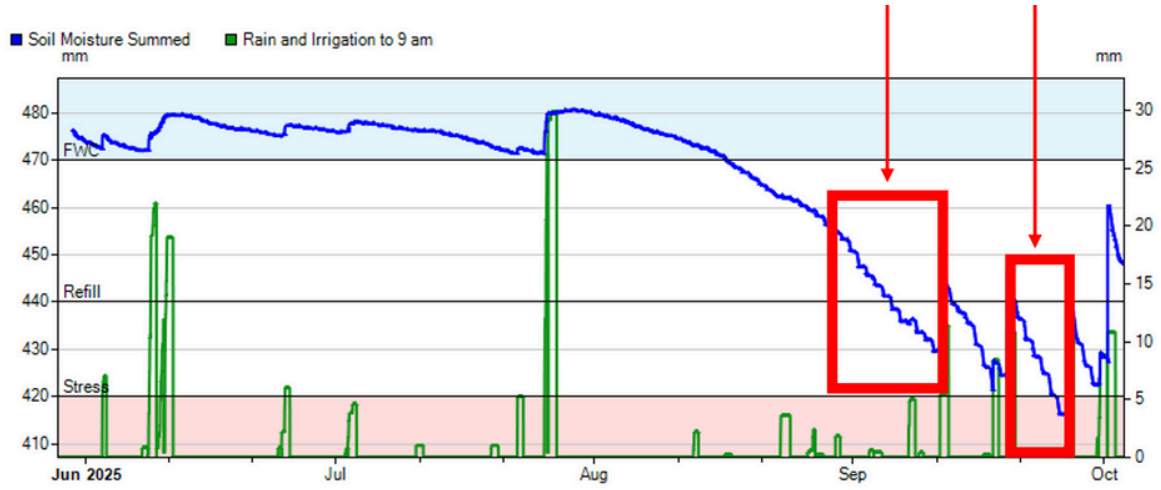
Irrigation Strategy

- **Limited water:** Spread irrigation across growth stages (sink:source balance). Engage agronomists early.

- **Adequate water**: Irrigate soil, not just crops. Wet the profile early to improve infiltration efficiency later.

- Irrigating during or after rainfall can boost **infiltration efficiency**.

Graph depicting soil moisture, with the blue line indicating soil moisture summed, and examples of diurnal stepping highlighted in the red boxes.



3 Tools & next steps

- **Ag Logic Weather Station & Soil Probe Network**: Subscribe for real-time weather, soil moisture and ETo data here.

- **Farming Forecaster**: Explore pasture growth forecasts and paddock-level data here.

- **Irrigation Scheduling**: Start collecting your own soil moisture data and/or observations so you can optimise timing to improve water use efficiency.

- **FAO Crop Factors** (fao.org): Reference for calculating ETc here.

- **Online Resources**: Short videos and guides by Ag Logic on interpreting soil moisture data, ETo, and other weather data can be found here.

- **Data display requests**: If you have any requests for which data should be displayed, or different ways the current data should be displayed please let Marek know via email or phone/text.

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Next month's webinar: Friday 7 November, 1pm.
Register online: tasfarmhub.com.au/events