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ASWGA Albury-Wodonga Region Report

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The Albury/Wodonga region has had quite a big turn in the season having had reasonably favorable conditions since early May in the lower North East of Victoria. However the Omeo-Benambr-Cassilis areas have had very little rain and are in extreme drought conditions. A lot of sheep have been sold. Windy conditions during June saw raised dust in the area worse than has ever been seen before.

Dairy farmers are doing it really tough following the collapse of milk sales and the opening prices are slashed by 50%. A lot of Goulburn Valley dairy farmers milked cows under a feed lot situation over the last 2-3 years buying in large quantities of feed because there is no irrigation water. However that scenario is no longer viable and a lot of cows have been sold. Farmers are endeavoring to milk the remaining cows on grass. One feedlot that I know was milking 3000 cows recently sold 2000 cows and is going to milk what they have left on grass. For this reason I don't think the market will be there for fodder this season.



Photo 1: Fire damage in the North East

Parts of the lower North East that burnt in the February fires are recovering slowly since the rain. Fortunately the rain has come slowly and has not caused major runoff problems in waterways.

Because of the low stock numbers in the north east large areas of land have gone under cereal crop this year. But look out if these crops fail and farmers make hay and silage of it because the usual market for it won't be there.

European Union Delegation visit Albury/Wodonga Region

The Humphry Family of Springhurst played host to a contingent of European Union Delegates on the 9th of July. The group was in Australia to look at sustainable farming practices. The Humphry family represented Victoria last November at the National Landcare Awards in Canberra. They were also looking at various scenarios of Government funding for Landcare – the latest being a system where by a group of farmers can decide what they want to study and then apply for Government funding to carry out the research.



Photo 2: Ian Humphry ASWGA Albury/Wodonga Region (fourth from left) with European Delegation