SEASONAL UPDATE WEBINAR - RECAP
May 2026

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1. Current Conditions & Regional Strategies

North West

- Improved rainfall has supported pasture growth and started to recharge the subsoil.
- Better infiltration from consecutive rainfall events has improved soil water availability and storage.

North East

- Rainfall has been variable, with limited deeper soil moisture recharge.
- Pasture response depends on pasture species and soil type.
- Any Autumn rain has been used by the pasture and needs follow up rain.

Northern Midlands

- Conditions remain variable with inconsistent rainfall.
- Pasture growth responded to some Autumn rain and mild weather but requires follow-up rainfall to continue.

Southern Midlands, Coal Valley, Derwent Valley and East Coast

- Dry conditions continue with no soil moisture at depth.
- Pasture growth is limited and variability and past rains have not led to any significant pasture growth.

Flinders Island & King Island

- Rainfall has supported growth, but moisture is being used quickly.
- Follow up rainfall is needed to maintain pasture performance.
- A wet winter for King Island is needed for a “reset” in soil moisture coming into spring.

Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry | Future Drought Fund | TAS FARM INNOVATION HUB | University of Tasmania TIA Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture | AG LOGIC Agricultural Intelligence

2. Autumn Break Update - by region

North West	✓
North East	?
Northern Midlands	?

Southern Midlands, Coal Valley & Derwent Valley	X
East Coast & FIngall Valley	X
Flinders Island & King Island	X

3. Key messages & actions: when planning for spring and summer crop fertiliser

- Soil variability within paddocks is often much greater than expected, particularly for pH and key nutrients.
- Gridded soil sampling is a practical way to identify differences in soil type, pH and nutrient levels across paddocks.
- pH is a major driver of nutrient availability and should be addressed early to improve overall fertiliser response.
- Large differences in pH across a paddock are common and can limit crop performance if not managed.
- Nutrient levels can vary significantly across paddocks, so uniform fertiliser rates often lead to over or under application.
- Variable rate fertiliser allows nutrients to be targeted to where they are most needed, improving efficiency.
- Fertiliser decisions should focus on the most limiting factor rather than applying standard blends.
- Spending the same fertiliser budget more strategically can improve confidence that nutrients are going to the right areas.
- Micronutrients can have a significant impact on yield and should not be overlooked.
- Soil moisture, drainage and even water application all influence how nutrients are used by crops.

4. Things to think about or speak with your advisor about

- Start with soil sampling to understand variability rather than treating paddocks as uniform.
- Use grid sampling to identify differences in pH, nutrients and soil properties.
- Prioritise fixing pH as it affects availability of all other nutrients.
- Identify the most limiting nutrient and focus fertiliser investment there.
- Avoid relying on standard fertiliser blends without checking soil test results.
- Discuss target nutrient levels and ratios with your advisor and understand why products are recommended.
- Consider variable rate fertiliser to improve efficiency across variable paddocks.
- Look beyond major nutrients and assess micronutrient requirements.
- Use autumn as a key time for soil sampling.
- Plan fertiliser programs early for spring and summer cropping.

5. Tools & next steps

- Start using gridded soil sampling to map variability and guide fertiliser decisions.
- Use EM38 mapping or similar tools to identify soil type differences and guide sampling locations.
- Ground truth soil maps by digging and observing soil differences in the paddock.
- Apply variable rate fertiliser to target pH and key nutrients across paddocks.
- Repeat soil sampling over time to track improvements and changes.
- Overlay soil data with yield or crop performance where possible to understand key drivers of yield variability in your specific situation.
- Use targeted tissue testing to link soil and applied nutrients with plant uptake.
- Use drones or crop monitoring tools to identify variability and guide field checks.
- Keep records of soil tests, fertiliser applications and crop performance to improve future decisions.

6. Links & useful resources

Bureau of Meteorology long range forecast
Short video explaining how to use the long range forecast

Farming Forecaster
Farming Forecaster places soil moisture, local weather, pasture production and livestock performance information at your fingertips.

Optimising irrigation resources
Case studies, factsheets and associated short explainer videos can all be found on the TAS Farm Innovation Hub website and YouTube.

Ag Logic Weather Station & Soil Probe Network Sign-up
Subscribe for real-time weather, soil moisture and ETo data. This supports more confident irrigation and fodder decisions, especially when conditions are changing rapidly. If you have requests for how you would like to see data displayed contact Ag Logic. Feedback helps improve how information is shared across the network.

Ag Logic Online Resources
Short videos and guides from Ag Logic explain how to interpret soil moisture graphs, reference evapotranspiration (ETo) and crop evapotranspiration (ETc). These resources support decisions on when to start, pause and resume irrigation.

Next month's webinar: Friday 5 June 2026
Register online: tasfarmhub.com.au/events