

Circular Head region -Dairy Effluent status

TR Kulinski

situation..

- Region has many larger dairies
- Greater concentration of dairies in some regions
- For many years environmental issues deemed “too difficult”
- Limited council resources

..Council appointed officer to audit all dairies..

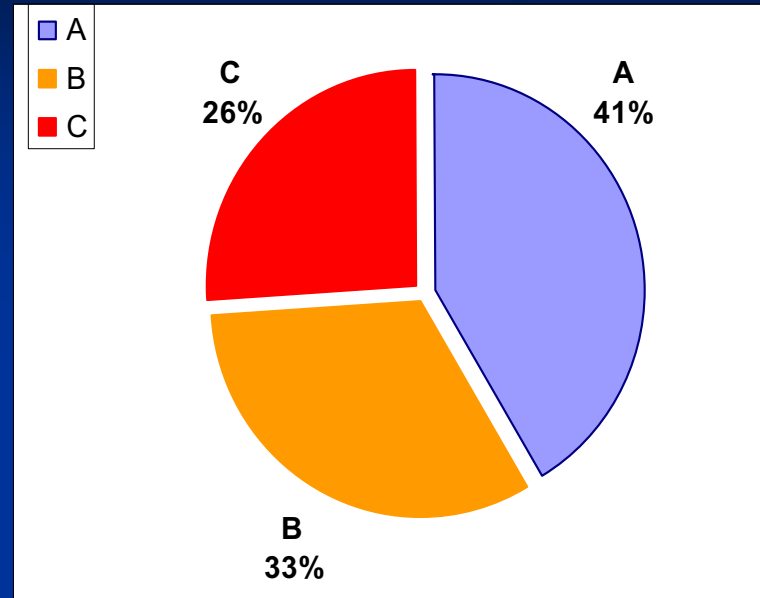
basic stats for region..

- 150 dairy farms, from Sister Hills to Marrawah
- Average of nearly 400 cows per farms
- Producing some 300 million litres pa
- Was a total value of near \$150m

Also....

- Many farms in low-lying flat regions
- Many pits and ponds

findings..



Grades:

A....all **appears** to function OK

B....need some work to improve but not causing any obvious off-farm issues

C....need work, as evidence of off-farm contamination is either visible or highly probable with rains (eg. Effluent in dam or watercourse near boundary)

observations..

- Farms in low lying areas are no worse than those from the hilly areas....
- Very few ponds had been drained or emptied in readiness for the winter months
- Many pits and ponds showed signs of overflow
- Many overflows **were** close to ditches, drains, paddock hollows, watercourses or creeks!!!
- Many overflows were obviously well contained on the property

issues..

- The pond is a collector of rain water
- The dairy yard is a collector of rain water
- Some dairies have water diversion facilities
 - Most do not operate reliably
- Many ponds will overflow in a good rain
- Draining ponds just before drying off can be a waste of resource, as nutrient absorption does not occur if ground is waterlogged.
- Waterlogged paddocks just drain away, especially if topped up with a rain.

- Paddock effluent overloading and laneway buildup will continue to be a problem. These need constant management!!!



Friday, June 5, 2009

MERCURY — 19

Duck River poison woe

MICHELLE PAINE

POISON has been found in a cherished Tasmanian river at more than four times international standards.

The state's leading chemical manager has slammed the findings, saying it was part of "widespread and common contamination".

The weedkiller MCPA was found in the Duck River, which lends its name to the award-winning butter brand and is linked to Tasmania's clean, green image.

"The contamination of MCPA in the Duck River has been an ongoing concern," said Christian Goninon of the

Farmers urged to reduce spraying

Department of Primary Industries and Water chemical management branch.

"This is a serious issue which needs to be addressed," Mr Goninon said.

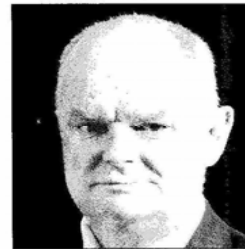
"This ongoing contamination must not continue.

"If improvements aren't



CONCERN: Christian Goninon made the department will have to look at what other measures it may need to take."

Mr Goninon said most of the 100-plus farmers in the area near Smithton used the weed-



DIRECTIVE: Chris Oldfield killer on their pastures.

He said investigations had started but sources of the spray were hard to find.

"What we have found is that the contamination of the river

is widespread and common, particularly after significant rainfall events in spring and autumn."

DPIW is talking to farmers in a bid to improve their management.

Australia has no health value for MCPA but the World Health Organisation has set a guideline of two parts per billion, compared to 9.1 parts per billion detected in the river on May 15. Contamination was also found on April 27.

The Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association said it would work with the State Government to address the problem.

"One of the first things we

need to do is establish whether this is an isolated incident," TFGA chief executive officer Chris Oldfield said.

MCPA has been detected repeatedly over the past four years since testing began, although at much lower levels, while atrazine has also been found.

Mr Oldfield said MCPA was used in various chemical applications to kill weeds and was better than many chemicals used in the past.

But he urged Duck River farmers to reduce the use of MCPA chemicals wherever possible and use weather forecasts to avoid spraying when rain was likely.

AFP moves to target illegals

AUSTRALIA will help Indonesian police train and equip new specialist strike teams that will target people smugglers across the archipelago.

Senior Australian Federal Police officers this week met with Indonesian National Police counterparts to discuss

Mr Negus said the new approach represented a significant boost in co-operation between the AFP and Indonesian police.

He said AFP officers in Indonesia would remain based in Jakarta but could spend time in the region working with the

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consequences..

- TDIA Effluent Code of Practice
- EPA laws
- NZ councils' rules & fines etc

- Coli contamination in region
- Effect on environment **AND** other industries
 - Projects underway on Montagu, Duck river etc

Dairy industry self regulation better than being regulated

- There is not any one “best practice” option
- Best design depends on land layout, size, cow numbers, investment, management capability, etc
- Every farmer has a duty to retain all effluent on the property (same principle as for all fertilisers, chemical sprays, etc.)
- ALL waterways must be protected, on land and any underground aquifers

the future..

Like it or not...everyone has a responsibility for

■ Environmental.....

- Compliance
- Sustainability ???
- Awareness

checked thru ..audits -TDIA / Councils / Dept. of Environment
..scrutiny or reactivity by MEDIA..!!!!

What benefits?? ..fertilizer replacement/environmental
compliance/protection of other industries

What cost ..initial installation, then small ongoing

What support/training ..DairyTas/consultants/TIAR/
many websites/DairySAT

...do you need more???

interesting turnaround..

25 years ago...

“the closer we are to a creek, the less of a problem we have.....”

NOW....

“don't want to waste any of it...it's valuable !!!”

remember..

Dairy effluent is a resource

Do not waste it....

It is not cute to pollute !!