

26/10/2015

Seasonal forecasting workshops on offer for Mackay Whitsunday graziers

Our region's climate is highly variable, what do climate and seasonal forecasts mean for our graziers and how can they start planning ahead?

Reef Catchments' Regional Landcare Facilitator and the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) are hosting free half-day workshops during November for graziers in Mackay and Proserpine.

The workshops **Seasonal Forecasting Tools for the Grazing Industry** will be held in Walkerston on Wednesday the 4th November and Proserpine on Wednesday the 11th November.

RSVPs close on the 30th October for the Mackay workshop and 6th November for the Proserpine workshop. Graziers are encouraged to book their spot, as places are limited.

Reef Catchments' Regional Landcare Facilitator, Dr Robyn Bell, said the local climate impacts everyone, with farmers and land managers particularly exposed to forecast changes in weather, rainfall and climatic events. The current El Niño is a prime example of thinking about land management decisions that impact on sustainability.

"For example, we know regionally that high natural variability in rainfall and temperature occurs throughout the region from year to year, yet there are now a number of forecasting tools available to predict the likelihood of rain in the short to medium term. These tools are of great assistance in making future decisions about mating, sowing pasture or making infrastructure changes," she said.

"We are now working to try and equip our graziers with the tools and knowledge they need to bring together forecast changes in climate and weather patterns with future farm planning and property management."

The workshop has been designed to improve understanding of the region's climate drivers, providing tools that can be used to access and interpret climate forecast information. The workshop will cover the following elements linked to weather and climate:

- Current climate outlook for the region
- El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) including SOI Phases
- Recent developments in international forecast systems (ECMWF)
- The Madden Julian Oscillation (MJO) (40 day wave)
- Discussion of farm management decisions linked to seasonal forecasts
- Links to climate information sources

"We are strongly encouraging local graziers to come along as this kind of information specific to our region has been thin on the ground to date or difficult to access to date," Dr Bell said.

The presenter for the day is Neil Cliffe (Senior Industry Development Officer, QDAF). Morning tea and lunch will be provided.

To RSVP contact Reef Catchments: Debbie Legge on - 07 4945 2321 or debbie.legge@reefcatchments.com

ENDS

EVENT DETAILS

Visit www.reefcatchments.com

MACKAY

WHEN: Wednesday, 4 November 2015, 9am-1pm

WHERE: Wests Leagues Club, 2 Branscombe Road, Walkerston

RSVP: By Friday 30th October on (07) 4945 2321 or debbie.legge@reefcatchments.com

PROSERPINE

WHEN: Wednesday 11th November 2015 9:00am – 1:00pm

WHERE: Proserpine Community Centre, 36 Gardenia St

RSVP: By Friday 6th November on (07) 4945 2321 or debbie.legge@reefcatchments.com

IMG: Climate forecasting workshops are on offer for Mackay Whitsunday graziers this November.

