



## Victorian worm update

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Here in hotter/drier North Eastern Victoria there has still been a reasonable amount of rain, 48mm for December and 26mm so far for January.

Worm egg counts are generally very high and farmers are at present sending in lots of tests.

It is a good idea to keep a check on the situation by testing sheep every four weeks during this wet summer. Also, get a larval culture done to see if the blood-suckers, Barber's Pole worm, Haemonchus, are present. Goats and alpacas should be tested soon as they carry sheep worms. Cattle should also be monitored as the worms are multiplying rapidly.

If you notice a green scum on any of your dams it is a good idea to get a water sample examined. There are many types of algae that bloom. Most of them are harmless to stock, however there are 5 types of toxic Blue-Green Algae (BGA).

Toxic blooms have already been reported this year on dams in this area, and they seem to be on the increase. Unfortunately, if BGA's are detected, then the dam water is not suitable for stock use.

The major pollutants which stimulate excessive algal growth are plant nutrients, nitrogen and phosphorus which are contained in human sewerage, animal manures, fertilizers, detergents and also result from soil erosion.

If you are confronted with an algal bloom in your dam the first thing to do is stay out of the water and do not drink it (even if filtered and boiled). Then, keep stock away and provide an alternative water supply. Don't spray water containing algal blooms on to pastures, crops, grapes, vegetables or fruit.

It is very important to get any green scums identified. Only a microscopic examination in a laboratory will confirm the types of algae present.