

MARCH 2022 – RAIN EXTREMES LOCKING IN

This year is only three months old, but an extreme pattern of rainfall seems to be developing fast. January's rain was 75% more than average, February's was a miserable 7% of average and a wet March scored 61% greater than average. April looks like another crash, with almost nothing measured in the gauge so far.

Most of the 68.7mm of rain that did fall in March came in the first ten days, all 64.6mm of it. Only 4.1mm fell in the rest of the month. This early rain triggered a false break. The seed that germinated then has barely grown since. If substantial rains don't arrive by the end of April, good pre-winter pasture growth can't happen; if it's not stopped by the dry, it will be stopped by the cold. Anyone with grazing animals will be hanging out for a true break before ANZAC day. Without it, valuable fodder reserves will be hammered over a long and hard winter.

Here at the Blueberry Farm we are still watering, it's the latest we've run irrigation in a decade. The plants have started their autumn colour change, but the ground is still very dry – the times certainly seem odd and uncertain.