**Demonstration goal**: Use soil moisture data and modelling to predict spring pasture growth, assisting producers to make early decisions and prepare for increasingly variable springs.

**Site location:** Dartmoor, Pigeon Ponds and Baynton

**Producer group:** Glenelg BestWool/BestLamb, Macarthur BetterBeef, Central Ranges Grassland Society of Southern Autstralia

**Group coordinators:** Andrew Kennedy, Andrew Speirs, John McMaster

**Agriculture Victoria coordinator:** Jane Court

**Duration:** 2018–2021

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*Measuring spring growth near the soil moisture probe*

**What are we aiming to achieve and why?**

This demonstration aims to determine whether soil moisture probes can be used with modelling to make early predictions of spring pasture growth.

Climate projections indicate an increase in the variability – and general shortening – of spring, so reliable pasture predictions could assist producers to make decisions on how best to prepare for the season.

ASKBill and MLA’s rainfall-to-pasture tool are two examples of tools that aim to do this, but they need to be validated and discussed by producers to determine the value and accuracy at a local level.

*Cuts are taken to estimate pasture growth*

**Method**

**•** Modelling predictions of pasture curves for each site by Brendan Cullen at Melbourne University. This includes long-term average annual monthly growth estimates, variability and predictions (e.g. from October) using soil moisture data from the probes.

• Validation of the modelled predictions through monthly cuts to measure pasture growth.

• Discussion with the producer groups involved about the predictions, localised pasture growth and how to use the information to make useful on-farm decisions.

**Partners:** This demonstration is conducted with Agriculture Victoria and co-funded by Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA).

**Contact**

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**More information**

[agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/on-farm-demonstrations](http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/livestock/on-farm-demonstrations)

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