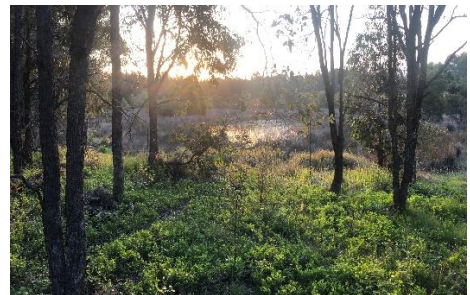
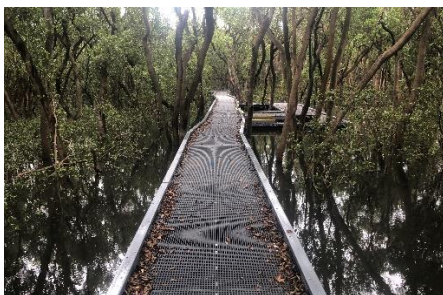


NSW Arbovirus Surveillance & Mosquito Monitoring Program, 2018-2019

Weekly Update: 22 March 2019



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All reports for the season are available at:

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/pests/vector/Pages/nswasp-weekly-report-2018-19.aspx>

Please send questions or comments about this report to: Environmental Epidemiology Unit, Environmental Health Branch, Health Protection NSW: nswh-envepi@health.nsw.gov.au

Testing and scientific services were provided by the Department of Medical Entomology, NSW Health Pathology (ICPMR) for the mosquito surveillance, and the Arbovirus Emerging Diseases Unit, NSW Health Pathology (ICPMR) for the sentinel chicken surveillance. Mosquito and wetland images were provided by Michael Onn and Dr Cameron Webb, University of Sydney. Please note that these results remain the property of the NSW Ministry of Health and may not be used or disseminated to unauthorised persons or organisations without permission.

Summary

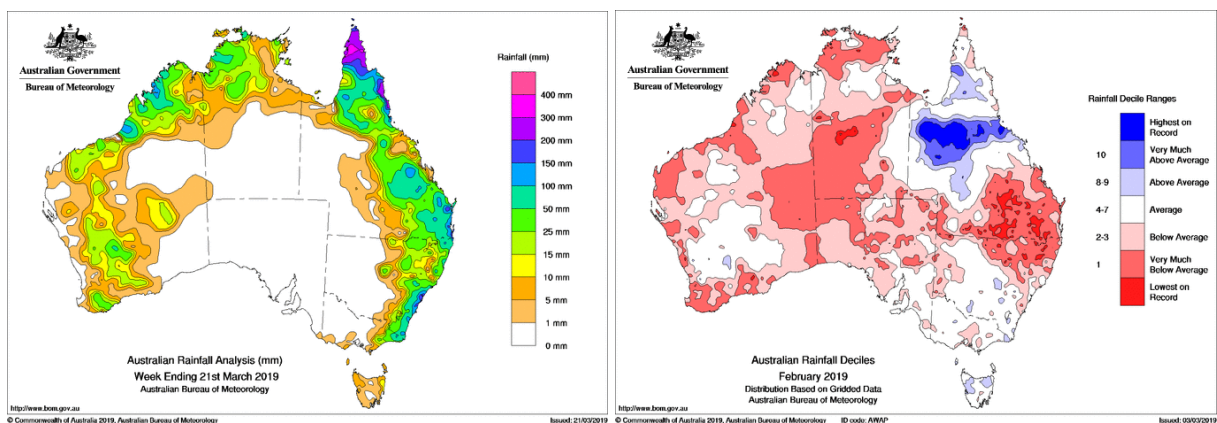
- **Climate:** over the last week, there was moderate to heavy rainfall all along the coast, while the inland remained largely dry. For February, rainfall was below average for the state north east and average elsewhere. Maximum and minimum temperatures were up to three degrees above average.
- **Three Month Forecast:** for April 2019 to June 2019, the chance of exceeding median rainfall is around 50%, thus rainfall should be normal ahead. Maximum and minimum temperatures are expected to exceed the normal. According to the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) as of 19 March 2019, the El Niño Southern Oscillation remains neutral, however there is now a 70% chance that an El Niño will form later this year.
- **Tides:** the next series of high tides that may trigger hatching are occurring now over 18–23 March 2019, with heights up to 1.95m forecasted. The tides have been higher than predicted by up to 16cm with the heavy local rains.
- **Murray Valley Encephalitis virus (MVEV) Models:** the data relevant to both the Forbes' and Nicholls' hypotheses have been updated to February 2019. Neither model is suggestive of an MVEV epidemic.
- **Mosquito Numbers Inland:** mosquito numbers continue to be well below average with only Griffith yielding a 'medium' catch (50–100 mosquitoes) this week. All collections of *Culex annulirostris* are now 'low'.
- **Mosquito Numbers Coast:** collections were up this week with larger collections trapped at most sites. Gosford, Tweed and Ballina continue to yield 'high' mosquito numbers (100–1,000), with the Lennox Head site at Ballina trapping over 1,000 mosquitoes.
- **Mosquito Numbers Sydney:** overall mosquito numbers were slightly down this week, although still 'very high' (1,000-10,000) from the Georges River site of Picnic Point with over 2,800 mosquitoes from and close to a 1,000 from Alford's Point. Both collections were strongly dominated by *Aedes vigilax*. Duck River produced a 'high' catch of close to 300.
- **Arboviral Isolates:** there were no detections this week from the mosquitoes.
- **Chicken Sentinel Flocks:** all chickens were negative to MVEV and Kunjin virus (KUNV).
- **Human Notifications:** for the current fiscal year, there have been 323 Ross River virus (RRV) and 38 Barmah Forest virus (BFV) notifications.

Comment: the recent rains along the coast are bound to see an increase in freshwater breeding mosquitoes in the upcoming weeks. Unfortunately the rain coincided with the high tides, further pushing up their height. This is likely to lead to greater *Aedes vigilax* hatches. Collections for this species were much lower this week at all sites, which was to be expected, with the tidal cycle. Notifications remain much lower than average but there were 21 RRV reports this week, a notable increase over a seven day period.

Environmental Conditions

Rainfall

Rainfall across Australia for the week ending 21 March 2019 is depicted on the left and monthly rainfall deciles for February 2019 are on the right. Over the last week, there was moderate to heavy rainfall all along the coast, while the inland remained largely dry. For February, rainfall was below average for the state north east and average elsewhere. Maximum and minimum temperatures for January were up to three degrees above average.



Three Month Rainfall & Temperature Forecast

For April 2019 to June 2019, the chance of exceeding median rainfall for NSW is around 50%, thus rainfall should be around normal for the upcoming months. Maximum and minimum temperatures are both predicted to exceed the average. The following webpages contain graphics of the seasonal outlook:

www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/median (Rainfall outlook).

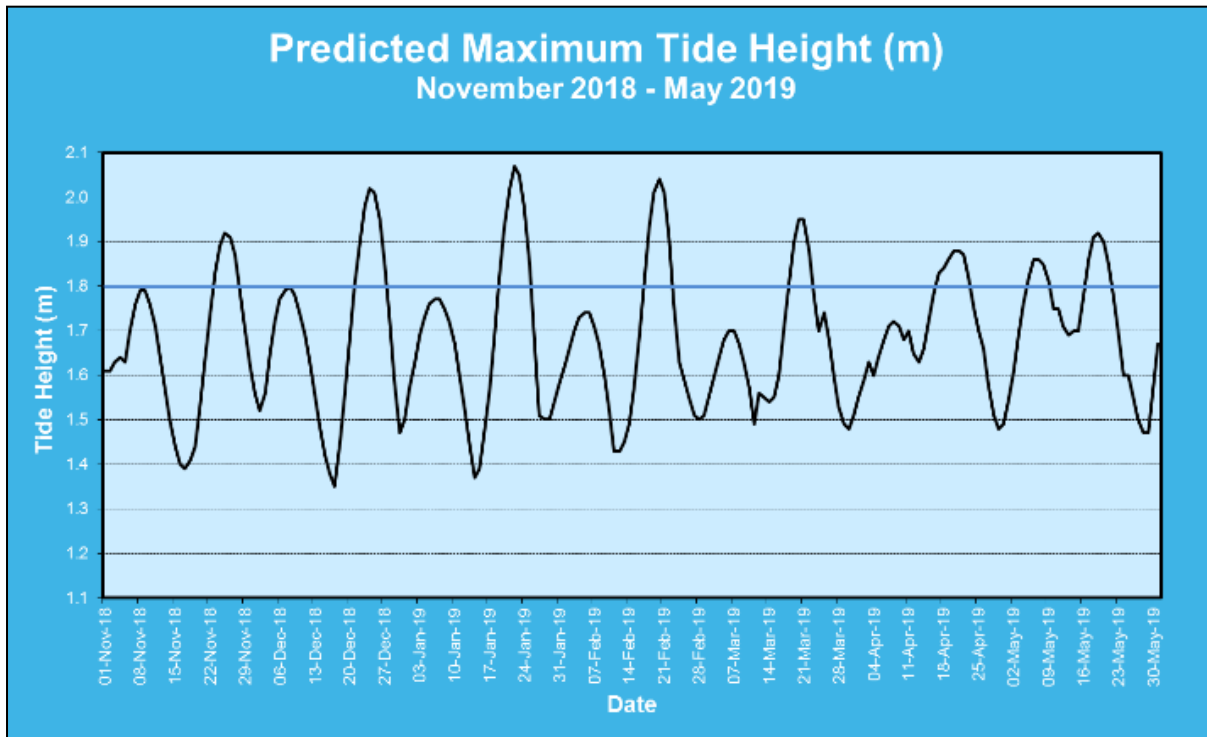
www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/temperature/summary (Max & min temperature outlook).

According to the BOM as of 19 March 2019, the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is currently neutral. However, the BOM’s ENSO outlook has moved from ‘WATCH’ to ‘ALERT’, which means there is now a 70% chance of an El Niño developing later in 2019. The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is currently neutral and expected to remain this way through autumn. Note that the IOD has little influence on the nation’s climate over December to April.

For more information: www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/ and, www.bom.gov.au/climate/iod/

Tides

Tidal information is relevant for the prediction of the activity of the salt marsh mosquito, *Aedes vigilax*. Typically for NSW, high tides of over 1.8m, as measured at Sydney, can induce hatching of *Aedes vigilax* larvae and the graph below of predicted tide heights can provide some indication of when this is likely to occur. Note this trigger height varies between regions, thus at Batemans Bay, a tide height over 0.8m can initiate egg hatching.



The next series of high tides that may trigger hatching are due to occur this week over 18–23 March 2019, with heights up to 1.95m forecasted. The tides have been higher than predicted by up to 16cm with the heavy local rains.

Actual tide heights can vary by 0.3m (or more in unusual circumstances) due to variations in atmospheric pressure, rainfall, wind, and other climatic phenomena. Sea level rise with climate change may also result in increased tide heights. Thus predicted tide height should be used as a gauge only for potential *Aedes vigilax* activity. The larvae of the saltmarsh mosquito relies on an inundation/drying cycle for the mudflats in which it lives; continual wet weather prevents the drying cycles thereby reducing larval production.

MVEV Climatic Models

Three predictive environmental based models for MVEV activity have been developed; the Forbes (which relies on rainfall in the river catchment basins of Eastern Australia), Nicholls' (based on the Southern Oscillation), and the Bennett theory (based on the Indian Ocean Dipole). The latter theory has low reliability and is not considered below. Note that all the predictive models have been developed on a limited data set and do not always forecast activity. There can also be unusual environmental conditions that may lead to the introduction of the virus to south-eastern Australia, such as the movement of low pressure cells from the north to the south of the country during 2008 and 2011. Vertical transmission of the virus (from adult to the egg in *Aedes* species) can result in restricted activity following localised heavy precipitation (as per 2003 at Menindee).

i. Forbes' Hypothesis

Rainfall was not above Decile 7 in all of the river catchment basins in eastern Australia for the last quarter of 2017, the first quarter of 2018, the last quarter of 2018, or the first quarter of 2019* (Table 1). Thus Forbes' hypothesis for an MVEV outbreak has not been fulfilled.

Table 1. Rainfall indices for the main catchment basins of eastern Australia as per Forbes' hypothesis, relevant to the 2018-2019 season. Note that a value of 1 equals Decile 7 rainfall.

Catchment Basin	Oct-Dec 2017	Jan-Mar 2018	Oct-Dec 2018	Jan-Mar* 2019
Darling River	0.93	0.52	0.71	0.22
Lachlan/Murrumbidgee/Murray Rivers	1.15	0.70	0.87	0.98
Northern Rivers	0.81	1.07	0.70	0.82
North Lake Eyre system	0.75	0.69	0.56	0.53

*Data for January & February only

ii. Nicholls' Hypothesis

Table 2. The seasonal atmospheric pressures (in mm) according to Nicholls' hypothesis, relevant to the 2018-2019 season.

	Autumn 2018	Winter 2018	Spring 2018
2018 Value	1009.27	1011.8	1010.90
Pre past MVEV seasons	<1009.74	<1012.99	<1009.99

The Spring period pertaining to the Nicholls' hypothesis is not in line with past MVEV active years.

Arboviral Isolates

LOCATION – Site	Date Trapped	Detection Method	Virus
GEORGES RIVER – Alford's Point	14/Mar/2019	Whole trap grind	Stratford
CENTRAL COAST – Ourimbah	13/Mar/2019	Whole trap grind	Ross River
PARRAMATTA – Duck River	12/Mar/2019	Whole trap grind	Stratford
PARRAMATTA – Duck River	25/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Stratford
GEORGES RIVER – Alford's Point	20/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Ross River
SOPA – Haslams Creek	18/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Ross River
PARRAMATTA – Duck River	18/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Stratford
GEORGES RIVER – Deepwater	12/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Ross River
GEORGES RIVER – Deepwater	12/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
GEORGES RIVER – Picnic Point	12/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
SOPA – Newington	12/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Stratford
GEORGES RIVER – Alford's Point	6/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
CENTRAL COAST – Ourimbah	4/Feb/2019	Whole trap grind	Stratford
GRIFFITH – Lake Wyangan	29/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
GEORGES RIVER – Alford's Point	24/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
PARRAMATTA – Duck River	23/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Stratford
HILLS – Glenorie	23/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
GEORGES RIVER – Picnic Point	23/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
BLACKTOWN – Ropes Crossing	22/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
GEORGES RIVER – Picnic Point	16/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
GEORGES RIVER – Alford's Point	10/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
GEORGES RIVER – Picnic Point	9/Jan/2019	Whole trap grind	Edge Hill
GEORGES RIVER – Picnic Point	9/Jan/2019	FTA card	Kokobera

FTA Card = Sugar based surveillance. Whole trap grind = all the mosquitoes are ground (or a subsample of the larger collections) and tested for arboviral nucleic acid.

Exotic Detections

There were no detections of exotic mosquitoes this week.

Human Notifications

Weekly notifications of human mosquito-borne disease infections are available from the NSW Ministry of Health, Communicable Disease Weekly Report and summarized in the Table below* (www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/reports/Pages/CDWR.aspx).

Table 4. Notifications of mosquito-borne disease in NSW, 2018-2019*

Week Ending	RRV	BFV	DENV [†]	Malaria [†]	CHIKV [†]	ZIKV [†]	Total
7-Jul-18	12	1	10	1	0	0	24
14-Jul-18	9	1	2	3	0	0	15
21-Jul-18	5	2	3	2	0	0	12
28-Jul-18	8	1	6	3	0	0	18
4-Aug-18	4	0	8	3	0	0	15
11-Aug-18	8	3	6	1	0	0	18
18-Aug-18	12	0	3	1	0	0	16
25-Aug-18	8	1	2	1	0	0	12
1-Sep-18	8	0	0	0	0	0	8
8-Sep-18	5	1	2	2	0	0	10
15-Sep-18	13	4	1	5	0	0	23
22-Sep-18	5	0	5	1	0	0	11
29-Sep-18	7	2	5	2	0	0	16
6-Oct-18	10	0	2	1	0	0	13
13-Oct-18	9	0	2	4	0	0	15
20-Oct-18	7	0	5	2	1	0	15
27-Oct-18	11	0	8	1	0	0	20
3-Nov-18	10	0	5	0	1	0	16
10-Nov-18	7	3	6	0	3	0	19
17-Nov-18	5	3	9	2	0	0	19
24-Nov-18	4	1	8	0	0	0	13
1-Dec-18	11	1	14	1	1	0	28
8-Dec-18	11	1	5	0	2	0	19
15-Dec-18	1	1	3	0	0	0	5
22-Dec-18	9	0	0	7	0	0	16
29-Dec-18	2	0	0	1	0	0	3
5-Jan-19	10	0	4	1	0	0	15
12-Jan-19	6	0	4	2	0	0	12
19-Jan-19	10	1	11	3	0	0	25
26-Jan-19	4	2	7	0	0	0	13
2-Feb-19	8	3	6	0	0	0	17
9-Feb-19	11	2	11	2	0	0	26

16-Feb-19	8	0	8	1	1	0	18
23-Feb-19	8	2	6	1	0	0	17
2-Mar-19	12	0	2	2	0	0	16
9-Mar-19	11	0	5	1	0	0	17
16-Mar-19	21	1	2	1	0	0	25
Total	310	37	186	58	9	0	600

RRV = Ross River virus; BFV = Barmah Forest virus; DENV = Dengue virus; CHIKV = Chikungunya virus; ZIKV = Zika virus. †All of these viruses are acquired overseas, although some DENV cases may be from North Queensland. *The data in this table is updated once available from the NSW Ministry of Health.

Comment: It should also be noted that notifications are for NSW residents and that the infection may have been acquired elsewhere. Winter notifications of RRV and BFV are unlikely to be recent infections or may be false positives.

Table 5. Ross River virus infection notifications in NSW residents, by month of disease onset per fiscal year, July 2013 to Jun 2019*.

Year	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
2014-2015	38	50	46	67	59	90	117	304	431	265	102	50	1,619
2015-2016	54	60	53	61	69	54	43	61	78	81	66	25	705
2016-2017	14	15	21	19	47	229	430	274	200	142	174	89	1,654
2017-2018	29	37	52	56	37	32	30	37	51	76	96	70	603
2018 - 2019	32	40	32	46	30	25	34	47	37				323
Ave [†]	33	40	41	50	48	86	131	145	159	141	110	59	981

*updated 22 March 2019 (this table is updated at different times to Table 4 above, hence there maybe differences in the numbers).

[†]Average for 2014-15 to 2017-18.

Table modified from: <http://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/IDD/#/ROSS>

Table 6. Barmah Forest virus infection notifications in NSW residents, by month of disease onset per fiscal year, July 2014 to Jun 2019*.

Year	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
2014-2015	10	3	11	11	8	4	12	17	43	43	16	11	189
2015-2016	6	9	7	9	6	3	4	5	2	3	10	2	66
2016-2017	4	3	0	0	1	9	9	5	8	6	24	25	94
2017-2018	8	10	6	8	8	6	5	12	8	10	6	7	94
2018 - 2019	4	6	5	2	5	4	7	4	1				38
Ave [†]	6	6	6	6	6	5	7	9	12	16	14	11	96

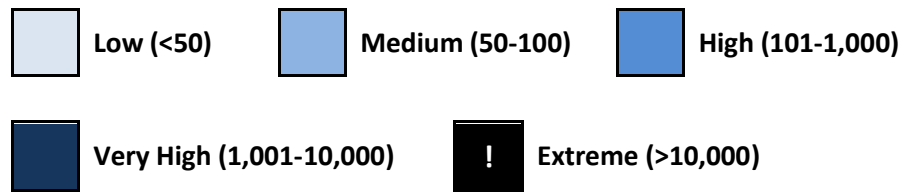
*updated 22 March 2019 (this table is updated at different times to Table 4 above, hence there maybe differences in the numbers).

[†]Average for 2014-15 to 2017-18.

Table modified from: <http://www1.health.nsw.gov.au/IDD/#/BF>

Mosquito Results

Mosquito abundance is best described in relative terms, and in keeping with the terminology from previous NSW Arbovirus Surveillance and Mosquito Monitoring Program Annual Reports, mosquito numbers are depicted in the tables below as:



Each location represents the average for all trapping sites at that location.

Inland

Location	Mosquito	Oct-18				Nov				Dec					Jan-19				Feb				Mar					
		7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	31	
Albury	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
Bourke	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
Forbes	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
Griffith	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
Leeton	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
Macquarie Marshes	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											
Wagga	<i>Cx. annul</i>																											
	Total Mosq.																											

Note that the date represents the Sunday, the start of the week.

Coastal

Location	Mosquito	Nov-18				Dec					Jan-19				Feb				Mar					Apr			
		4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28
Ballina	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Coffs Harbour	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Gosford	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Kempsey	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Lake Macquarie	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Nambucca	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Port Macquarie	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Tweed	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Wyong	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										

Note that the date represents the Sunday, the start of the week.

Sydney

Location	Mosquito	Nov-18				Dec					Jan-19				Feb				Mar					Apr			
		4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28
Banks-town	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Blacktown	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Georges River	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Hawkes-bury	<i>Cx. annul</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Hills Shire	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Parramatta	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Penrith	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										
Sydney Olympic Park	<i>Ae. vigilax</i>																										
	Total Mosq.																										

Note that the date represents the Sunday, the start of the week.

Sentinel Chicken Flocks – MVEV and Kunjin Virus Antibody Test Results

Location	Oct	Nov				Dec					Jan-19				Feb				Mar				Apr			
	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	7	14	21	28
Deniliquin			15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N			15N	15N	14N		15N	15N	15N									
Dubbo								15N		15N	15N	15N		14N	14N	14N	13N	14N	14N	14N						
Forbes			12N	12N	12N	14N	15N	15N			14N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N							
Griffith		15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N			15N	14N	14N	13N	13N	13N	13N	13N	13N	13N						
Hay		15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	14N	14N	14N	14N	14N	14N	15N						
Leeton	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N		15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N							
Macquarie Marshes		15N		15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N		15N	15N	15N	15N	15N		15N	15N							
Menindee		15N		15N	15N	15N	15N				15N	15N	15N		12N	12N	12N	12N	12N							
Moree				15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N	15N							

The number represents the number of chickens by test result (N = Negative, M = Positive for MVEV, K = Positive for Kunjin virus). **Positive results will be in bold.** Results are shown by week of sample collection, note that the date represents the Sunday, the start of the week.