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## COMMENT

# Too cold, too hot, too dry, too wet... The life of a farmer

By Ted Brown tedbit@hotmail.com

You know, every day, I wear a few different 'hats' which are associated with my lifestyle.

One is that of a journalist, albeit a somewhat 'retired' journalist, spending a day a week, gathering thoughts and opinions, to write this collection of words.

My second 'hat' is that of a local Councillor, and that hat sees a lot of dialogue between people, who usually are striving to resolve an issue.

The third and most ingrained 'hat' I wear is that of a farmer. I've been more or less wearing it for all my life, to some extent or another, and after that much time, I've come to realize that we farmers are somewhat predictable in wearing that hat.

You see, we tend to complain. I was going to use another word, but I figured it was just as well to use 'complain' as the other word would likely be changed by the editor.

So we complain.

Now I'm not saying the journalist 'hat' and the council 'hat' don't hear their fair share of complaints or heated discussion. but it does seem to be a bit more varied in

I find my farming colleagues and myself are much more specific in presenting our complaints. Think about it, what is the most talked about subject on the face of the earth?

The weather.

And no matter what kind of a day it is, farmers will always be able to find something wrong with it.

Cold nights— 'it will be too cold for the crops and they won't germinate.'

Hot days— 'too hot (for those plants that did actually germinate in spite of it being 'too cold') so they will bake in the ground instead of growing into strong, upstanding

Too windy— 'we can't spray the weeds...'



### **A Ted Bit**

Too dry— a month ago, it was simply too dry for the freshly planted crops; 'they'll never grow in this hellish dry weather.' Of course no one mentioned that we got the fields planted because the cultivated ground was dry enough to support the big machinery.

And now, too wet.

Yup, it's gone full circle, and we're all going through the 'its waaaay too wet, we can't cut or bale hay...' scenario.

(By the way, just to level the playing field, my urban counterparts also complain about it being too wet as well, but usually because it's too wet to cut the lawn, or too dry and the grass is yellow, so we have to water the grass to make it grow and become lush and green, until it's too high when the wet weather comes, so we can't cut it.)

Or our townies' best complaint: 'it's too wet to host that family barbecue, which, in the grand scheme of things, really doesn't matter at all.

Personally, I'm in a bit of a catch-22 situation right now—the dry spell caused my hay crop to have a slow start, stunting its growth, and now that we're in the middle of June, when the hay should be cut to preserve as much protein and nutrients as possiblewell, it's too wet to cut, and would never dry in a month of Sundays.

Let's face it, most of us are simply never happy with the state of the weather.

But you know, every time I bump into someone, and deliver one of my 'antiweather farm rants,' I walk away with the exact same thought in my mind

"And what am I gonna do about it?"

My 'inside voice' always counters with that same old answer,

"Nothing you fool, it's just because you have nothing else to bitch about."



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