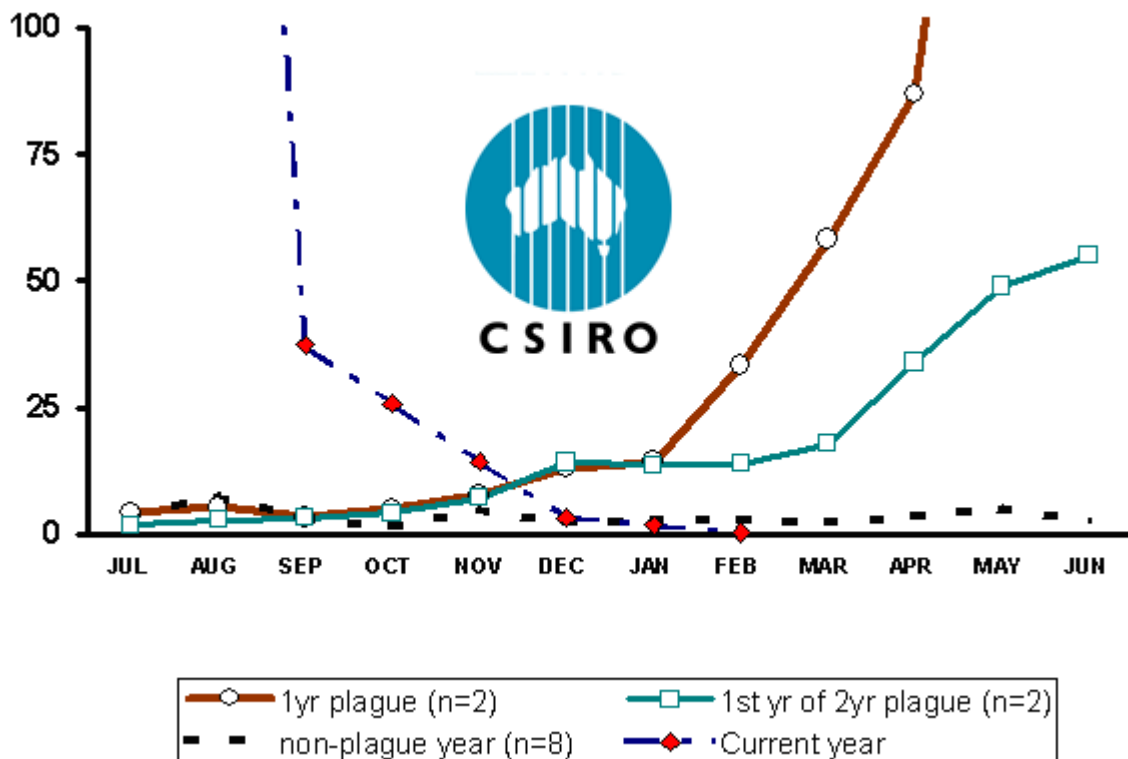


## Update of mouse numbers from the Central Mallee of Victoria March 2002- CSIRO Rodent Research Group

Regular monitoring of mouse populations is conducted in 5 regions in southern Australia. We have a good understanding of population dynamics for the Central Mallee wheatlands of Victoria because of a 19-year data set. The Grains Research and Development Corporation fund the monitoring and updates on population trajectories.

### Abundance of mice

The abundance of mice is low for this time of year (Figure 1). There has been a steep decline in mouse numbers since September last year (blue line). At present, the numbers are mirroring those seen previously during non-plague years.



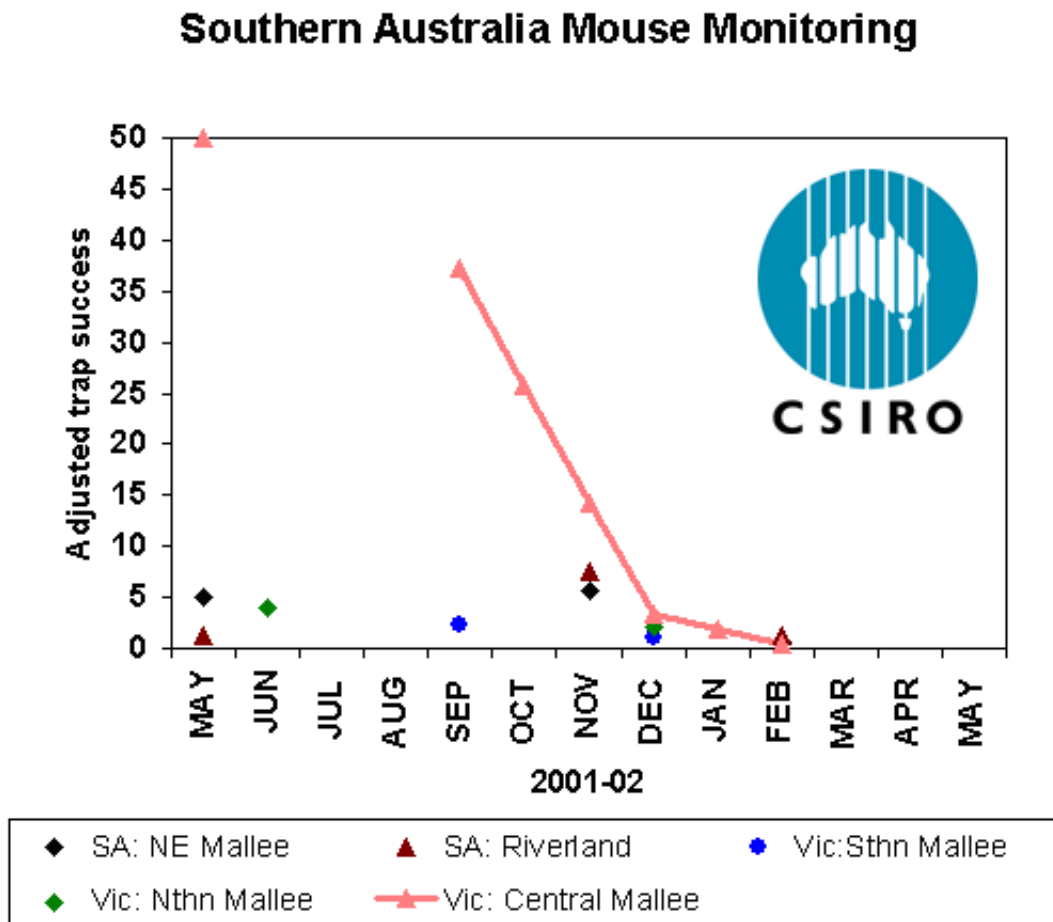
**Figure 1.** Historical and current trends in the abundance of house mice in the cereal production areas of the Victorian Mallee. The index of abundance is adjusted trap success per 100 trap nights and recent data are shown for the period September, 2001 to February, 2002. For each sampling point 193 traps were set for 3 consecutive nights (581 trap nights). The historical data come from four plagues that have occurred in this area since 1983.

## Breeding of mice in the central Mallee

Breeding began in the central Mallee of Victoria in the first or second week of October, 2001. This is a late start to the breeding season. Based on 18 years of data, breeding on average begins in mid-September.

## Monitoring of mouse numbers at other sites

Mouse numbers are low at all five sites in the wheatlands of Victoria and South Australia (Figure 2). At present, the likelihood of high mouse numbers in autumn is low (approximately 5%).



**Figure 2.** Relative trap success of mice at 5 sites in the wheatlands of Victoria and South Australia. On average, 193 traps were set for 3 consecutive nights (581 trap nights) at each site for each sampling period.

## **General Comments**

*The above data indicate that we do not expect significant mouse numbers during the sowing period of autumn in the Victorian Mallee, South Australian Mallee, or South Australian Riverlands.*