



Australian Fodder Industry Association



27 August 2021

# HAY REPORT

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The Hay Report is produced for Dairy Australia by the Australian Fodder Industry Association (AFIA) – the national independent voice for the Australian fodder industry which connects the entire supply chain from seed to feed.  
For further information: [www.afia.org.au](http://www.afia.org.au)

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## NATIONAL SUMMARY

### Driving Prices Up

- Reduced production of hay for export across the West and South Australia will mean no overflow into the domestic market.
- Cost of production with many products not available or significantly increased in price, in particular fertiliser due to COVID. Labour shortages continue to impact growers as they race to secure staff for the upcoming harvest with many having to pay increased wages to remain competitive.
- Despite a strong cattle market feedlots are increasing numbers to meet export markets and will need the fodder to support this demand.
- A new season shortage of good quality cereal how as many growers are now on the edge of deciding to let crops go through to grain with good pricing in this sector as the northern hemisphere reports reduced yields.

### Driving Prices Down

- Good winter rainfall over a large part of the country is seeing stock moving onto green feed now and farmers holding off on further purchasing of fodder.
- All time high cattle prices continue to impact the trade of hay as many farmers are selling stock at weaning and not requiring the extra feed to carry them through.
- Significant amount of weather damaged hay is still on the market now pushing the lower end of pricing further down as growers look to move this before the new season. Growers will find this difficult to move now at this point in the season.

### Local News

- Timely rain this week across the eastern parts of the country following some warmer conditions and wind. Crops have been boosted with many growers able to apply fertiliser prior to the rain front passing through.
- Many growers have started or are on the verge of cutting for silage with big crops being reported.
- Many farmers still feeding out in southern Victoria where paddocks have still been too wet to graze and farmers wanting to prevent too much damage from stock.
- In the north demand in the Atherton Tablelands remains steady with a small amount moving locally. Following the recent rainfall in QLD many parts including the Tablelands have had an influx of fresh grass. The Darling Downs region reporting one of the best starts to a season following good rainfall for the first half of the year.
- Southern Australia is again on track for a good season with timely rain, most regions are reporting good growth. Several key factors still needed to take place and a relatively dry spring to improve on last year's season.
- Western Australia has recorded one of its best season breaks. Rain has been widespread this season with reports July was one of the wettest months on record. High yields expected through the region as the season continues to progress well. Prices remain strong for all fodder types in WA.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchasing to be sure of the quality of the feed.

## Regional Commentary

### Atherton Tablelands

- Atherton has received some warm days this week as well some light rain.
- Conditions have been up and down for growers wanting to bale rhodes grass with rain being predicted but not eventuating. Grasses are young and can handle being left for dryer conditions at this stage. Some farmers looking for silage opportunities now going into spring.
- Plenty of green feed in the region for grazing stock following winter rain across most of the Atherton area.
- Trade continues to be well down as many farmers have been able to produce a product further west which is more economical than freighting from the Tablelands.
- No changes to prices this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$330).
- Note: Hay in the Atherton Tablelands is traditionally priced at \$/bale, so it is important to check bale weights for conversion. The price range indicated is for feeds of varying quality with the price range generally indicative of quality of feed. We recommend feed testing and viewing of fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

### Darling Downs

- Over the last week 7mm of rain has been recorded in the St George area.
- Majority of the Darling Downs is on track for a good season, St George has missed out on significant rain over the last four weeks. Some growers have irrigated new season crops, more rain would be ideal now.
- Many crops are later this year with some only being in the ground now for six weeks following late cotton crops. Reports of mice climbing new season crops and chewing heads as soon as they appear. Growers are having to air bait to control mice numbers.
- Majority of new season fodder is going into storage for personal use as demand in the area continues to be well down.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$60 to \$70/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$240/t) Prices remain steady this week.

Please note unless stated otherwise, prices are per tonne, sourced and delivered locally. The price range indicated is for feeds of varying quality with the price range generally indicative of quality of feed. We recommend feed testing and viewing of fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

## North Coast NSW

- Conditions have become dry on the North Coast, 7mm this week has been timely. Average rainfall for August is 90mm, the region is currently at 14mm.
- Growers have started to cut silage. Crops have been slower with dry conditions and warm days. Cooler change now will help to boost cereal crops, along with rain.
- Reports not as much silage will be made this season with demand down and many still carrying over from last season.
- Trade continues to be steady with local coastal growers selling to smaller farming operations and equine clients over the last six weeks.
- Cereal hay, straw, and lucerne prices quoted are for supplies to be carted into the region.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## Central West NSW

- Rain this week in the north with Dubbo recording up to 30mm of rain.
- Reports crops in the north of the state are big and going to head now.
- No increase in mice at this stage in region but growers and farmers continue to be vigilant. Hay production will be well down with many growers preferring to go through to grain due to current attractive prices and minimal ongoing trade of fodder.
- Trade is minimal in the region with reports of Queensland feedlots seeking straw and good quality oaten hay for entry cattle from New South Wales growers. Lucerne moving to the New England area for farmers weaning cattle.
- <https://www.nsw.gov.au/initiative/mouse-control-support-program>
- <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/50-million-support-package-to-help-regional-communities-combat-mouse-plague>
- Changes to pricing this week for cereal and lucerne hay.
- Cereal hay: +\$10 (\$180 to \$210/t). Prices are up this week.
- Lucerne hay: -\$20 (\$310 to \$360/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$60 to \$80/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$160 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Bega Valley**

- The last seven days has brought a timely 30mm of rain to the Bega Valley.
- Growers waiting for more growth before cutting for silage. Small amounts of rain would still be ideal to get maximum growth from grass in the region.
- Winter was not a difficult time in the region for farmers with many not having to feed out until June. Significant conserved fodder from last spring has continued to be utilised to carry stock through.
- Trade continues to be low with reduced amounts of cereal hay coming onto the coast for dairy farmers. Small squares of lucerne also trading mainly to equine customers.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$290 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$480 to \$520/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Goulburn/Murray Valley**

- Rain for the region this week with reports of 10 – 20mm.
- Growers are trying to get onto paddocks to spray and fertilise. This continues to be difficult as paddocks are still soft on top following a wet winter. Pasture crops are read to be cut for silage. Reports some growers have started following the last rain front.
- Very minimal rain needed now, paddocks are wet, and farmers continue to feed additional fodder to supplement the green feed that is now ready to be grazed.
- Small amounts of good quality lucerne continue to move into New South Wales primarily the North Coast.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$100/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$230 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Gippsland**

- Light rain this week with 5mm recorded in the north. South Gippsland is still wet while the north has dried out over the last month.
- To dry out the region needs to keep receiving small amounts of rain. Growers and farmers set to make a significant amount of silage again this season.
- Reports crops are up to four weeks behind on where they would normally be for silage season.
- Cereal and vetch hay continues to be traded into Gippsland from the Mallee for dairy farmers calving in cattle. Farmers only taking what they need to get through now.
- No changes to prices this week. Good quality vetch is being delivered for \$300/t into Gippsland from the Mallee.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$210 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$550 to \$650/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$85/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/- (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Southwest Victoria**

- Rain in the south of the region this week with 12mm recorded.
- Good rainfall is still needed now in the Wimmera and Mallee for crops to finish well. Reports that cereal crops are hanging on.
- Conditions still damp in the south with several overcast days. Pasture is slow growing, but growers are reporting a good season ahead.
- Farmers are still buying in feed in the Warrnambool region and other southern parts until pastures are more viable. Vetch coming from the Wimmera and cereal hay is currently freighting into the area from Ararat.
- Changes to pricing this week for cereal hay with a slight increase to the top end. Good quality vetch is being delivered for \$280/t.
- Cereal hay: +\$5 (\$170 to \$220/t). Prices are up this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$60 to \$80/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$150 to \$180/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Southeast South Australia**

- Keith recorded 60 – 10mm of rain this week.
- Conditions have been wet for the region, but crops are looking good, and the region is on track for a good season. Reports that silage and hay production will be well down on previous years.
- Paddock feed slowly returning, farmers with heavier stock numbers still needing to supplement feed.
- Steady trade for growers to beef and sheep farmers. Also, opportunist buyers that have storage are taking advantage of any good quality fodder on the market. Some inquiry for straw from farmers but a majority at this stage are not wanting to buy significant amounts of fodder leading into the spring.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$120/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Central South Australia**

- June and July brought above average rainfall to the Central South, August is currently trailing and is down 10mm on previous years.
- Growers continue to work through spraying programs. There is water laying in some paddocks across the region. An increase in lentil plantings this year over hay in the region.
- Local trade has slowed as paddock feed continues to improve. Reports some growers have been trading into New South Wales to meet demand that cannot be met locally due to mice damaged hay.
- Exporters will only take a reduced amount of new season cereal hay and it will need to be a premium product.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$190 to \$220/t). Prices remains steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$450/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/- (\$90 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## Southwest Western Australia

- No significant rain recorded this week in the Southwest.
- Reports of water still laying in lower parts of paddocks. Waterlogging has been a significant widespread problem this season. Conditions are improving with warmer weather following July's record rainfall.
- Minimal domestic trade at present with reports still on the demand for straw. Only a small amount of straw stored undercover this season, as the chicken industry continues to seek out a good quality product.
- The season is still on track to be a success in the west with big yields already being forecast for grain and hay growers. Reports there may be more hay still produced than first thought with many choosing to grow grain this year.
- Pricing changes to cereal hay and straw this week, with some growers trying to move remaining cereal hay stores.
- Cereal hay: -\$15 (\$260 to \$310/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$490). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +\$25 (\$130 to 180/t). Prices are up this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## Northwest Tasmania

- In the last seven days the Northwest has recorded 12mm of rain.
- Reports crops have been waterlogged with oat crops showing signs of stress. Conditions have started to improve with warmer days in the more eastern areas where rain has been minimal this week. Growers getting onto paddocks when they can to spray and fertilise, lower country still not able to be accessed.
- Reports growers are preparing for a big hay season. Ongoing wet weather could push the season out. The latest season start for the Northwest have been the second week of November.
- Demand continues to be steady as farmers continue to feed out until paddocks can carry stock again. Majority of cereal hay produced last spring has all but been traded now.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$220 to \$280/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$350/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$200/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$240/t) Prices remain steady this week.
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