



Australian Fodder Industry Association



15 October 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

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NATIONAL SUMMARY

Driving Prices Up

- A critical comment that is being repeated is that there is a potential shortage looming of good quality new season hay. Wet conditions have firmed up growers' decision to harvest for grain and in some cases where yields are expected to be well down in Western Victoria and South Australia growers would still rather take the price on grain.
- A shortage of new season vetch which is favored by farmers because of its protein content could see more lucerne traded to fill this gap in the coming year.
- Opportunist trade continues, where farmers can store hay, they are seeking out any available good quality fodder from previous seasons.
- The cost of production is set to increase in the coming year with fertiliser, chemical and fuel all earmarked to climb dramatically in price.

Driving Prices Down

- New season prices are not expected to increase dramatically as many farmers wait now to see how much is produced and the quality of new season hay before committing.
- A significant amount of last season's weather damaged hay is on the market at a reduced price. With the potential for more lower grade hay again this season, growers ideally would have preferred to have traded last year's weather damaged carryover.
- Good spring conditions will see many farmers producing and conserving as much silage as they can themselves, particularly along the NSW Coast and Victoria.
- Australia continues to do well with no significant drought or natural disaster requiring the high volumes of hay being traded to all states that we have seen previously over the last ten years.

Local News

- Wet conditions in the west and on the eastern side of the country have started to impact the new hay season with conditions starting to replicate 2020. The small amount of vetch cut in the west of Victoria will not fair well if down for an extended period.
- The hay season will be well underway by the end of the October in most parts with many growers having to make the decision to cut cereal crops for hay now at the optimal growing point before grain starts to form and risk rain. Ongoing rain events through New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia this growing season means many heavy crops will also be laying on damp ground and will require significant drying time.
- Boarder closures and permit requirements continue to be a concern for contractors as they work to understand the changing rules and regulations that they and staff must comply with when moving between regions and states.
- Majority of spring silage has been made now in Northern Victoria, with Southern Victoria starting in the last fortnight but continues to be hampered by wet weather. Good conditions in the Bega region will see a significant amount of silage made again this season.
- In the north demand in the Atherton Tablelands remains steady with a small amount moving locally. Following the ongoing rainfall in Northern QLD many parts including the Tablelands continue to have an influx of fresh grass. The Darling Downs region reporting one of the best

seasons following good rainfall for the first half of the year. Oaten crops have started to be cut in the area for hay.

- New South Wales reporting good crops following timely rainfall. South Australia impacted by dryer conditions, further in the Southeast crops are on track to yield well. Northern Victoria will start cutting within the fortnight. 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 timely for the west this season. 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

- Dry conditions this week across the Tablelands with storm activity forecast over the weekend.
- Growers have been able to cut and bale rhodes grass this week with good drying temperatures reaching up to 34 degrees during the day. Growers currently trying to find a market for cereal crops that has been grown in the region this year. Many are wanting to free up paddocks now for summer crops.
- Plenty of green feed in the region for grazing stock following winter rain across most of the Atherton area. Constant station cattle coming into Mareeba selling centre with yarding's up to 2,500 compared to a normal yarding of 800 – 1000 head.
- Trade continues to be well down as many farmers further west have had improved conditions and have produced some hay which has been enough to carry current stock numbers through rather than freight hay in from the Tablelands. Reports that amount of hay being freighted in previous years is not being seen this season.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- 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

- Widespread rain this week from Warick recording 15mm to St George recording 9mm.
- Reports that this is one of the best hay producing seasons in three to four years. Growers producing good quality cereal hay in particular barley and oaten. Cereal hay will continue to be baled for the remainder of the month. This week's rain has slowed production, any hay currently down will require assistance with drying which will impact the quality.
- Confirmation that new season hay is going into storage for personal use as trade continues to be minimal in the region.
- Growers will continue to bale new season straw taking advantage of a good clean product despite minimal enquiry locally.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$420/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.

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North Coast NSW

- This week up to 70mm of rain was recorded across the North Coast.
- Rain up until now has been minimal to finish these crops off with the soil profile quickly drying out over the last eight weeks. This week's rainfall will be of no benefit to these crops and only hinder those growers now trying to produce hay.
- Reports not as much silage will be made this season with demand down and many still carrying over from last season. Grass for grazing will improve in the coming weeks following rain. Growers fertilising rhodes grass and millet will be planted later in the year if conditions continue to improve.
- Trade continues to be steady with local coastal growers selling to smaller farming operations and equine clients over the last two months due to the dryer conditions. Reports new season cereal hay with some minimal weather damage freighting in from the New England region for dairy farmers.
- Cereal hay, straw, and lucerne prices quoted are for supplies to be carted into the region.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -\$25 (\$250 to \$280/t). Prices have eased 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

- Storm activity across the Central West over the last seven days with the Forbes area recording 54mm for the month of October thus far.
- Some silage has been made in region by growers wanting to clean up lucerne crops. Growers have also taken advantage of the season and planted teff grass. New season hay is ready to be cut now. Reports of a small amount of rust in crops but to be expected with significant rain, heavy crops and spraying windows lost with continued wet conditions.
- Enquiry from produce stores and dairy farmers about new season hay, wanting to know what fodder will be available in the coming months as they start to run out of current stores.
- Local trade continues to be minimal as good grazing increases in the region and low stock numbers.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$210/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$310 to \$360/t). Prices remain steady 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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quality of feed. We recommend feed testing and viewing of fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

Bega Valley

- Up to 20mm of rain fell across the valley this week.
- Prior to this week's rain event warm conditions had continued in the region, allowing growers to continue to make silage.
- Good grazing conditions for stock following ongoing timely rain. As farmers head into summer there is plenty of water available for irrigating. Conditions have also been favourable for those that grow lucerne on the flat country.
- Trade continues to be low with reduced amounts of cereal hay coming onto the coast for dairy farmers. Depending on conditions dairy farmers will look for good quality straw this season. Smaller farming operations continue to purchase small squares of fodder.
- 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 this week for the Valley with 16mm being recorded with more light rain predicted for the coming days
- Many growers in the region have held off cutting hay due to recent weather forecasts but will have to decide in the coming days to cut crops that are now on the edge. A significant amount of pit and rolled silage has been made over the last month.
- Growers wanting to make hay will need big windows this year for drying time with heavy crops being reported. Further rain not needed in the region now and wet spring conditions like 2020 are already starting to impact new season crops.
- Trade is minimal at present majority of local farmers have plenty of conserved fodder and good grazing grass for stock.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: -\$30 (\$380 to \$410/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$100/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -\$15 (\$220 to \$260/t). Prices have eased this week.

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Gippsland

- No significant rain recorded this week in the north.
- Silage production continues to be hampered by wet conditions, the south and western parts of the Gippsland are still significantly wet. Growers now grazing paddocks that were set aside for silage due to the wet and will work towards producing pasture hay once grazed off.
- Corn plantings for chopped silage again to be reduced due to the ongoing wet conditions in the south. Farmers have feed out majority of last season's silage and are looking to secure good quality fodder for the next twelve months.
- Growers and traders trying to ascertain the value of new season hay. 2020 cereal hay freighting into the south for farmers as they need.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady week.
- Lucerne hay: -\$25 (\$550 to \$600/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$85/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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Southwest Victoria

- The south recorded 5mm this week following on from 30mm that fell during the first week of October.
- Silage continues to be made in the Portland region, more rolled silage than pit at this point with paddocks to wet for heavier machinery. Growers are locking up paddocks now for pasture hay that will be cut towards the end of November. Warmer conditions will enable farmers to graze more feed as it continues to improve.
- Approximately 20% of vetch that was planted this year in the Mallee has been left for hay. Limited rain saw growers spray out crops or graze off. Reports recently cut vetch crops that are still another seven days off baling received rain this week with 5 – 10mm recorded. More rain is forecast for the Mallee over the coming days. Good quality vetch will be in short supply this season.
- Reports that cereal hay is freighting into feedlots in the south preparing cattle for live export. Farmers have also taken advantage of any reasonable quality cereal and vetch hay left in the Mallee and storing for use over the coming year in the southern parts of the state.
- No changes to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady 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

- The Southeast recorded a maximum of 8mm of rain this week. Year to date rainfall is well below average for the region.
- Reports crops are not as big as anticipated and yielding forecasts are starting to drop. There have been no major rain events across the Southeast since the end of July. Small amounts of rain have fallen but the cold conditions and overcast weather have impacted crop growth. Growers will be cutting hay earlier with the season quickly coming to an end.
- Livestock are grazing and this continues to impact local trade. Farmers without established pastures will quickly run out of feed with dry conditions. Farmers may opt to take advantage of strong market prices and sell cattle rather than feed over the coming summer months.
- Mainly opportunist buyers that have storage are taking advantage of any good quality fodder on the market. No significant enquiries for new season hay, many will be anticipating pricing and quality.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/- (\$180 to \$210/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

- Significant rain was forecast for the region this week but at time of report only 5mm had fallen. More storm activity for the coming days.
- With a late break many crops were planted later this year and are still up to five weeks from where they would normally be. The western part of the region including the York Peninsula have not had adequate rain since the end of July and the season has quickly come to an end. Growers are now cutting hay that will yield significantly less on what was originally predicted. Provided spring rain doesn't become an issue there will still be good quality fodder produced. Burra was predicted to yield 5 – 6/t per hectare but are now forecast 3 – 4/t.
- The season is expected to be in full swing in another two weeks. Parts of Barossa received an isolated rain event three weeks ago which has benefited crops in that area.
- Exporters will only take a reduced amount of new season cereal hay and it will need to be a premium product. It continues to be an opportunist market and some trade is taking place for this reason.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/\$20 (\$180 to \$1200/t). Prices have increased this week.

- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$450/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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Southwest Western Australia

- No significant rain for the West in the last seven days.
- North of Northam have started to cut hay, reports some of this hay has had 10 – 20mm of rain since cutting. Conditions have been mild in the west for this time of year and growers are needing bigger windows to dry hay. Cut hay is also laying on wet ground due to the high moisture levels following a wet season.
- In the north crops have only been impacted slightly by rust, further south in the York region new season cereal crops have been plagued by waterlogging. Any later crops will potentially yield better and avoid the current spring rain.
- In general, the season is still on track to finish well in the west. Mixed reports on how much hay will be produced this season. Growers who decreased plantings due to limited export opportunities are now looking at good yielding crops and finding tonnes produced will be on par with 2020. With export only taking reduced amounts of premium hay this season some growers could be storing downgraded hay due to recent weather damage.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -\$10 (\$260 to \$290/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$490). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to 180/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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Northwest Tasmania

- The Northwest again faced another wet week. Forecasts that the Launceston region could again receive up to 30mm of rain. Reports also that floods are coming down the river systems at present, which could impact lower country.
- Silage season remains on hold now until conditions become dryer. Feed has been slow to grow with ongoing cool conditions but with warmer weather growers are indicating that this will improve quickly.
- Concerns that it could be a wetter than average spring and summer. Growers reporting if they can get the required break in the weather, it should be a good yielding season.
- Demand continues to be steady as some farmers continue to purchase what they need to get through until the wet conditions ease.
- 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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