



Australian Fodder Industry Association



17 December 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

- Cost of production concerns continue going into the new season with further AdBlue shortages being reported this week as well as price increases already across fuel, chemical, fertilizer and machinery.
- Good quality cereal hay will be in short demand following two wet springs in many states during 2020 and 2021, as well as reduced plantings.
- Flooding in Central and Western New South Wales, water continues to lay on paddocks damaging lucerne stands, paddock feed and new season crops.
- Cattle market predictions for the new year could transverse several ways for the fodder industry, a possible dip making it affordable for more farmers to restock.

Driving Prices Down

- Varied qualities of fodder are currently on the market with new season hay being impacted by rain events.
- Milder conditions and regular rainfall have seen paddock feed continue to do well, alleviating the need for farmers to supplement feed. Many also have good, conserved fodder of silage and hay for the coming months.
- Good irrigation stores that have built up during the year from timely rainfall as well as affordable temporary water mean many farmers can continue to water feed over the coming summer months.
- La Nina event where December to February is expected to bring above average rainfall and mild conditions for the eastern and central parts of the country further reducing the need for farmers to purchase extra feed over the summer months.

Local News

- Significant flooding continues in the Central West of New South Wales causing large scale damage to standing crops that are now unsalvageable. The Darling Downs, Queensland also continue to be impacted by rising water from recent heavy rain. The Bega Valley, New South Wales saw water levels quickly rise causing flooding earlier this week with many roads cut.
- Recent flooding declared a natural disaster now to many regions, those affected can report damage to their industry group with assistance being provided by a joint Commonwealth and State fund.
- Majority of hay now baled with growers now concentrating on grain harvest. Trade continues to be significantly down and will be until the new year before an anticipated increase takes place once farmers plan for the coming season.
- Boarder closures and permit requirements are easing now and making movement of agricultural machinery and hay less difficult.
- 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.
- New South Wales reporting good crops following timely rainfall. South Australia impacted by dryer conditions, further in the Southeast crops are on track but yields are expected to be done after difficult growing conditions this season. Hay season is all but complete in Northern Victoria.

- Western Australia has recorded one of the best seasons breaks. Rain has been timely for the west this season. Varied qualities of cereal hay being produced in the West as the season continues to be hampered by ongoing rainfall. 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

- No rain recorded this week with conditions building towards more storm activity.
- Small amounts of rhodes grass being baled. Growers now looking towards summer crop plantings. Some crops have been taken for seed rather than cut for hay. Concerns again over potential Fall Armyworm damage and the cost to control.
- Farmers are selling weaning stock with ongoing good market prices rather than carry them through.
- Trade continues to be well down as many farmers further west have had improved conditions. Reports that the 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

- Dry and warm conditions this week with St George reaching 35 degrees.
- Some paddocks are just starting to dry out, lucerne cuts have been delayed with growers baling the lower grade cut into large squares now. River levels continue to remain high following heavy rain over the last fortnight across catchment areas.
- Cotton production will again increase this season with many growers now concentrating on this instead of crops such as sorghum while prices continue to be high.
- Trade predominately for weaning cattle and some farmers taking advantage of pricing and storing for future use. Grazing continues to be good for farmers at this stage. Limited amounts of straw will be made with most stained from recent rain.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -\$10 (\$250 to \$270/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/\$15 (\$70 to \$90/t). Prices have increased this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$240/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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North Coast NSW

- No significant rain for the North Coast this week.
- Reports it is one of the best seasons and growers could be making silage and hay well into the new year depending on conditions. Growers taking advantage of conditions and planting summer crops.
- Good quality cereal crops were made in the west, yields were down due to limited rain during the growing season.
- Small amounts of new season cereal hay freighting in for dairy farmers taking advantage of new season cereal hay prices. Straw production expected to be well down and a possible shortage of a good quality product for those farmers and feedlots seeking it due to the heavy rainfall and flooding this season in the Northern and Central parts of New South Wales.
- Cereal hay, straw, and lucerne prices quoted are for supplies to be carted into the region.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$260/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: -\$10 (\$190 to \$220/t). Prices have eased this week.
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Central West NSW

- A dry week for the Central West, warm conditions enabling evaporation of some flood waters.
- Farmers and growers on the eastern side of Forbes are reporting 90% of their farms were covered this time in flood water. A one in fifty-year flood, with 33 inches recorded to date this year where a normal year would see approximately 21 inches. Water has receded in most parts to the east, but water is expected to still be laying paddocks for up to three months west of Forbes. Reports it is a similar event to the 2015 floods.
- Lucerne crops significantly damaged with chaff mills seeking out good quality wheaten hay to be processed. Other standing cereal crops now shot and sprung.
- Local trade continues to be minimal, still a significant amount of carry over hay of varied quality from last season stored in the region. Farmers seeking good quality cereal hay locally will have difficulty finding this.
- For flood assistance contact NSW Rural Assistance Authority [Disaster Assistance \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://www.nsw.gov.au/disaster-assistance) Service NSW can also assist with checking your eligibility.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$340/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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Bega Valley

- Heavy rainfall for the Valley at the start of the week that went on to cause significant flooding north of Bega in the Mogo area with the region recording over 100mm of rain.
- A significant amount of silage has been made thus far. Rain events have slowed production down. An abundance of feed in the area for stock has made it an ideal season for growers and farmers going into the warmer months.
- As farmers head into summer there is plenty of water available for irrigating.
- Trade continues to be low with reduced amounts of cereal hay coming onto the coast for dairy farmers. Smaller farming operations continue to purchase small squares of fodder for equine stock.
- Changes to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$480 to \$520/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -\$10 (\$200 to \$220/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Pasture hay: -\$10 (\$330 to \$360/t). Prices have eased this week.
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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Hot conditions across the region with a cool change mid-week that brought light rain to moderate rain.
- Majority of hay has been bailed across the Goulburn/Murray Valley. Growing conditions have been good enabling growers to take second cuts of grass for silage and pasture hay.
- Corn planting for chop silage continue in the region with forecasts of increased plantings by many dairy farmers this season. Focus for local growers in the region will now start to shift to grain harvest.
- Trade is minimal at present majority of local farmers have plenty of conserved fodder and good grazing grass for stock. Milder conditions and late spring rain have allowed feed to keep growing without farmers and growers having to utilise irrigation.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$210/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$100/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$210 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Gippsland

- Light rain only this week in the north this week for Gippsland.
- Growers have been baling pasture hay in the north with improved conditions. Silage season has been drawn out this year with difficult wet conditions, quality was an issue early on with growers and contractors unable to get on paddocks. Growers will be cutting well into the new year.
- 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.
- Reports of some vetch coming into the region from Charlton. South Gippsland will again need to secure feed for the next twelve months.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: -\$20 (\$530 to \$550/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Straw: +\$13 (\$80 to \$100/t). Prices have increased this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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Southwest Victoria

- No rain recorded this week across the Southwest.
- Most growers have finished making silage now in the south, but it has been a stop, go operation with continued wet conditions. Reports the crops were bulky and quality down, farmers grazed where they could, to try and retain grass quality.
- Growers are currently making pasture hay where windows have been small with crops quickly toughening during baling. Ideally growers would like to produce as much as possible filling any silage gaps this season.
- Trade to potentially lift in the new year depending on summer conditions and how much feed farmers have been able to conserve themselves.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +\$10 (\$180 to \$220/t). Prices have increased this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +\$20 (\$80 to \$100/t). Prices have increased this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$150 to \$180/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Southeast South Australia

- Up and down conditions this week with temperatures topping 35 degrees, followed by a cool change.
- Early hay was slower to cure and impacted by rain events.
- Cereal hay being baled now is good quality with limited rain damage, majority of new season hay now baled. Crops are later due to a mild growing season but are yielding well now. In general hay production is well down this year with reduced demand. Straw production will be down this season many contractors no wanting to take it on and quality issues.
- Warmer weather now will quickly burn off paddock feed if conditions stay dry. No significant enquiries for new season hay, many growers and farmers storing for when the market lifts, and some will utilise for own stock.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/- (\$190 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

- No rain recorded over the last seven days for the Central South.
- Majority of hay in the north of the region has been baled with growers now focussing on grain harvest.
- Where other growers have been affected by rain and dry conditions and unable to meet the export grade in Western and South Australia exporters are filling gaps with top quality cereal hay that has been found in small areas in the Central South.
- Domestic trade is well down and new season hay is being produced for personal use. Straw production will again be up this season where crops have been tall enough with orders for pig breeders, small feedlots as well as for use across sandhills.
- Changes to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: -\$5 (\$400 to \$440/t). Prices have eased this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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Southwest Western Australia

- Cooler conditions to start the week for the West following hot weather and bushfires in the Southwest last week.
- Many growers now focused on grain harvest in the west. Rain continued to plague farmers during November making conditions difficult to bale hay.
- A strong beef market in the West looks to continue with ample pasture and hay supplies for the coming months.
- Mixed reports on how much cereal hay has been produced this season. With export only taking reduced amounts of premium hay some growers could be storing downgraded hay due to recent weather damage.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$290/t). Prices remain steady 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

- A dry week this week for the Northwest with temperatures reaching the mid-twenties for western parts of the region.
- It has been a hard season for silage with constant wet weather across the region. Feed is improving now with warmer conditions and less overcast weather. Some growers will attempt additional good quality silage cuts with dryer
- Improved weather conditions over the last fortnight have meant growers have been able to bale hay uninterrupted. Quality is down this season on silage and hay due to weather damage and not being able to get onto paddocks in time.
- Farmers considering feed needs for the next twelve months with the opportunities to make silage and pasture hay being limited this season.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -\$10 (\$220 to \$260/t) Prices have eased 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: -\$10 (\$190 to \$230/t) Prices have eased this week.
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