



Australian Fodder Industry Association



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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

- Good quality hay is required to support stock recovery in areas where flooding impacted pasture supply. Sales are expected to increase as donations and Departmental emergency fodder drops fall.
- The bureau of meteorology has reported La Nina is continuing although it is expected to weaken. There have been some reasonable falls across some cropping areas and confidence amongst those growers that the break has arrived. Other regions are still waiting for rain after little to any summer rainfall.
- Current high forward contract prices for canola and wheat, with firming prices for barley and hopes of increased pulse sales into India will mean hay may be removed from cropping schedules so supply is expected to tighten over the coming months.
- Despite a 20-cent reduction in fuel excise helping to reduce fuel costs some transport companies will continue to apply the 5 - 10% fuel levy. Some hay growers, who deliver locally, have indicated that due to ongoing high fuel costs cartage fees of up to 50 cents per kilometre or will apply a fuel surcharge of up to 10%, to cover increased fuel costs.
- Input costs continue to impact cropping decisions as grain and fodder producers prepare for sowing. Opportunistic hay production will not be seen as a price competitive cropping option, so expect a smaller number of hectares to be sown this season. Pasture hay may not be a priority for fertiliser application which may reduce quantities produced this season.
- There is increasing demand for good quality cereal hay and vetch hay. However, supplies of both are low. Lucerne prices are slowly rising as it is being purchased to fill the protein gap. Supplies are expected to tighten as the season progresses.

Driving Prices Down

- Recent rainfall and mild weather had boosted pasture growth. Many growers in the southern states continue to be confident ryegrasses and other pasture growth will support stock without need for supplementary feed over coming months.
- Varied qualities of fodder are available on the market. Growers with lower grade hay, particularly hay stacked outside are expected to actively trade this in the coming months.
- The quality of new season hay was impacted by continuing rain events across most states. Rainfall has meant many crops were harvested later than usual, resulting in coarser hay of lower quality.

Local News

- Some areas have received good rainfall which has built confidence at the start of sowing. Some dry sowing has commenced in other regions with reliance on subsoil moisture and hope forecast rains fall in coming weeks. Dry conditions and high input costs will impact cropping decisions.
- In other regions the continued availability of pasture, where growth has been supported by rainfall and warm weather, will maintain the tradition of a slow Autumn market for fodder however, fodder stocks are running low in some areas so it is expected that those who like to have fodder on hand will seek to purchase hay in coming weeks.
- Lack of rain in southwest Victoria, and some parts of South Australia and Tasmania, are driving some early enquiries from those looking to secure feed allotments for winter.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchasing to be sure of the quality of the feed.

Regional Commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- Significant rain (20 – 200mm of rain) has been predicted so farmers are working to get silage cut and peanut crops are ready to be harvested with concerns weather may impact quality.
- Current cycle of hay production has finished. Input and machinery repair costs will deter many producers from hay production in the coming season due to lack of profitable return versus cost of production.
- For growers who recently harvested pasture for seed or hay, decisions are being made not to invest in fertiliser (at current prices between \$3,000 to \$4,000/acre) to produce a future crop of hay. Given currently low demand for hay, a high percentage pastures will be left and used as a green manure mulch for the paddock.
- Fuel prices are lower due to the short-term removal of 20-cents of excise but diesel is still \$1.96/litre.
- Due to high prices for beef, cattle weaners and store cattle tend to be sold as soon as they are ready rather than being kept on farm and therefore requiring supplementary feeding. Slow trade and low movement of fodder some movement expected as rain reduces quality of paddock feed.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady.
- Please 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

- Little rainfall across the region this week, allowing for draining of flooded fields. There are large areas of green as pastures respond to the rainfall.
- Assessment of the loss of harvested and unharvested crops is now in place as the fields become accessible. The predicted downgrade in Sorghum and Mungbeans looks to be coming true as crops come off. In those regions where the fields are suitable the drier weather allowed for the resumption of the winter crop planting, with plenty of soil moisture.
- There is some issue with transport availability (both trucks and drivers) as the Rice harvest comes in and diesel prices are still a factor with freight levies being the norm rather than the exception.
- Interest in hay is much quieter this week; this is a combination of the weather events and growers concentrating on sowing where possible. There is some interest in Vetch or cereal hay, but there is little available on the market.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$255 to \$275/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$90/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

- Assessment of additional damage from the repeated flood events is continuing. It is expected pastures will require support and careful management to recover from the repeated flooding events and associated mud across the region.
- There is little if any trade in fodder as those able to produce/harvest fodder look to restock supplies.
- Need was being filled by hay/silage donations and Government supported emergency fodder programs to those livestock producers affected by flooding. Additional high-quality hay will continue to be required. Good quality feed is a priority to support the health of recovering stock and to reduce the risk of biosecurity impacts from poorer quality fodder.
- Flood-affected farmers can call the Department of Primary Industries' emergency hotline on 1800 814 647 to request assistance from Agricultural and Animal Services for animal assessment and veterinary support, emergency fodder and, if required, euthanasia and burial. Assistance or further information can be accessed through the online portals:
 - <https://www.nsw.gov.au/floods>
 - <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/floods/financial-assistance>
- Minimal fodder sales outside of some Departmental purchases for the emergency fodder drops.
- No 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: +/-0 (\$190 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Please note: Cereal hay, straw, and lucerne prices should be considered as a bookmark rather than a reflection of the local trade due to the reliance on donations and current conditions. We recommend feed testing and viewing of fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

Central West NSW

- Little rain fell early in the week, but moderate rainfall across some parts of the region on Wednesday with 20mm in Forbes. Both minimum and maximum temperatures have been above average for this time of the year
- Growers are expecting high demand due to the recent weather events once the extent of the damage has been assessed.
- Soil moisture profiles are good and some growers are switching from forage crops to wheat varieties due to the current geopolitical unrest.
- Some growers are planning to plant canola instead of pulses as a break crop due to the competitive market and good pricing outlook.
- There has been some isolated mouse activity seen across the region.
<https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Input costs are a continuing worry, with fuel and fertiliser still high with no indication the recent drop in diesel prices will continue.

- The interest in higher protein hay continues, with a reduction in supply causing prices to steady at a higher level. The feeling is the high point in this pricing has not yet been reached due to a number of availability and weather factors.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +0/-0 (\$175 to \$215/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +0/-0 (\$305 to \$355/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.
- 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.

Bega Valley

- Little significant rainfall across the region this week, some areas receiving 10-20mm in total. Most falling mid-week as the rain band came through.
- With the clearer weather winter sowing programs resumed with growers taking advantage of the conditions before forecast rain arrives later this week.
- Good soil moisture has led to crops coming up fast so growers are weighing the benefits and costs of early spraying programs.
- Small amounts of hay have been moving locally to farmers to feed stock that has been affected by the weather conditions. Requests are still ongoing for hay donations to help flood victims.
- Hay inquiries have slowed as many farmers have already secured some reserve feed and following the rain events, grass-based pasture is plentiful.
- No changes to pricing 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: +/-0 (\$200 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$360/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.

Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Moderate rainfall across the region mid-week with some areas receiving 40-50mm, most consider the Autumn break has arrived.
- Grazing wheat sown earlier in the month is coming along well taking advantage of soil moisture and rainfall.
- The run of drier conditions allowed for the completion of the bailing schedule.
- Silage crops still being cut during dry periods in the southern part of the region.

- Sowing program in full swing with the rains boosting confidence across the region
- Hay inquiries are steady with some small interest in straw. Lack of summer rain is causing some farmers to substitute hay due to the lack of grass, but the interest is in high quality with prices to match.
- Given the rain break there is a belief the interest in hay will slacken as pastures green up.
- The price of inputs is still being stated as a concern, with the sowing program costs being calculated.
- Slight change to pricing this week
- Cereal hay: + \$3 (\$170 to \$205/t). Prices slightly up this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$110/t). Price range wider this week, prices increased for higher quality.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$210 to \$250/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.

Gippsland

- Sporadic rainfall across this region this week with falls ranging from 10 - 30mm in some areas.
- Lack of heavy rain has allowed for the assessment of damage caused by the flooding earlier in the month with farmers and growers taking account of stock and paddock losses. Reports of replanting now underway in the east of the region.
- Sowing is underway with the rain giving growers some confidence for the season.
- Some farmers have started using this season's silage as the last seasons on-farm stores are depleted.
- Hay inquiries remain steady as cooler months approach. Most pastures are green enabling farmers to forward plan and lock in favourable contracts, however there is still some interest in quality hay, particularly vetch.
- Fuel prices have steadied and most believe that no further reduction will be forthcoming, however fertiliser costs are still very high.
- Slight change in prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$240/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$530 to \$550/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$80 to \$100/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: + \$8 (\$90 to \$125/t). Prices slightly higher 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.

Southwest Victoria

- Patchy rainfall across the region this week with most falling after Easter, with falls of 25mm in the east of the region, but less than 5mm in the west. In those regions with soil moisture, the rainfall has encouraged farmers to sow ryegrass. Cost of production continues to be a concern with fuel and fertiliser still cited as the major issues of concern.
- Reports of some oat crops coming along well, but most areas need good soaking rain. Last of the maize crop being cut for silage before forecast rain arrives.
- Dry weather and low humidity allowed for the application of animal manure for subsoil amelioration.
- Reports that hay production will be lower this season as growers switch to higher value crop options.
- Fodder stores are being reduced as farmers supplement due to the green feed drying off. More rain will be needed in the west of the region to reinvigorate some pastures.
- Straw is in short supply and demand is increasing, whilst costs have not yet risen the belief is it soon will. Some trade into the region for contracted hay.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$80 to \$100/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$150 to \$180/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.

Southeast South Australia

- Patchy summer rains have left some areas with inconsistent sub-soil moisture. Some slight showers but no significant rainfall has been measured across many parts of the region.
- Cropping decisions are still to be made. While some with contracts in place will maintain their program there are some indications some farmers appear to be heading towards preferencing additional pasture rather than cereal hay due to input costs. Some movement towards grazing cereal varieties confirmed.
- Increase in demand for hay for beef cattle and sheep in the upper parts of the region which may see prices increase over the coming weeks. Slower sales so far in the southern part of the region.
- Slow trade is due to some levels of understocking and livestock producers holding off purchasing fodder due to hopes for additional rain to support pasture growth. Sheep producers will be starting to look for feed once the green pick dries off.
- Cereal hay: +\$5 (\$200 to \$240/t). Prices have increased slightly.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady depending on quality.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$120/t). Prices remain steady.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady.
- 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.

Central South Australia

- Little rainfall across the region, only patchy amounts around 5mm of rainfall for April so far. Some other areas have had reasonable falls which have maintained subsoil moisture.
- It is expected some growers will be dropping out of hay production this coming season due to gross margin concerns. Canola will be highly preferred if the season breaks in time. A few beginning to undertake dry sowing of canola. Wheat will be dry sown in coming weeks if the break hasn't arrived.
- Hay production is still seen as a competitive weed control method for control of ryegrass.
- Due to the combination of ongoing high fuel and transport demand reducing available trucks and drivers, transport costs for local delivery have risen by 10-15%. Producers are passing these costs on via increased fees or by imposing a fuel levy on deliveries.
- Minimal fodder sales at present. But there is still demand for high quality cereal hay which will support long-term hay producers to keep hay in the cropping schedule. Much of the surplus hay from the 2020/21 season is no longer in the system. Shortage of stored fodder and little available carryover is expected to increase prices as the season progresses.
- Limited straw available for general sale. Most cereal hay should be of reasonable quality. Low volume but steady sales demand with higher prices available for better quality.
- Pricing remains variable and is quality rather than demand driven.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$240/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week for high protein hay.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady.
- 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.

Southwest Western Australia

- There has been rainfall in some cropping areas with consistent falls of rain for northern, central and midlands wheatbelts of WA. It has been a reasonable start for many croppers.
- Seeding has started, canola is first crop sown and many paddocks have already germinated.
- Input price pressure, labour shortages and the high contract prices being offered for canola and wheat and an improvement in the prices already being offered for barley means the price for hay is not competitive, so hay is being left out of many cropping schedules. Rain has encouraged sowing of early sheep feed which may reduce fodder demand. Long-term hay producers will still be planting some crops for hay, although less hectares expected overall.
- Increased late season rainfall during 2021 led to a weed seed burden, hay will be used within the crop rotation program as a clean-up crop by some grain growers.
- Monitoring for mice activity remains a strong recommendation during sowing. It is recommended where mouse control is required growers spread bait during seeding <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- No changes to prices.

- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$250/t). Price remains steady.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$490/t). Price remains steady.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$120/t). Price remains steady
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$160 to \$180/t). Price remains steady for good quality varietal pasture hay.
- 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.

Northwest Tasmania

- Rainfall has been sporadic over the past week with little or no rainfall across the east of the area but consistent falls around Smithton, last weekend saw the heaviest falls across the region.
- Minimum and maximum temperatures continue to trend above average for the month.
- Baling season almost complete with the low rainfall offering favourable conditions.
- Dry conditions have led to direct drilling and over sowing into pastures for a quick feed crop.
- Reports around Launceston area of Crimson clover and grass bulking out, brassica and chicory going well. Maize crops are about a week to 10 days from maturity and will be cut for silage thereafter.
- Rainfall has been welcomed to reinvigorate green feed however the consensus is that more is needed to ensure stable growth and good ongoing pasture options.
- Input costs continue to be of concern, with the outlook for continued high prices. Tasmania also suffers from additional transport costs generally not experienced on the mainland.
- Dry conditions have seen interest in hay steady, but recent rains may reduce demand. As always most inquires have been for higher quality cereal and lucerne.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$260/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$290 to \$340/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$200/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$190 to \$230/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.