



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 continues to be required to support stock in areas where flooding impacted pastures. Sales into the area are expected to increase as donations and Departmental emergency fodder are phased out. Long recovery time expected for local fodder production.
- The bureau of meteorology has reported significant rainfalls across many cropping and fodder production areas of Australia. Despite the rainfall warmer weather will be needed to support late Autumn pasture growth. Hay sales are expected to increase in areas where temperatures have dropped and remain low.
- Demand for canola and wheat, with firming prices for barley and firming demand in India for Australian pulses is driving up forward contract prices. Hay supply is expected to be tight.
- Input costs continue to impact cropping decisions as sowing commences. Opportunistic hay production will not be seen as a price competitive cropping option, so expect a smaller number of hectares to be sown.
- Pasture hay may not be a priority for fertiliser application which may significantly reduce quantities of pasture hay produced this season.
- Hay growers have indicated that due to ongoing high fuel costs, despite the short-term fuel excise reduction, local delivery cartage fees of up to 50 cents per kilometre or a fuel surcharge of up to 10%, will be applied to cover fuel costs.
- 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 continue to tighten as the season progresses.

Driving Prices Down

- Expectations that pasture growth will support stock without need for supplementary feed has kept demand for hay and fodder at low levels, although some early purchasers are now starting to make inquiries to source feed and increase on hand supplies.
- Varied qualities of fodder are available on the market making price signals inconsistent.
- Growers with lower grade hay, particularly hay stacked outside have been actively trading.
- The quality of new season hay was impacted by continuing rain events across most states. Many hay 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. Grain growers have now commenced their sowing programs across all regions.
- High input costs and availability of labour are causing general concern.
- The continued availability of pasture, where growth has been supported by rainfall and warm weather, has kept the Autumn market for fodder slow. However, high rainfall events have damaged the quality and quantity of some dry paddock feed, so decisions will be made to reduce stocking levels or buy in fodder earlier than expected.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchasing to be sure of the quality of the feed.

Regional Commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- Continued rainfall has hampered the peanut harvest. Steady falls of rain most days with few days of sunshine to allow paddocks to dry out between days with rainfall.
- 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. Prices will need to rise over the coming months to make hay production viable this season.
- 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 now \$1.99/litre.
- Slow trade and low movement of fodder continue. Some increase in demand 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

- No significant rain across the region this week, with some areas receiving no rain at all. However, the forecast for the coming week includes a high probability for rainfall.
- Most of the assessment to damaged fields, crops and infrastructure has been completed and the region is now focussed on reconstruction and repair.
- Some late harvesting of sorghum and mungbeans in the area continues, growers are monitoring the moisture content of the beans before harvesting to ensure they are below the downgrade threshold of 12% moisture.
- The sowing program is continuing across the region with some wheat crops already up and barley going into soil with good moisture profile. Some growers on black soil country are having issues with melonholes, due to the recent wet weather and are allowing a little extra time for them to dry out.
- For those that have canola seed plantings continue, there is a reported shortage of available canola seed, due to high demand because of growers switching to canola in anticipation of good returns.
- Hay enquires have steadied but are slow. The rains have produced quite a bit of green feed reducing the need for supplementary feed for livestock. There continues to be some interest in vetch and high-quality cereal hay, but it is in limited supply.
- 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 continues. Pastures will require support and careful management to recover from the repeated flooding events and associated mud across the region. A long recovery period is expected and many have concerns about soil health.
- There is little if any trade in fodder as those able to produce/harvest fodder look to restock supplies.
- Hay/silage donations and Government supported emergency fodder programs continue to support livestock producers affected by flooding.
- 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 such as stock health and weed contamination.
- 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 due to reliance on fodder imports from outside the region.
- 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

- Moderate to heavy rainfall across large parts of the region, with rainfall between 40mm and 80mm reported in those areas hit by the rain band.
- Due to the rainfall sowing has been placed on hold in those regions where the rain left the fields too wet to sow. However there has been some limited interest in aerial seeding those areas.
- In those areas that received a large dump of rain on the weekend there is some concern newly sown canola will be washed away. Assessment will take place once the fields have drained.
- Corn is being cut for silage around Forbes.
- Southern end of the region is on track with sowing of wheat continuing into stubble fields into soil with good moisture. Canola continues to be sown due to the return potential, but there are reports of seed scarcity. Sheep are being introduced into 'graze and grain' wheat and canola crops, such as 970.

- 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 concern. There is no expectation prices for fuel and fertiliser will drop.
- The interest in quality fodder remains high, some increased interest in straw. Prices have steadied.
- 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

- Low rainfall across the region this week, with most areas receiving less than 15mm of rain.
- Dry sowing continued across the region and growers who had sown earlier in areas that received rainfall report good germination rates.
- Pasture growth in the region is looking good with oats, chicory, red and white clover pushing through. However, there is some concern soils will have low nitrogen levels due to the set conditions.
- Reports of Argentinian scarab in soil perennial ryegrass fields across the region.
- Donations for weather affected farms and livestock are still being sourced and delivered, mostly from outside the region.
- There has been some isolated mouse activity seen across the region.
<https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>. Monitoring numbers and baiting at sowing, to protect sown seed, remains the CSIRO recommendation.
- Hay enquiries remain steady as many farmers have secured winter feed stock and the recent rains have supported maintenance of pastures. Feedlots are showing interest in hay and straw.
- 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

- Low rainfall across the region this week with falls ranging from 10-30mm of rain. Soil moisture profiles are looking good after the break
- Grazing and grain canola and wheat sown earlier in the month are doing well. Canola is at full ground cover stage in some areas. Grass/weed spraying is being undertaken prior to putting livestock out on the paddocks.
- Growers have been and will continue to seed over the coming months. They are hoping for mild and consistent rainfall to support germination and growth without a disruption to the sowing schedule.
- Pasture grass is still growing well in the region and water is reasonably affordable for those seeking to irrigate.
- Input costs remain an on-going issue, most growers are now incorporating these costs into their forward planning as there is a firm belief input costs will remain high for the foreseeable future.
- Hay enquiries remain steady with some interest in shedded straw for those looking for fibre. Sufficient hay remains stored on farm which is expected to keep local demand down over the coming months.
- No change to pricing this week
- Cereal hay: +/- 0 (\$170 to \$205/t). Prices remain steady 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

- Low rainfall across this region this week with falls ranging from 10 – 25 mm of rainfall. Some areas remain too wet to sow, planting is being held off until longer periods without rain support paddocks to dry out and the sowing schedule to resume.
- Pastures are lush following recent rainfall, some waterlogging remains, but overall plentiful supply of green feed.
- Tillage radish crops sown mid-April are coming up well, should be set for first grazing in 2-3 weeks.
- Plentiful water is available in springs and streams, with some water still lying beside roads and on pastures.
- Some evidence of mice in paddocks and around sheds. Reports of damage to stored silage.
- High input costs remain of considerable concern and are impacting cropping decisions. Fertiliser is currently being applied so the costs are front of mind.
- Hay enquiries have decreased as the green feed on farm gives confidence that earlier contracted winter feed will be sufficient to carry farmers through the colder months. Interest in those areas that remain dry has also steadied.

- No 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: +/-0 (\$90 to \$125/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.

Southwest Victoria

- Low rainfall across the region this week, with the highest falls records in the east. The border region continues to be very dry. There is reasonable rainfall forecast over the coming weekend.
- Drier conditions have led to silage crops being cut in the west of the region.
- Earlier sowing took advantage of the rainfall in the east and the forecast rain is giving hope the break will come over the coming days. Growers in the west have dry-sown wheat and barley.
- Spring sown pasture feed such as phalaris and cocksfoot are looking good in the northern part of the region. Hybrid ryegrass and clovers dry-sown into brassica crops are at the ground cover stage and should provide good bulk feed in June/July.
- Some reports of increased mice numbers. CSIRO recommendation remains to monitor and bait at sowing to support efficacy of baiting programs. <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Straw remains in short supply with demand increasing though prices appear to have stabilised. With the on-going dry in the west of the region there is requirement for hay for immediate consumption. There are varied qualities of hay on the market with an assumption trade should increase in cooler weather.
- No change 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

- Some slight showers but no significant rainfall has been measured across many parts of the region. It is dry and more people are having to use supplementary feed as it has gotten colder.
- While some with contracts in place will maintain their hay program there are some indications producers are waiting for the break to finalise cropping/hay production decisions.
- Good supply of silage in the lower SE of the region as weather conditions supported silage rather than hay production.

- Increase in demand for hay for beef cattle and sheep in the upper parts of the region may see prices increase over the coming weeks. Sales also increasing into the southern part of the region.
- Trade is building due to the dry conditions and supplies are starting to tighten.
- Some increase in pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$240/t). Prices remain steady, supply is tight.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady depending on quality.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$120/t). Prices remain steady.
- Pasture hay: + \$10 (\$190 to \$230/t). Prices have increased, supply is tight for high quality.
- 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

- Some patchy rainfall across the region, some reasonable rainfall in some areas. Mid North and Mallee, Riverland are still very dry.
- Strong demand for big square bales to the Riverland and Mallee regions as growers seek to maintain their livestock numbers through feed lotting and using hay for additional roughage.
- Reasonable in paddock feed in the Adelaide hills and surrounding areas has reduced the hay and fodder market into that part of the region.
- SA Lucerne is in high demand into Qld and NSW with good prices being offered.
- Dry sown cropping had commenced for some growers although there are concerns that the lack of rainfall following may have reduced the efficacy of weed control activities. Others waited for rain and have commenced sowing now with the expectations they will be finished by the end of May.
- 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 good rainfall across some parts of the cropping regions of WA. Other areas remain dry with follow up rain, or a good break still needed.
- Seeding started during the last two weeks, canola has been the first crop sown and many paddocks have already germinated. Some dry sowing of oats has been undertaken in those areas that have not yet received rain. Some early sown crops now need good rain to support establishment.
- Input price pressure, labour shortages and the high forward contract prices being offered for canola, wheat and barley means the price for hay is not competitive.

- Long-term hay producers will still plant crops for hay, although less hectares expected overall.
- Early rain had encouraged sowing of oats for early sheep feed, with some areas maintaining reasonable in paddock feed levels.
- There remains reasonable demand for high quality hay.
- 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 low but consistent over the past week with low rain falling on most days. Expected rainfall over the weekend due to an approaching front is being watched closely.
- Soil moisture profiles remain low, leading to a consideration of the value of dry tolerant varieties.
- Winter pasture crops around Smithton are coming along nicely.
- Maize crops remain on schedule for silage harvest in coming weeks, depending on weather conditions and availability of contractors. Oat crops, sown a month ago, are germinating consistently and doing well.
- Recent rains in the more southern parts of the region are supporting continued availability of green feed, though more consistent rain is needed to give farmers confidence of sustained pasture growth.
- Input costs continue to be of concern, with the outlook for continued high prices. Fertiliser spreading is still being completed in some regions in preparation for the forecast rains.
- The dry conditions have seen interest in hay remain steady. Enquiries have been for quality cereal and lucerne hay, with most being sourced from the south where the cutting and bailing season is mostly complete.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$265/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.