



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 in areas where repeat flood events have impacted pastures. Sales are expected to increase as the winter progresses, donations and Departmental emergency fodder are phased out.
- The bureau of meteorology has reported significant rainfalls across areas of Qld and a cold front that brought rain across areas of Victoria, Southern NSW and Tasmania.
- Grain and fodder producers are in the midst of sowing and as predicted many grain farmers have increased plantings of canola, wheat and barley due to high world market demand.
- In temperate zones pasture growth will now be inhibited by cooler soil temperatures leading to an expected increase in demand for hay for supplementary feeding.
- Input costs will continue to impact cropping and fodder decisions. Replenishing pasture hay will not be a priority for fertiliser application which may reduce quantities of pasture hay available in Spring.
- Despite the temporary 20-cent reduction in fuel excise, fuel costs have again increased in many regions. Some transport companies will continue to apply a 5 - 10% fuel levy. Some hay growers, who deliver locally, have indicated that due to ongoing high fuel costs they will apply a fuel surcharge of up to 10%, or cartage fees of 50 cents per km.
- There has been high demand for good quality cereal hay and vetch hay. However, supplies of both are very 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

- In areas with mild to warmer weather and consistent rainfall, pasture growth will support stock without need for supplementary feed. This will reduce demand for hay and fodder.
- Varied qualities of fodder are available on the market.
- 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. Rainfall has meant many crops were harvested later than usual, resulting in coarser hay of lower quality.

Local News

- Some areas have received consistent falls of rain which has built confidence at the start of sowing.
- Grain growers have commenced sowing 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, as per past years.
- Some mouse damage to stored fodder has been reported.
- Repeated high rainfall events in some regions of Northern NSW and Queensland have damaged pastures. In other regions, high Autumn rainfall has reduced the quality of dry paddock feed so decisions will be made to reduce stocking levels or bring 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

- After a week of significant steady falls, the region has now had a week of fine weather to support the harvest of peanut crops and some hay making.
- Input and machinery repair costs will deter many producers from hay production in the coming seasons 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 rising, \$2.11/litre for diesel.
- Slow trade and low movement of fodder. Some increase in trade as rain reduces quality of dry 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

- Major rainfall over most of the region over the weekend with falls of 80-100mm across large parts of the area. Rainfall was minimal in the early part of the week however riverine flood warnings are still in place. For flood relief and assessment aid visit <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/>
- Assessment of flood damaged fields and crops from the last rain event had not been completed when the latest rain arrived, especially in low lying areas where flood waters are slow to drain. There is expected to be substantial losses for sorghum, beans and cotton crops. Reports that crops sown earlier in the month are either stripped, buried in silt or still underwater however the extent of losses cannot be assessed.
- Reports of damage to roads and infrastructure making assessment difficult by road; however some drones are being employed to support the process.
- Some growers are reporting they did manage to get mungbeans off between the rain events but they are in the silos at 15% moisture, which may impact quality and storage capacity. There is a general feeling there will be downgraded crops suitable for animal feed coming on to the market in the region with a greater than expected portion of the sorghum and mungbeans heading into silage pits.
- Some growers will consider aerial seeding as a way of resowing fields where access is limited.
- In areas at the edge of the rain events crops are coming up well. Long maturity wheat varieties such as sunmax are green and thriving.
- There have been some biosecurity concerns voiced by the cattle farmers in the region about lumpy skin and now the recent reports of foot and mouth in countries close to Australia.
- The interest in sales is currently subdued due to the sowing season and the weather events. Green feed is still in plentiful supply in regions not adversely affected by the recent flooding. As always there is interest in quality Vetch or Cereal Hay, but the supply is somewhat restrained.

- 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

- Continued and repeated rainfall events has caused repeated flooding. There is concern about the impact this is having on residents and the ability for the region to recover without additional support.
- Assessment of additional damage from the repeated flood events is continuing. Pastures have been significantly damaged and will require support and careful management for soil structure 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 when conditions permit.
- 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

- Moderate but sporadic rainfall across parts of the region over the weekend, with falls of between 40 – 60mm in the north and west, with 20 – 30mm in the south. There were minor and moderate flood warnings in place for riverine flooding in parts of the region, some of which are still ongoing, though the levels have subsided.

- Corn harvested in the period between rain events with expected reasonably good yields.
- Wheat and oilseed plantings continue as well as some trial barley crops. Hay and fodder crops are not considered a profitable option so there have been reduced plantings across the region.
- Reports of an increase in slug infestations, especially in canola crops. Monitoring along riverbanks and in thick stubble is recommended as the first step in control activities is to assess numbers. <https://www.grdc.com.au> have a number of resources regarding best practice slug control.
- With the autumn break and warmer temperatures pasture feed is available in good quantities. Oats, annual ryegrass and graze and grain canola are also offering plenty of green feed for sheep and cows.
- Some growers ran an aerial sowing program with a urea mix for canola before the rains to take advantage of warmer weather and forecast wetter conditions. Sowing schedule continuing in those areas less affected by adverse weather conditions.
- Mouse activity in the region continues to be reported, though the wet conditions are keeping numbers lower in some areas. Monitoring is recommended and where mouse control is required growers should spread bait during seeding <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Reports indicate the price of diesel is on the rise again across the region, which will further impact crop management decisions.
- Enquiries for hay have increased with a lot of farmers now purchasing hay to put away for later in the year. Lucerne hay is being sourced locally whilst most of the grass and clover hay is coming out of Victoria. High quality cereal hay is fetching better prices. Interest in straw appears to have decreased.
- Slight change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +\$3 (\$175 to \$225/t). Prices increase slightly 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: +\$3 (\$165 to \$220/t). Prices increase slightly 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 over the area this week with some areas receiving less than 10mm.
- With clearer conditions the sowing schedule is in full swing, and good soil moisture is giving growers a level of confidence in the season moving forward.
- The crops sown early continue to flourish in the good conditions with hopes for a good season ahead. Growers are watching the rainfall forecasts however as this year has been unpredictable.
- Green feed continues to be plentiful across the region with most farmers feeding almost completely from pasture.
- Good conditions are continuing with rain falling at the right time for the area after a rocky start; however a wet and cold winter may see demand for cereal hay and straw increase for stock security.

- Requests for donations for livestock farmers further north have been received in the region with some growers either sending up supplies or commencing donation drives.
- Hay inquiries remain slow but steady as the recent rainfall events have ensured immediate feed via pasture grasses are sufficient. Interest from feedlots is increasing as they seek to secure winter feedstock. Given the weather conditions the enquires are increasingly for shedded hay.
- Slight change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -\$3 (\$265 to \$300/t). Prices slightly lower 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

- Slight rainfall with falls of between 10-15mm for the week across most of the region.
- Average temperature trends are continuing to fall below expected, with cooler nights being forecast.
- The last of the silage crops are being cut around Invergordon. Spraying and seeding operations are in full swing taking advantage of the favourable conditions while they last.
- Whist the rain events have become intermittent some low-lying paddocks are still too soft for either the completion of pasture hay cutting, or to allow livestock on to graze. Farmers in those areas are hoping for further clear and warmer days to allow completion of hay production with good weather for curing.
- Most are reporting a good greening of the fields with both earlier and later sown crops taking advantage of increased soil moisture as well as ongoing small but steady falls of rain to maintain growth.
- Silage crops are still being cut in the region, depending on weather conditions as well as the availability of contractors. The rice harvest in Southern NSW has been significant, so there is a shortage of contractors for other crops and jobs.
- Hay enquires are rising with most growers moving quite a bit of stock. Feedlots are in the market for some good quality lucerne and cereal hay. Livestock prices are stated as the reason for the higher than expected demand, with prices of fodder expected to rise as supply becomes restricted. There is still plenty of green feed around for pasture feeding, mostly for dairy farmers.
- Inputs costs continue to be on the growers' radar, especially fuel with a noticeable increase in diesel prices during the past week.
- 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). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$210 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Gippsland

- Variable rainfall across the region this week with totals of 50mm in the far east and less than 5mm in the west.
- There have been some sporadic sheep graziers warnings due to colder overnight conditions, as well as reports of low visibility due to mist persisting well into the mornings on some days.
- Replanting in the east of the region to replace those crops damaged or destroyed by the rain dump has now been almost completed. Growers in that region are feeling optimistic with the follow up rain after the plantings were in. Sowing season continues with ongoing good soil moisture and promising weather forecasts giving growers' confidence for the season.
- The drier calmer days allowed for the spraying of post emergent herbicide on canola crops to be completed in most regions.
- Final cut coming off in fields around Bairnsdale, reports of good yields. It has been a good growing season for most of the region's traditional dryland pastures.
- Annual ryegrass and clover pasture crops are flourishing with plenty of on pasture feed available. Pastures sown 6-8 weeks ago in the central areas are now at 15cm high cover.
- Higher fuel costs are being reported by some in the region, and the freight levy is still being applied to deliveries to offset fuel costs.
- Hay and silage enquiries continue with strong demand, with some dedicated growers pushing out 2-3 truckloads a day over the last couple of weeks. Good livestock prices and increasing demand from the south and west to build on farm stocks for the winter months are being stated as the reason for the uptick. Shredded hay is attracting the most interest due to the unstable weather conditions.
- 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 \$135/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 in the region of the week with most areas recording 10-15mm, there were falls of around 25mm in the far west coastal and limited border regions, however the remainder of the border and coast is still very dry.
- Reports of forage kale bulking up well around Macarthur after receiving good rainfalls earlier in the month.

- Cereal and wheat crops sown earlier in the month in the central and east of the region are looking good with enough moisture from the rain event and ongoing small but steady falls to support growth. Growers still looking for more consistent heavier falls to bolster confidence.
- Dry conditions in the west have allowed the continued cutting of silage crops, however little is left now to harvest.
- The border areas are still dry and need good rainfall now to support crops that have been dry seeded. Many growers reporting less than 10mm of rain has fallen on new season crops.
- Reports of mice continue in the region, mostly seen around sheds and housing, some activity in the fields but damage apparently low. <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Fuel prices are on the rise across the region.
- Hay inquiries have steadied as most growers are taken up with sowing and spraying programs. There has been interest from dairy farmers in the drier parts of the region to bolster fodder stores. Some trade into the region for contracted hay and small feedlots.
- 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 \$105/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. Some concern being expressed about the continued dry conditions.
- Cropping schedules may be amended if the dry weather continues. Some movement towards grazing cereal varieties confirmed as growers try to increase options and reduce need for additional inputs.
- While some with contracts in place will maintain their hay production program there are some indications some farmers appear to be heading towards preferencing additional pasture rather than cereal hay to reduce input costs.
- 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.
- Most growers are very busy preparing for or commencing sowing. Hay and fodder sales have remained steady with increased enquiries from sheep producers as they are starting to look for feed as the green pick dries off.
- No change to pricing this week
- Cereal hay: +/- 0 (\$200 to \$240/t). Prices remain steady.
- 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 May so far. Some other areas have had reasonable falls which have maintained subsoil moisture levels but consistent rainfall needed across the region to support grain and hay production.
- It has been confirmed that some growers have dropped out of hay production this coming season due to gross margin concerns. Canola plantings are expected to be up, although some grain growers are still waiting on the break. Dry sowing of canola in some parts of the region. Wheat now being sown.
- Hay production is still seen as a competitive weed control method for control of ryegrass.
- Due to the combination of ongoing high fuel costs 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.
- Still demand for high quality cereal hay which supports long-term hay producers to keep hay in the cropping schedule. Much of the surplus hay from the 2020/21 season is no longer available. 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 reasonable rainfall of between 25-50mm across western cropping areas. It has been a reasonable start for many croppers with a level of optimism about the season ahead in most areas.
- The full sowing scheduled has now commenced. Canola crops are coming on well and good germination for other early crops has also been reported. Increasing fuel prices and the labour shortage are causing some concerns and have increased pressure on grain and hay producers across the region.
- 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 opportunistic hay production has been left out of many cropping schedules.

- Hay will be used within the crop rotation program as a clean-up crop by some growers, however this should not be considered in the same category as the production of high-quality varietal pasture hay.
- Long-term hay producers will still be planting some crops for hay, particularly those who specialise in oaten hay for export, although less hectares expected overall.
- Rain has supported sowing and growth of early sheep feed which has reduced Autumn fodder demand.
- 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

- Good rainfall fell across the region during the past two weeks with falls of more than 25mm of rain across much of the area on a single day and ongoing 10-15mm falls of rain every few days. However, some areas did receive significant heavy falls of 60mm as the cold front moved in.
- Temperatures are beginning to trend back down to average range, with some areas experiencing early frosts.
- Sowing of pasture grasses and ryecorn has been ongoing in those areas with a bit of soil moisture. Farmers are looking for some quick winter feed varieties to take advantage of the sporadic rainfall.
- Perennial clovers starting to show themselves more, especially red and white clover as well as strawberry clover. These are complimenting the cocksfoot and chicory which had been coming along well.
- Some of the maize crops scheduled for silage cuts were taken off before the rainfall, and are on schedule for cutting to continue as the weather clears, depending on the availability of contractors.
- There have been reports of excellent winter crop growth in some areas especially for Forage ryecorn and annual ryegrass as well as turnips and bulk winter feed from kale.
- Input costs continue to be of concern with no indication there will be much relief in the short to medium term. Additional freight costs exacerbate the cost of inputs for Tasmanian farmers.
- Continuing unstable conditions has maintained a high level of interest in hay. Most inquires have been for quality cereal and lucerne hay for stock feeding though there is also interest in small bales for equine sales. Some are being sourced locally with the bulk coming up from the south. The advice is to lock in supplies for winter, as supply is showing signs of tightening especially in the higher end of the market.
- 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.