



Australian Fodder Industry Association



27 May 2022

# HAY REPORT

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>NATIONAL SUMMARY</b>	
Driving Prices Up	3
Driving Prices Down	3
Local News	3
<b>Regional Commentary</b>	
Atherton Tablelands	4
Darling Downs	4
North Coast NSW	5
Central West NSW	5
Bega Valley	6
Goulburn/Murray Valley	7
Gippsland	8
Southwest Victoria	8
Southeast South Australia	9
Central South Australia	10
Southwest Western Australia	10
Northwest Tasmania	11

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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](http://www.afia.org.au)

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## NATIONAL SUMMARY

### Driving Prices Up

- Ongoing support to access good quality hay is required to support stock recovery in areas where repeat flood events have impacted pastures across Northern NSW and into Qld. Sales are expected to increase as the winter progresses, donations and Departmental emergency fodder are phased out.
- The bureau of meteorology has reported heavy rainfall across parts of WA, with low to moderate rain falls across most grain cropping regions. Most SA and Victorian cropping regions have had between 5-10 mm of rain if any.
- In temperate zones pasture growth will now be inhibited by temperatures leading to an expected increase in demand for hay for supplementary feeding and stock support.
- Grain and fodder producers are sowing and as predicted many grain farmers have increased plantings of canola, wheat and barley due to high world market demand. Hay production may be down this year.
- Input costs will continue to impact cropping and fodder management decisions. Replenishing pasture hay will not be a priority for fertiliser application which will reduce quantities of Spring pasture hay.
- Despite the temporary 20-cent reduction in fuel excise, fuel costs have again increased. Higher transport costs and/or fuel levies are expected to remain a feature of pricing for fodder this year.
- 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

- Varied qualities of fodder are available on the market due to weather damage. 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

- On Wednesday 25 May, the Bureau published a formal record of the extreme rainfall and flooding in south-east Queensland and eastern New South Wales, documenting the 22 February to 9 March 2022 event in Special Climate Statement 76.  
<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/statements>
- Grain and fodder growers are focused on sowing across all regions and while there is reasonable confidence of a good season in many areas, some regions are still waiting for breaking rains.
- 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, had kept the Autumn market for fodder slow, as per past years. Demand is now increasing.
- Some mouse damage to stored fodder and sown crops is been reported.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchasing to be sure of the quality of the feed.

## Regional Commentary

### Atherton Tablelands

- The harvest of peanut crops has been a key activity across the region with some hay making also being undertaken.
- Machinery repair costs, long delays to access replacement parts and high input prices will deter many producers from hay production in the coming seasons due to lack of profitable return.
- 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 still rising, with diesel now up to \$2.12/litre.
- 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

- Moderate rainfall across wide areas of the region with 15-40mm of rainfall for the week, the recent flooding leaves ground inundated, and any further rainfall is staying on the surface. Ongoing rainfall and saturated fields make assessments of damage to crops, stock and infrastructure challenging.
- For flood relief and assessment aid visit <https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/>
- Many growers are stating they believe they need at least a month of warm sunshine with no rain is needed in order to repair the damage and make planting a winter crop this season viable. There has been some suggestion of skipping the winter crop and instead focusing on the summer crop with a full moisture profile. Oats that were freshly sown in some parts of the region are now considered to be lost and, if weather permits them to dry out, the paddocks will need to be re-sown.
- Some barley and early wheat crops in those areas at the lower end of the rain events are emerging well, with post plant falls of 60mm or less supporting germination and early growth.
- Fuel, fertiliser, chemicals and freight costs continue to be a concern for most in the region, and though the recent rain has put the sowing on hold, early crop losses will need to be replaced with all the associated costs. Recent rains have increased the weed burden, management actions will be needed.
- Many growers are downgrading their legumes, grain and pulses and a sizable portion is now being prepared as silage, which could lead to an abundance of this commodity in the local market.
- Sales continue to be slow due to the weather events and the ongoing instability. Green feed is in plentiful supply in those regions which received good but not flooding rains. As always there is interest in quality Vetch or Cereal hay, supplies are scarcer.
- 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**

- Heavy rainfall and storms again across the region. The continuing rain and repeated flooding are causing significant concern as the region heads into winter. Assessment of additional damage from the repeated flood events is continuing but hampered by lack of clear days.
- There is little if any trade in locally produced fodder as those able to produce/harvest fodder look to restock their own supplies. Pastures have been damaged by waterlogging, damage to soil structure and inundation with mud.
- Hay/silage donations and Government supported emergency fodder programs provide some support to those 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 (e.g weed) 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**

- There has been little to no rain across the region this week with sunnier and warmer days welcomed after some heavy falls earlier in the month.
- There is a fair amount of concern regarding the possibility of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) making it to Australia. The impact to livestock and the follow on to growers would be substantial. Information about the Australian Vetplan and preparedness is available at <https://animalhealthaustralia.com.au>

- Sowing is continuing well in those areas less affected by adverse weather conditions, however as indicated earlier in the year the amount of acreage devoted to hay and fodder crops is down from previous years as growers make a call about the returns available on higher profit crops.
- Diesel prices are high. With price reductions, from removal of the excise, eroded by supply pressures.
- Growers with early sown spring wheat are now monitoring closely. Disease management and nitrogen decisions will be crucial to ensure high quality but profitable yields. There have been some sporadic reports of early stripe rust in grazing wheat in the east of the region.
- Resowing of canola and other rain affected crops is being reported around Forbes and Eugowa.
- Growers are closely watching crops such as fababeans and will consider converting them into green mulch for nitrogen later in the year, if the wet weather causes fungus and quality downgrades.
- Slug infestations, especially in canola crops, continue to be reported, with the pest showing in new areas. <https://www.grdc.com.au> have a number of resources regarding best practice slug control.
- Mouse activity in and around sheds continues to be reported, though the recent wet has made it less viable for them in the fields as some still have water lying on the surface so burrows are flooded.
- Green feed is going strong in areas with tillage raddish, ryegrass and graze and grain canola giving a number pasture options for sheep and cows.
- Enquiries for hay have steadied, however trade with farmers purchasing to put away for later in the year is going well. Lucerne hay is still being sourced locally and grass and clover hay is coming out of Victoria. High quality cereal hay is still in demand.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +0/-0 (\$175 to \$225/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 (\$165 to \$220/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 to no rainfall across the region this week, with overall warmer temperatures.
- The ongoing clear and dry conditions are allowing the sowing schedule to get into full swing, and good soil moisture is giving growers a level of confidence in the season moving forward. However, predictions of a wet and cold winter will boost demand for reasonable on-farm fodder supplies.
- The crops sown early continue to flourish in the good conditions with hopes for a good season ahead growing as the favourable conditions continue.
- Broadcast seeding and mulch has been a successful strategy for establishing good pasture on the more coastal dairy farms in the region. Green feed continues to be plentiful across the region with most farmers feeding almost completely on pasture, with Italian ryegrass, white clover and

oats being the standout varieties. Widespread reports of fleabane in pastures, due to the past wet spring/summer.

- Requests for donations from 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 greened up the fields. Feedlot interest continues to be strong as they seek to secure winter feedstock. Given the weather conditions enquires continue to be mainly for shedded hay.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$265 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**

- Little to no rainfall across the region this week with some clearer sunnier days. The average temperature for both day and night are trending back up to the norm.
- Mid-winter wheat varieties such as Cesario are coming along well around Katandra, looking for some additional urea in the next week or so to boost it along.
- Canola and wheat varieties went in late last week in drier fields to the west of Shepparton, barley is currently on track to be sown this week. In the areas heaviest hit by rain, canola crops are coming up in levelled ground or around trees but not emerging yet in areas which were flooded. Some speculation that resowing may be required.
- The clearer drier days have allowed some paddocks to dry off, but low-lying fields remain too soft for either the completion of hay cutting, or to allow livestock on to graze.
- Some summer crops are still being cut for silage across the region; this has taken a little longer than expected due to the shortage of contractors.
- Inputs costs continue to be of concern, especially diesel. Some growers are taking delivery of inputs such as lime well before it is needed on the assumption prices will continue to rise.
- Hay enquires have stabilised, with a large amount of stock already moved or contracted. Feedlots are in the market for some good quality lucerne and cereal hay with prices of fodder expected to rise as supply becomes restricted. There is still plenty of green pasture feed around, mostly for dairy farmers.
- 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.
- 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**

- Little to no rainfall across the region this week with most areas receiving 10mm of rain or less.
- Colder overnight conditions have persisted into this week, with frost and mist affecting some areas.
- With the cooler conditions across the region some farmers are watching pasture growth carefully; however, no significant slowdown has been recorded yet. Ryegrass and clover pasture crops continue to be standouts across the region supporting good in paddock feed levels.
- Growers continue overseeding of grass with rye in the region. Parts of the region are doing well now with recent rain falling at the optimal time.
- Replanted grain crops in the east are now germinating from last week's rain events. Growers are hoping for more consistent rainfall to establish growth and kick start the season again.
- The cost of inputs is once again on the minds of growers as the short term relief from the fuel levy has been offset by demand driven price rises.
- Enquires from farmers planning for winter months continues. Farmers continue to seek out good quality fodder to meet protein needs over the coming months.
- Demand for hay and silage has steadied though still in demand, a balance between the farmers planning for incoming cooler months and the ready availability of in paddock feed. Farmers continue to seek out good quality fodder to meet protein needs over the coming months
- 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**

- After some rainfall late last week the region has again had little to none for the remainder of the week.
- The north and the east of the region still have soil moisture which supports some confidence in the cropping season. However, the coastal and border regions are seeing soil moisture degradation. The border and coastal areas remain very dry.
- Sowing of oil seed crops into ripped ground continues in and around the Hamilton region. Lentil crops have been sown in the past 2 weeks into the north of the region, closer to the Wimmera, in areas with some damp loam and are coming along well.
- Growers in the east of the region, who planted early, are still looking for decent rainfall to boost growth, whilst soil moisture and temperatures are reasonable; the lack of substantial rainfall is a cause for concern.
- Reports of mice continue, still not considered to be a threat as evidence in the paddocks is low, more seen around sheds and storage. Monitoring and management is ongoing.

- Fuel and other inputs costs are still a cause for concern in the region. The fuel excise reduction has been overtaken by demand driven price rises and reliance on imports for supply.
- Hay enquiries are quieter as growers concentrate on seeding and spraying. There has been interest from dairy farmers in the drier parts of the region to reinforce on farm stores of fodder. 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 light falls but no significant rainfall has been measured across most areas. The region is well behind average recorded rainfall for Autumn.
- Some rainfall over the past few days, enough to stop seeding, some confidence of a reasonable season. Crop and fodder growers are concentrating on sowing. Some undertook early sowing so are almost finished, others waited so have some weeks to go.
- Across the region more grain has been planted due to the forward contract prices available and the cost of inputs. Some movement towards grazing cereal varieties confirmed as growers try to increase options and reduce need for additional inputs.
- Big shortfall of hay is expected this Spring.
- While some with contracts in place will maintain their hay production program firmer indications some farmers have chosen additional pasture rather than cereal hay to reduce input costs.
- 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. Continued increase in demand for hay for beef cattle and sheep across the upper parts of the region.
- Slower sales in the southern part of the region due to croppers concentrating on sowing.
- Supply of hay is low across the region, no advertising has been required to support sales. A lot of the remaining hay is already contracted for sale.
- 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

- A little bit of rain this week but substantial falls needed to start the cropping season, rain has been predicted for week commencing 30<sup>th</sup> May.
- Dry seeding has been undertaken by many growers with estimates that 95% of the region's crops have been dry seeded. Most growers have therefore finished seeding and are now waiting for rain to support germination and start the season.
- Canola plantings have increased as predicted, most dry sown early have germinated.
- Diesel sitting at around \$2 per litre, so fuel levies and increased prices for local deliveries are expected to remain a feature.
- Hay prices will need to rise to reflect input costs and commodity prices for alternative crops.
- Steady demand for hay, regular late Autumn sales
- Pricing remains variable and is quality rather than demand driven.
- Cereal hay: -\$5 (\$170 to \$240/t). Prices for lower quality dropped slightly 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

- While some areas haven't had considerable rain in the past week overall it has been a reasonable start for many croppers. The sowing season is in full swing.
- Canola crops are coming on well and good germination and establishment for other early crops has been reported.
- Increasing fuel and input prices and ongoing labour shortages remain issues of concern.
- International markets are offering high prices for canola, wheat and barley. Pulse sales into India are expected to increase and ongoing world market impacts from poor crop seasons in competing grain production countries will keep a focus on grain rather than hay production across WA.
- Hay will be used within the crop rotation program as a clean-up crop by some growers, however this does not lead to 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**

- Little to no rain across the region this week with average falls of between 5mm and 15mm.
- Temperatures are continuing the trend back into average range, with some areas experiencing early frosts.
- Sowing of pasture grasses has continued in those areas with a good moisture profile, farmers are looking at quick winter feed varieties to take advantage of the sporadic rainfall. New season grasses have been seeded in the region and growers are now looking to commence other plantings including some cereal hay varieties.
- Clover crops are bulking up along well in the region, adding to the flourishing chicory and cocksfoot.
- Winter kale crops are excellent in the region with 2-4 weeks of growth before they are ready for feeding to dry dairy cows. Fodder beets are being harvested around the Burnie area, most for direct feed to stock. Maize crops are being cut for silage with the clearer weather in those areas where contactors can be sourced.
- As usual the cost of inputs is an ongoing concern for growers, with fuel and chemicals remaining an immediate concern.
- Interest in hay has stabilised, however farmers are looking to the falling temperatures and filling their sheds with good quality hay where they can source it. Equine sales continue steadily. 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.