



Australian Fodder Industry Association



24 June 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

- Good quality cereal hay is now in high demand but there is short supply in a number of areas. Farmers looking to purchase and store fodder against expected winter demand may find long-term customers are given first options by hay and fodder producers as supplies tighten.
- There has been the expected drop in temperatures as winter has begun. The cold front responsible for rainfall events has moved across the country contributing to need for stock to be supported with supplementary fodder.
- Pasture growth will be inhibited by cooler soil temperatures leading to further expected increase in demand for hay.
- Current high forward contract prices due to strong international market demand has encouraged grain growers to plant additional grain crops instead of investing in hay production. Opportunistic hay production is not seen as a price competitive cropping option, a smaller number of hectares has been sown this season.
- Hay growers are tending to preference existing customers over new ones given the shortage of higher quality hay. Hay sheds are less than half full but most is already committed.
- Input costs continue to impact cropping decisions as grain and fodder producers undertake sowing and for most producers' pasture hay will not be a priority for fertiliser application. This may reduce quantities of pasture hay produced and available during late winter/early spring.

### Driving Prices Down

- Expectations for a wetter than average spring will maintain confidence. Farmers may consider pasture growth will support stock without need for supplementary feed.
- Varied qualities of fodder are available on the market. Growers with lower grade hay, particularly hay stacked outside have been actively trading to reduce the amount stored on farm and prepare space for the new seasons harvest.
- The quality of late 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

- The majority of grain and hay production areas across Australia have completed sowing. Dry sowing had commenced in April in some regions with reliance on subsoil moisture. Some areas have been hampered by ongoing rainfall events and saturated soils which means paddocks cannot be accessed.
- Most cropping areas have received reasonable and in many cases consistent falls of rain, improving confidence in the 2022/23 cropping season.
- The Bureau of Meteorology has announced the end of the La Nina, but have suggested there is a 50% chance it may reform later in the year, bringing wet conditions for late winter and into Spring.
- High input costs and availability of labour remain of general concern. The lack of available labour may impact hay production in the coming season and will restrict hay movement over 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

- It remains a busy time for growers with corn being harvested. Due to high moisture levels corn will be dried prior to storage. Average moisture level of between 17-18% makes drying cost effective compared to previous years where moisture levels were above 22%.
- The last of Rhodes pasture hay has been baled. Further rainy weather has been predicted which may impact quality if stored outside.
- There continues to be plantings of sugar cane as grower attempt to balance continued high input costs with the need for a consistent guaranteed return.
- There are concerns about the vulnerability of the machinery supply chain and potential impact on farming. Lack of mechanics, machinery repair costs, long delays to access new machinery, replacement parts and high input prices are deterring many growers from purchasing new machinery.
- Fuel prices increased to \$2.29/litre a ten-cent increase in the past week.
- Slow trade and low movement of fodder. Some increase in trade is expected as winter progresses.
- 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 to no rainfall across the region this week with some sunny days giving the growers a chance to get back on to the paddocks. Farmers watching the rain gauges are reporting they reached their yearly annual rainfall by the first week in June, and are expecting more as winter sets in.
- Sorghum harvesting remains sporadic as weather continues to interrupt the harvest. With approx. 80% of the harvest complete, the remaining 20% is expected to be downgraded. However, with weather clearing there is hope of harvest for part of the remaining crop. Some will be turned into green manure.
- Cotton growers around Toowoomba and into Central Qld are reporting trouble getting picking completed due to a lack of contractors. This is due in part to the increased cost of diesel increasing the contract price.
- Due to the wet and unpredictable weather conditions some growers chosen shorter season crops such as barley or chickpeas.
- High yield wheat varieties have been popular, growers are being more selective of varieties when matching them to available paddocks due to the underlying wet soil. The sowing season has been extended beyond usual timeframes.
- Mungbeans harvest is complete with a forecast for substantial quality issues and seed spillage. Some crops have been left unharvested as quality will be too low to justify harvester damage to paddocks.

- Mouse numbers are being reported, especially where sowing has not commenced or has been halted due to the underlying saturation of the soil. Plentiful supply of unsown seed available to feed the mice. <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Fuel, fertiliser, chemicals and freight costs continue to be a concern for most in the region, as well as a lack of contractors hampering transport options to deliver to farm.
- Hay enquires have steadied with good interest in vetch hay as well as high quality cereal and clover Hay. A shortage of hay is forecast this year due to the switch to grain and oilseeds as well as the inability of some growers to plant their usual hectares due to the weather.
- 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 (\$220 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.

## North Coast NSW

- The continuing rain and repeated flooding will hamper the ability of the region to recover without substantial additional assistance. Assessment of additional damage from the repeated flood events is continuing but has been hampered by ongoing high rainfall weather events and lack of consistent support.
- There is little if any trade in locally produced fodder as those able to produce/harvest fodder look to restock their own supplies. Where paddock access has allowed pasture rehabilitation or sowing of fodder crops there is some confidence of improved local supply of feed.
- Careful management is being undertaken to support and rehabilitate pastures damaged by waterlogging, damage to soil structure and inundation with mud.
- Flood-affected farmers can call the Department of Primary Industries' emergency hotline on 1800 814 647. 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 ongoing storm impact recovery within the region.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$260/t). Prices bookmarked until more regular trade resumes
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$430/t). Prices bookmarked until more regular trade resumes
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices bookmarked until more regular trade resumes
- 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

- Low rainfall totals across the region this week with some areas receiving no rain at all.
- The weather continues to play havoc across many parts of the region, with reports some growers are yet to complete this season's sowing program. This will reduce hectares sown but some have made the decision to hold areas available for a summer crop where it is possible.
- As with growers further north, there are reports some central west growers have altered the sowing program to incorporate shorter season crops such as barley or chickpeas. Others however report staying with more water resistant cereal crop varieties and hoping for fewer wet days.
- Growers have now turned to some unorthodox sowing techniques to get seeds on the ground. Some in the West Wyalong region are now using aerial seeding followed by pressing. Others have a set depth as shallow as possible with packing pressure just enough to break topsoil to reduce risk of bogging.
- Canola crops sown early on moisture with mild temperatures following around the Lake Cargelligo region are coming along very well with some very early flower development seen, this should slow down to usual growth pattern with cooler weather.
- On the clearer days, growers are taking to opportunity to grass spray across grazed canola.
- There have been some issues with already failing rural road networks being further damaged by rain events causing delays and, in some cases, preventing deliveries.
- Slug infestation has been reported in the Parkes, Forbes and Condobolin regions with heavy losses. Weather events made early season baiting impossible, high slug numbers are being reported from paddock inspections. Mouse activity in and around sheds continues to be reported. <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Hay enquires have steadied in the last week as scarcity becomes a factor, older hay is moving quite well. Feedlots are also sourcing more quality product as supply of feed grain is restricted after high exported tonnage due to international market demand.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +0/-0 (\$175 to \$240/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Lucerne hay: +0/-0 (\$305 to \$355/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Straw: +0/-0 (\$65 to \$80/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Pasture hay: +0/-0 (\$165 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.

## Bega Valley

- Sporadic small amounts of rain fell across the region this week, with falls of 5mm of rain on average.
- Whilst there is still green feed available in the region, the grass has stopped growing and the soil is dry. The region has reported its first frosts which are further drying out the soil and damaging susceptible crops.
- Following drier conditions, paddocks previously too wet are now being sown and fertilised with pasture crops including clover, rye and chicory. However, the cooler conditions and later sowing are requiring closer monitoring than would normally be expected at this time of the year.

- Mice activity continues to be reported in both paddocks and sheds, and the numbers are now increasing <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Reports of a rapid growth in the instances of invasive African Lovegrass in the Bega and Cooma area. Management being undertaken to control the weed.
- The prices of inputs continue to be an issue. The current energy crisis is causing concern. Farmers looking to re-contract their electricity price have been quoted a 30% price increase. This is following the estimated 40% increase in transport costs and on-going rise in fertiliser prices.
- Hay enquiries have steadied with the drier and colder days. Feedlot interest continues to be strong. Most high-quality fodder is either sold or contracted for sale, fodder at lower quality end of the market is still available.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$265 to \$310/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 this week with falls averaging around 20mm of rain.
- Canola graze and grain varieties in the north-east of the region are growing well after their first graze.
- Ryegrass paddocks planted in late April are showing plenty of biomass due to good soil moisture and follow up rains. Many are now ready to be grazed before being supported prior to being cut for hay.
- The drier conditions have ramped up the cutting of silage. There is a high quantity and quality of product coming off the paddocks with more manageable moisture levels.
- Reports of the emergence of Russian Wheat Aphid in wheat and barley crops in the region. Damage is being reported across 40% of crops in some paddocks, control measures are underway.
- Inputs costs continue to be of concern, with fuel being the most mentioned however while urea prices have come down a little most are still being quoted \$1200 - \$1300 per tonne delivered on farm.
- Hay enquires and prices have stabilised this week after a lift last week. The feeling is there will need to be some conservation of hay in the region as shortfalls are expected, due to the less favourable conditions and reduced hay plantings elsewhere. Many fodder growers in the region are only servicing existing customers. Sales and movement of lower grade hay will continue.
- No change to pricing this week
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$215/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

- Low rainfall totals this week, with averages of 10-15mm of rain though coastal areas saw a higher average, however temperatures are quite low with frosts most mornings.
- The cooler temperatures have led to pasture growth slowing and early frosts are drying out some of the ground. However, there is still plenty of green feed currently available.
- There has been an increase in the number of fox sightings in the region, causing concern for dairy farmers regarding the risk of pregnant cows being infected with *Neospora caninum*. [https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/160436/neospora.pdf](https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/160436/neospora.pdf)
- Plentiful soil moisture has supported growth of mixed pastures of peas, vetch, ryegrass and clovers. Vetch and peas have out-competed the rye and clover but after grazing the ryegrass/clover is bouncing back well. After 30 day rounds of grazing the remainder will be cut for silage by most growers.
- Early calving season has started in the region, but the bulk of births are expected in July.
- Fuel prices are again on the rise in the region, with an increase of 10c per litre in the diesel price in the last week.
- Hay and silage enquiries have levelled out, though trade is still good. A number of farmers are filling up their sheds, and in some cases building new ones, as insurance against the next drought.
- No change in prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$250/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 \$145/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

- Light to moderate rainfall this week over the region, especially along the coastal areas with falls in between 15-25 mm of rain for the week and 10-15mm of rain for the rest of the region.
- Border and coastal regions which had dry sown their crops in the hope of follow up rains are reporting strong growth, however frosts are causing some concern.
- Lambing season continues in the region with some welfare management required to reduce the impact of the cold conditions.
- Grass continues to grow slowly in the area. Farmers are trying to make the most of this growth by spreading urea and nitrogen. Sunshine and warmth will be needed support ongoing growth.
- Slug and conical snail infestation has been reported in new crops and grasses around Heywood with mitigation now underway to prevent losses. GRDC have provided factsheets on optimal

control <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/grdc-update-papers/tab-content/grdc-update-papers/2019/02/snail-research-optimising-control>

- Mice activity continues to be reported in both paddocks and sheds, with higher numbers being reported over the last few weeks. <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Input costs continue to be an issue for growers and farmers, with the cost of fuel rising steadily.
- The cold weather and dryer than normal conditions supporting hay sales. Most of the hay being sold is either going to beef or dairy farms. Feedlots are starting to look at hay as the cheaper alternative existing grain supply contracts end and they have to negotiate grain contracts at the higher prices.
- 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 rainfall has been measured across most parts of the region during the past week. However, the region remains behind average recorded rainfall for Autumn.
- Autumn rainfall has improved confidence in the season. Crop and fodder growers are completing their sowing program. Those who undertook early sowing are almost finished; others who waited for the break have some weeks to go. Sowing is expected to be finished by end of June.
- Across the region more grain has been planted due to the expectation it will be more profitable than hay. Significant grazing cereal varieties confirmed as growers focus on profitability, spread risk and reduce need for additional inputs during the growing season.
- Big shortfall of hay is expected this year, supply of stored hay is very short. Growers with contracts in place will maintain hay production program. However, as sowing is finalised it is clear farmers have planted additional pasture rather than invest in cereal hay due to input and labour costs.
- Hay and fodder sales have remained steady. Enquiries and steady sales in the southern part of the region while croppers concentrating on sowing and not actively trading fodder.
- Supplies of hay are very low across the region. A lot of the remaining hay is already contracted for sale so reports of shortages and low sales availability expected to increase.
- 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**

- Some parts of the region have received light rains of between 5-10mm of rain building on good falls during the past month. Barossa valley region growers have received up to 100 - 125mm of rain since the end of May.
- Estimates that 98% of overall crop seeding has now been completed. Only grain producers in very heavy dry areas had to wait until rains to seed, 95% of the crop across the region was dry sown.
- Diesel sitting at around \$2.20 per litre for bulk deliveries on farm, it is causing considerable concern about profitability of cropping and hay production in particular. Fuel levies and increased prices for local deliveries are expected to remain a feature. Hay prices will need to rise to reflect the increasing costs of inputs and commodity prices for alternative crops.
- Increasing demand for hay. Livestock farmers are deciding to supplementary feed to support their ability to hold on to stock confident rainfall will support pasture growth into Spring.
- Pricing remains variable due to remaining stocks of low-quality older hay from 2-3 seasons ago.
- Demand is increasing as supply shortages become well known.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week for high protein hay.
- Straw: +\$10 (\$110 to \$150/t). Prices have increased because supply is short.
- 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**

- Good rainfall has been falling over much of the area with heavy falls of up to 50mm of rain record in scattered parts. Heavy rainfall in places around the Lake Grace region. Good conditions and strengthen the expectations for hay production this season
- Crop growth is strong. Pasture growth in southern parts of the region is slow due to colder temperatures so hay and supplementary feeding will be needed.
- Increasing fuel prices \$2.00 per litre on farm for diesel, input prices and ongoing labour shortages remain an issue of concern.
- Strong forward contract prices being offered 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.
- Monitoring for mice activity remains a recommendation. It is recommended where mouse control is required growers spread bait during seeding <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Hay is being fed out, so enquiries are steadily increasing and reasonable sales are expected.

- Shortage of good quality pasture hay so prices are remaining strong for quality varietal pasture hay. Cheaper prices for older, lower quality/paddock clean up hay as growers try to move it off farm.
- Strong contract prices for export quality hay have been offered to support planting of crops for hay and to maintain hay as a competitive option. Prices need to be above \$300 per tonne in order for hay to be profitable given consistently increasing input and labour costs.
- Slight changes to prices.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$250/t). Price remains steady.
- Lucerne hay: -\$70 (\$350 to \$420/t). Small bales selling well. Price has dropped for large bales given strong supply available in some areas.
- 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**

- Heavy rains fell across the region this week with falls of around 40mm of rain in Smithton, and up to 70mm of rain around Burnie.
- Fodder kale growing in many paddocks around Burnie is robust with high biomass, after a summer of low rainfall this crop is filling the winter feed needs for a number of livestock farmers.
- Paddocks of chicory undersown with red clover are powering along with excellent growth in the northern inland parts of the region.
- As expected with the winter temperatures and conditions, pasture growth has now slowed, and supplementary feed is being employed by livestock and dairy farmers.
- Graze and grain barley crops around Cressy are coming along well after a graze by lambs earlier in the month.
- Input costs continue to be an issue, with the price of fuel once again rising and with fertiliser now being spread on crops being factored into the future plans for some growers.
- Interest in hay has steadied, there are still some parcels of this year's hay around but much of what is moving is older stock. This is being sourced by livestock, dairy and equine buyers as long as the quality is good. Preference for shedded hay from many purchasers.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$245 to \$270/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 (\$195 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.