



Australian Fodder Industry Association



01 July 2022

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

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## NATIONAL SUMMARY

### Driving Prices Up

- The bureau of meteorology has reported rainfall of between 10-50mm of rain across many fodder production areas in WA, SA, Tas, Vic and NSW providing support for the early stages of crop growth.
- Pasture growth will continue to be inhibited by cooler soil temperatures leading to an expected increase in demand for hay during the winter months.
- There is a growing expectation that there will be a shortfall of hay in the coming season. Current high forward contract prices for oilseeds, cereals and pulses focussed grain growers on the profitability of grain crops against hay production. Opportunistic hay production will not be seen as a price competitive cropping option, a smaller number of hectares has therefore been sown this season.
- 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.
- Slow but steady increase in enquiries to source feed and increase on hand supplies.
- There is increasing demand for good quality cereal hay and vetch hay. However, supplies of both are now very low and being prioritised by some hay producers for sale for long term or existing customers.
- Lucerne prices are 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

- Continued confidence pasture growth will sustain stock without need for supplementary feed had kept demand for hay and fodder at low levels.
- Varied qualities of fodder are available on the market. Growers with lower grade hay, particularly hay stacked outside for the past two seasons have been actively trading to reduce their on-farm stores
- 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

- The majority of grain and hay production areas have completed sowing. Some shorter season varieties of barley and pulses are still being planted in areas where paddocks had been inaccessible due to high rainfall. Dry sowing in many regions allowed sowing to be completed in many areas prior to the forecast rains falling to support germination and strong crop establishment.
- There is reasonable confidence of an average to good production season. A La Niña WATCH has been issued by the Bureau of Meteorology. This means there is around a 50% chance of La Niña reforming later in 2022, approximately double the normal likelihood
- High input costs and availability of labour are causing general concern. The lack of available labour may impact hay production in the coming season and the availability of transport options to support 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

- The harvest of peanut and corn crops has given way to another busy planting season. Some growers are now putting in crops of wheat and barley with the hope of having a cereal crop to harvest.
- Heavy rainfalls are predicted over the coming weekend.
- There is a shortage of feed grain available in the region as some specialist livestock producers look for high quality feed to support their stud cattle during show season.
- Machinery repair costs, long delays to access replacement parts and high input prices will deter many producers from opportunistic 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 while a drop in prices has not yet eventuated) to produce a future crop of hay.
- Given consistently low demand for hay, a high percentage of older pastures will now be left and used as a green manure mulch for the paddocks.
- Fuel prices rose again, diesel is now up to \$2.32/litre with some small decreases forecast but ongoing concern about the impact fuel prices will have on hay and crop production.
- Slow trade and low movement of fodder. Trade is expected to increase 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.
- Resowing of oats around Nobby has been completed as well as sowing of faba beans, with growers hoping for a few weeks of little to no rain and sunny days to ensure the crops have a chance.
- Slow maturing wheat varieties such as Lancer are coming along well in areas with sufficient drainage and have been taking advantage of the recent sunny days; however, in low lying areas the crop is showing signs of waterlogging and losses are expected. Growers with badly damaged crops due to the rains are levelling the paddocks in preparation for a summer crop with full soil moisture profiles.
- Reports growers in the Dalby region have harvested the last of the viable sorghum crops and are now looking at the corn crops, before commencing a very late winter wheat sowing program in paddocks that have dried off enough to enable conventional sowing. Whilst growers closer to Toowoomba are still harvesting the sorghum during the clearer weather, before moving on to silage harvests.
- Wheat crops around Goondiwindi are picking up colour with the warmer days and showing signs of good growth. Whilst chickpeas sown in the same region as a replacement short season crop are already up and starting to reach ground cover level.

- Fuel, fertiliser, chemicals and freight costs continue to be a concern for most in the region especially those trying to take off what crops they can and sow or re-sow damaged paddocks. There are also concerns about the quality of the roads which were already in poor conditions becoming impassable with the weather damage.
- Little change to hay enquires this week as growers are taking advantage of the sunnier days to get on to the paddocks to salvage what they can and to plant if possible. Interest in vetch, cereal and clover hay supplies continues, and feedlots are looking for quality to supplement the higher priced grain.
- 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

- Ongoing and additional damage from recent rainfall events following the damaging flood events earlier in the year is hampering recovery of pastures and farms across the region. There is concern about the need for increased support across the region to assist the community as winter progresses.
- Farmers producing fodder crops on higher ground are working to increase their stocks of feed to support a reinstatement of the local fodder trade.
- Pastures have been damaged by waterlogging, damage to soil structure and inundation with mud.
- Biosecurity concerns have been raised by some farmers regarding the potential importation of weed seeds when large amounts of donated fodder of varying quality were brought into the region.
- Flood-affected farmers can call the Department of Primary Industries' emergency hotline on 1800 814 647 to request assistance 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

- It's been another week of low rainfall totals across the region with some areas receiving no rain at all.
- Sunnier, drier weather is supporting growers to get onto paddocks to assess damage and seed loss as well as plan for any re-sowing or change in crop decisions, or preparation for sowing a summer crop.
- Canola crops around Condoblin are looking good with growers now controlling weeds and applying a nutrient foliar to boost along the growth.
- Sowing of field peas has been completed in the south of the region. A smaller crop is expected due to rain delays and bogged equipment. In the same region paddocks planned for lucerne have been abandoned due to the excess underlying moisture.
- Graze and grain canola and vetch paddocks sown in March showing strong growth in the south of the region. Canola is holding green leaf despite wet soils. However, growers are on the lookout for Manganese toxicity due to the extremely wet conditions.
- Slug infestations are still being reported in the Parkes, Forbes and Condobolin regions with heavy losses. <https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/pest-animals/snail-and-slug-control>.
- Mouse activity in and around sheds continues to be reported. Monitoring is recommended to determine numbers. <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.
- Hay enquiries have remained steady 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

- Little to no rainfall across the region this week. This supports wetter paddocks to dry out however the area as a whole is drying up and additional rains are needed to support continued crop growth.
- Most of the irrigated winter ryegrasses, oats and cereals are in, with oats still to be sown on dryland paddocks.
- Some early planted crops have finished a grazing rotation. Farmers are now selectively spreading urea and spraying herbicides for weed control.
- As grass growth slows down in the cooler conditions, farmers are feeding out silage stocks.
- With growers now able to access paddocks as they dry out, evidence of mouse depredation is being reported across a wider area. <https://grdc.com.au/resources-and-publications/resources/mouse-management>.

- There is some concern in relation to Varroa destructor mite detected in some beehives around the port of Newcastle. Control activities have led to a shutdown of apiary movement in NSW as a preventative measure. <https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/new-biosecurity-zone-set-up-for-varroa-mite>
- The prices of inputs continue to be an issue with the current energy crisis causing concern due to rising electricity costs added to the already increased prices of fuel, chemicals and transport.
- Hay enquiries have remained steady with the drier and colder days. Feedlot interest continues to be strong as they firm up the supply of secure winter feedstock. Much of the highest quality fodder is either sold or contracted so some sales are now at the lower quality end of the market.
- 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**

- Light rainfall across the region this week with most areas receiving falls of less than 10mm of rain.
- Whilst some paddocks are showing good growth with the favourable conditions, there are some still too wet to have been sown around the Invergordon area. Growers are expecting to make a call about late season sowing or prepping the ground for a summer crop instead in the next two weeks.
- Oats coming along well in the north of the region. It is expected to provide bulk fodder options to fill the early feed gap, however there is evidence of crown rust in the crop. Some growers plan to crash graze the paddocks showing rust.
- Early sown mid-maturing barley in the west of the region is coming along following good rains, growers are hoping ongoing moisture will sustain the early bulk of the current crop growth.
- Some early cuts for hay in the region as the sunny days give growers optimism the crop will dry in preparation for bailing.
- Inputs costs continue to be of concern, with fuel being of primary concern followed by fertiliser. Many growers are using much more vigorous soil sampling this season to target the application of fertiliser and therefore reduce overall costs.
- Hay enquiries and prices are stable this week. Many farmers in the region are only servicing existing customers. A lot of the hay that is now moving is lower grade though some higher-grade parcels are available for a premium.
- 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 around 10mm of rain for the majority of the region, though the west of the region saw higher averages. Temperatures remain low with occasional frosts.
- The good rainfall, soil moisture and temperate conditions have supported lucerne crops, allowing an early cut. Colder temperatures during winter will slow growth to support quality high for later cutting.
- Some of the paddocks on the plains are still too wet to allow the sowing program to commence.
- There is still an abundance of green feed currently available in regions with sufficient drainage.
- Some areas with low pasture cover and wet fields have resorted to aerial spraying of Gibberellic acid to stimulate growth in the cold conditions.
- Early calving season has started in the region, but the bulk of births are expected in mid-July.
- Many dairy farmers in the region are waiting for the end of the pricing period to look at future inputs and pasture decisions.
- Fuel prices are again on the rise in the region, as well as fertiliser and other chemicals.
- Hay and silage enquiries have steadied this week as some dairy farmers are waiting for a final milk price to make decisions around feeding and stocking levels. A good number of farmers are still filling up their sheds, 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, with the coastal areas receiving the bulk of the rain. Inland most of the area received less than 10mm of rain.
- Kale fodder crops have bulked up well around the MacArthur region, with first graze this week.
- Cereal crops are still being sown in the north of the region on to irrigated paddocks.
- Mixed pasture paddocks of canola and vetch looking solid in the north west of the region, will be boosted by fertiliser spreading in the coming week.
- Paddocks dry sown in May with hybrid ryegrass and clovers into canola is providing good bulk green feed. It is expected ryegrass pasture will take over later in the season.

- As with other regions with a good number of dairy farms, the farmers are waiting on the last of the offers for the milk price contracts before making decisions around pasture investments and purchases.
- Input costs continue to cause concern for farmers, with the cost of fuel rising steadily again this week. However, some relief as there has been a small reduction in the prices quoted for urea.
- The ongoing cold weather and drier than normal conditions are keeping hay moving as beef and dairy farms look to shore up supplies for winter. Feedlots are looking at hay more closely as the cheaper alternative with grain contracts finishing up, and they have to negotiate grain at a higher rate.
- 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**

- Consistent but light rainfall has been measured across most parts of the region during the past week. The region remains behind average recorded rainfall for the year but confidence of a reasonable to average year remains.
- Sowing is now complete for the vast majority of growers across the region only some small areas of heavy soil still being planted.
- The predicted movement towards grazing cereal varieties has been confirmed. The high international prices encouraged growers to increase their crop options. Return on investment was also a key factor given the high ongoing price of inputs and labour shortages.
- Big shortfall of hay is expected this year, supply availability will become clearer in Spring. Growers with contracts in place will maintain their hay production programs. However, as sowing has progressed it is clear farmers have planted additional grain crops/pasture rather than invest in hay due to input costs.
- Hay and fodder sales have remained steady with increased enquiries from sheep producers as they are look for feed to maintain stock levels. Steady sales in the southern part of the region due to croppers concentrating on sowing and not actively trading fodder.
- Supplies of hay are very low across the region. Little hay is available for open sale so reports of shortages are expected to increase which will increase quoted prices for new customers in particular.
- 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**

- Light rainfall fell across southern areas of the region. Most had no more than 5-15mm of rain.
- The majority of seeding had been undertaken dry by many growers with estimates that 95% of the region's crops have been dry seeded. Only grain producers in very heavy dry areas had to wait until rains to seed so there is little crop area still to be planted.
- Diesel sitting at around \$2.32 per litre for bulk deliveries on farm but prices are expected to increase again and remain going up. Fuel levies and increased prices for local deliveries are expected to remain a feature.
- Growers reiterate that hay prices will need to rise to reflect the increasing costs of inputs and commodity prices for alternative crops. Urea is now around \$1,100 - \$1,200 per tonne.
- Demand for hay has slowed. Livestock farmers are confident of a reasonable season so are confidently sourcing fodder for supplementary feed.
- Pricing remains variable due to remaining stocks of low-quality older hay from 2-3 seasons ago.
- Demand is consistent but has steadied even though 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: +/-0 (\$90 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady but 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**

- There was varied rainfall of between 5-20mm of rain over much of the region during the past week.
- Increasing fuel and input prices and ongoing labour shortages remain an issue of serious concern. The shortage of labour is particularly impacting farm management decisions and transport providers are struggling to source or retain staff which has led to delays in deliveries.
- International grain prices and the poor crop seasons in competing grain production countries encouraged many farmers to focus on grain rather than opportunistic hay production across WA. A shortage of general hay supplies is predicted over the coming year.
- Monitoring for mice activity remains a recommendation <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.
- No changes to prices.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$250/t). Price remains steady.

- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$490/t). Small bales selling reasonably well. 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

- Heavy rains fell this week across Tasmania, with highest falls in the west of the state. Falls of around 50mm of rain in the northwest, the highest weekly total was 153.8 mm of rain at Mount Read.
- Winter fodder pastures of kale, turnip and radish are doing well in many paddocks around Burnie with a lot of biomass. Following a low rain summer, the crop is filling the winter feed needs for several livestock farmers.
- Growers are preparing to sow ryegrass and clover pastures for silage and hay but are waiting for the longer day length and higher soil temperatures to speed up establishment. Winter kale and ryegrass paddocks are coming along well around Edith Creek, wet weather has prevented some paddocks being grazed as farmers protect soil structure and pasture growth.
- As expected winter temperatures and conditions have slowed pasture growth. Supplementary feed is being employed by livestock and dairy farmers.
- There is widespread concern in relation to the Varroa destructor mite detected around the port of Newcastle. Tasmania has a large number of horticulture and cropping business which are almost totally reliant on bees both wild and farmed for pollination.  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/media-releases/new-biosecurity-zone-set-up-for-varroa-mite>.
- Input costs continue to be an issue, with the price of fuel once again rising. Fertiliser costs will also be factored into fodder and cereal crop management decisions.
- Interest in hay has steadied; much of what is moving is older stock with most of the recent season's hay contracted and not available for purchase, though lower quality hay is also moving as supply tightens.
- 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.