



Australian Fodder Industry Association



06 October 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

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NATIONAL SUMMARY

Driving Prices Up

- Scarcity of good quality older hay of many varieties continues to be reported, and there are strengthening forecasts for reduced hay production in the upcoming season.
- Growers shall consider the continual rise in input costs when considering whether they will invest in hay production in the coming season. In some cases, producers have indicated they are only going to be harvesting hay for existing customers with long-term contracts.
- Growers are responding to the production costs and adverse conditions late in the season and are changing their production choices. A large number of vetch crops will be ploughed in for use as a valuable nitrogen source, leading to high protein hay shortages.
- Fuel costs will be factored into deliveries for premium to small or short-term deliveries.
- Demand continues from livestock and feedlots for hay and straw to add bulk and support stock manage the high moisture content green feed in some regions.
- Farmers, especially dairy farmers, are actively securing supplies of high protein hay due to the prediction for lower production and lower quality by the end of the year.

Driving Prices Down

- Good spring pasture growth continues across many areas. This has seen a sustained reduction in the late winter demand for supplemental feeding in some areas.
- Lower quality hay stored outside came on to the market to fill in the gaps created by the scarcity of high-quality supplies. This hay was in many cases traded at a lower price point.

Local News

- The Bureau of Meteorology's (BOM's) ENSO Outlook shows an established La Niña. Tropical Pacific sea surface temperatures have been cooling since June and are now at La Niña thresholds. The models indicate this La Niña event may peak during the spring and return to neutral conditions early in 2023.
- With moisture profiles already at saturation point and the bureau's outlook for a wet spring/summer firming the elevated flood risk remains for eastern Australia. Some areas again under flood watch and concerns about the coming days.
- Rain continues to fall on hay growing areas of the east coast. The rain falls are consistent each week without the needed extended periods of sunshine to enable curing and baling. There are concerns this is already reducing the quality product for the new season.
- Reports of smaller hay and fodder plantings earlier in the year as growers chose to take advantage of predicted global grain and oilseed prices to offset higher input costs supports forecasts there will be a shortage of high-quality spring hay and silage this season.
- There are concerns about the integrity of news reports that Bali is reporting no cases of Foot and Mouth Disease in the lead up to the G20 meeting in Indonesia. Growers would be very concerned about the reduction of any measures to prevent the disease reaching Australia.
- With the fuel excise being reimposed this week, the costs of diesel will rise adding to the already high production and delivery costs for fodder.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

Regional Commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- Some good clear days interspersed with grey days with light showers are causing some issues with fresh cut hay. Temperatures are trending upwards throughout the region. The forecast storms did not bring large amounts of rain. However, the inconsistent weather conditions are not currently supporting the cutting and harvest of hay.
- Wet harvesting conditions has seen a reduction in quality and therefore some is being sold as garden mulch rather than as feed quality.
- Hay shortages are expected as the season progresses as a number of growers chose to spread the risk and plant other crops rather than invest in the high cost of hay production without guaranteed return due to consistently low prices.
- Fuel prices have stabilised at the bowser at around \$2.09 per litre. However, the reapplication of the fuel excise at 25c per litre will be passed on to growers in the coming weeks.
- Urea prices have remained high currently averaging \$1,500 per tonne, with blended costing even higher. Liquid fertiliser shuttles have increase in price from around \$4,500 to \$6,500 which while cost effective is a substantial initial outlay.
- Increased movement of hay across the region, mostly heading west with a higher frequency of trucks seen carting hay, however the price point remains static. There is the belief this will continue until storms hit and then trade will again slow down.
- No change to pricing this week even with an increase in trade, enquiries remain fairly low. Growers are indicating input costs require a corresponding rise in the price of hay to maintain interest in producing hay and fodder. Demand expected to increase in coming months.
- 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

- Clear and dry across most of the region with falls of 10 to 15mm of rain on average for the week, though temperatures are still trending below average.
- Wheat crops across parts of the region on well-drained soil are looking set for a bumper crop after being treated with fungicides and boosted by fertiliser to mitigate the possible yield damage from rain events. The next seven weeks will be critical for optimal crops yields and quality.
- Wet paddocks continue to hamper plantings around Toowoomba with standing water still evident across large parts of the area.
- Growers on red soil around Goondiwindi are applying pre-planting herbicide in preparation for summer fodder plantings..
- Growers are advised to be on the lookout for fall army worm and to report any incursions. Qld agriculture have set up an online engagement hub for information, which can be found here <https://daf.engagementhub.com.au/fallarmyworm>
- Most growers are getting very few enquiries at the moment as availability is known to be low and growers are preparing for harvest. Most enquiries are to lock in deliveries later in the season as some farmers respond to the projected reduction in available hay and silage.
- Slight change to pricing this week.

- Cereal hay: -\$3 (\$235 to \$270/t). Prices decrease this week due to reduced quality.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$75 to \$135/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$220 to \$250/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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North Coast NSW

- Moderate falls across the region this week with most areas reporting between 20 to 40mm of rain. However, given the already wet conditions any rainfall can lead to flooding. Temperatures continue to trend below expected average.
- Growers on areas with moderate flood risk are reporting high percentages of crops lost, and those farming directly on the floodplains are reporting a total loss of crops on those paddocks. However, growers with land at a higher elevation are looking at a good return if the rains hold off a little longer.
- The on-going wet conditions are making crop management and biosecurity mitigation efforts quite difficult with the inability to complete spraying or maintenance schedules due to rain interruptions. Damage to roads and infrastructure is also preventing access and assessment.
- There are some pasture paddocks showing reasonable growth where flood mitigation efforts were instigated, with pastures of serradella and rose clover kicking away now, after a slow winter.
- Flood-affected farmers can call the Department of Primary Industries' emergency hotline on 1800 814 647 to request 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>
- Little change to last week, there are few enquiries due to the continuing rain conditions and flooding. Most either have no hay for sale or if they do are having issues in relation to moving supplies due to road closures or damage. Donations are still supplying a fair proportion of the market but are being accepted at whatever quality can be obtained.
- No change to prices this week
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$340/t). Prices steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$550/t). Prices steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$220/t). Prices steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$280/t). Prices steady this week.

Please note: Cereal hay, straw, and lucerne prices should be considered as a bookmark rather than a reflection of the local trade due to the reliance on donations and current conditions. We recommend feed testing and viewing of fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

Central West NSW

- Moderate to heavy rainfall across large parts of the region most of it in the north and north east, Condobolin and Lake Cargelligo have seen upwards of 60mm of rain fall in a 24 hour period leading to riverine and flash flooding.

- Plantings which were postponed last week due to the rainfall are back on track in some areas where rainfall was not too severe. Other areas in the region continue to monitor the ground and wait for more sunny days before the schedule can get back on track.
- Winter wheat around Forbes is looking healthy with plenty of potential even after the rain events, hope for a good yield continues.
- Growers planning to plant Lucerne around Cowra and Canowindra have postponed the sowing due to the wet ground conditions and the associated need for significant inputs to ameliorate the impacts of the wet conditions.
- Silage cutting has recommenced in the region, though the cutting is sporadic due to the weather and concerns around moisture content.
- Some growers are reporting issues sourcing parts for repairs and maintenance of existing machinery as well as the on-going concerns regarding ordered machinery arriving in time for summer crop planting or harvest of spring crops.
- Enquiries are remaining at a low level as a result of both the start of the new season and the unusual wet conditions. Most enquiries are reported as being for the next season, as older stocks have dwindled. Deliveries are still arriving from interstate to supplement pasture and remaining on farm stores.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$305 to \$355/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$65 to \$90/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$235/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Bega Valley

- Moderate to heavy rainfall across the region this week with falls ranging from 40mm to 60mm of rain from north to south; however, the rainfall was interspersed with clearer drier days.
- Continued rain and saturated soil around Bega has some growers concerned that another heavy fall could tip the region into flood conditions. While the paddocks are green and lush they are becoming hazardous for livestock grazing, and the application of fertiliser risks causing compaction to the paddocks.
- The forecast for more rain has some severe implications not just for the current crop but also in relation to preparation for and planting of summer crops. Drainage is considered an important investment for growers to support crop production.
- Silage continues to be cut across the region with some degree of urgency as the crops are at risk of too high moisture contents which will need to be mitigated or run the risk of poor fermentation or high input costs to dry the cut.
- Little has changed in relation to enquiries this week as most growers are out in the paddocks preparing or cutting. Additionally there is a shortage of any good quality produce due to the previous high demand by weather affected producers. Straw is still moving quite well, as is most of the remaining hay available. Most enquiries are for the new season.
- 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 (\$180 to \$210/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$360/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Light rainfall across the area this week with most falls of around 20mm of rain. There were some clear dry days early in the week though temperatures remain low.
- Vetch around Invergordon is standing tall and just beginning to flower after being treated with Plant Growth Regulators to bulk the stems. In the same region silage cutting is well underway and looking promising in accessible paddocks. Bogging continues to be an issue in more low lying or water logged paddocks and there is some concern regarding the quality of the crop.
- There are concerns about how to manage heavy ryegrass pastures as the window of opportunity is closing and conditions haven't held long enough to get it baled, even if the paddocks were accessible.
- Clover crops around Diggora are coming along well, with good water tolerance this crop has flourished in the wetter conditions and is on track to be cut for silage in the next week. In the same region the wheat crops are looking good and getting their last fungicide applications.
- Some growers in the west of the region have made the decision to utilise the failed vetch crops as brown manure. This will add to the expected shortfall of high protein hay this season.
- Hay enquiries are low due to the shortage of supply and the fact most dedicated growers are out in the paddocks taking advantage of any opportunity. Green feed is still available for livestock farms in the region and straw remains relatively plentiful for those seeking it locally, though deliveries are mostly going interstate.
- No change to pricing this week
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$120/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$215 to \$260/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Gippsland

- Another mostly clear and dry week with the west receiving almost no rain, average of 5 to 10mm of rain across the remainder of the region. Average temperatures are increasing towards long-term averages.
- Wet conditions, especially in the west of the region, continue to hamper the efforts of growers to maintain the quality and yield of some crops, with accessibility issues preventing activities.

- Silage cutting continues across most of Central and East Gippsland as dedicated growers attempt to harvest and store as much as possible, and salvage as much quality as possible. Dryers and conditioners being applied to most cuts to ameliorate the high moisture content.
- Warmer and drier conditions around Sale have seen some growers needing to apply irrigation to their pastures in order to keep the growth going and supply quality green feed.
- Pastures around Poowong are looking green and lush with plenty of feed for newly weaned calves.
- Hay enquiries are quiet this week as growers are out in the paddocks, and there is little good quality hay still available, some unshedded lower quality is moving but at a reduced price; fodder continues to be moved from east to west to supplement poorer pastures for livestock and dairy herds. Straw continues to be requested to aid in bulking up stock feeding from water affected pastures.
- Slight change in prices this week due to reduced quality.
- Cereal hay: -\$3 (\$185 to \$240/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -\$8 (\$500 to \$520/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$80 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$90 to \$180/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Southwest Victoria

- Dry but with limited sunshine across the weekend and early part of the week with some light falls of around 15mm of rain falling in the latter part of the week. Temperatures are beginning to trend upwards.
- Paddocks around Hamilton remain very wet leading to issues with bogging and paddock damage when applying spray for growth and disease mitigation. Some growers are choosing not to spray to reduce paddock damage and as rain has been falling outside of forecasts and in some cases simply washing away expensive inputs.
- Dairy farmers around Cobden are being required by the conditions to spread fertiliser on pasture paddocks via aeroplane.
- With the ongoing wet conditions leading to high moisture content and concerns around accessibility, the general view is consistent silage cutting in the area will not be possible until November.
- Plans to cut lucerne for hay are still on hold as the weather continues to play havoc with the schedule. Some rain and flood damaged vetch crops have already been prepared as brown manure as the return on saving the crop is outweighed by the costs of inputs needed and the overall benefit to the soil of reincorporating the nitrogen.
- Enquiries are quite flat as most producers are either on the paddocks, or are employing mitigation strategies for the wet conditions. Some older hay stocks are still appearing on the market but they are scarce, and of lesser quality. Anecdotally there are reports of some growers who have sizable stocks of older shedded hay, but this has not been seen in the market. Fodder is still moving across the border though it is in small quantities, and straw still has some trade ongoing.
- Slight change to prices this week.

- Cereal hay: -\$3 (\$180 to \$215/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$150 to \$190/t). Prices remain steady this week

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Southeast South Australia

- Light rainfall across the region this week with falls of 5 to 10mm of rain on average across the area. Some areas received no rainfall at all. Temperatures are also trending back towards the average although remain lower than expected.
- Grain crops are showing good growth and yield potential. The crops will need more clear and warm days to boost growth and yield; however the good soil moisture and rains have given a reason for optimism for growers despite price fluctuations.
- Expected production of hay will be lower than usual due to unfavourable weather conditions as well as crop production choices earlier in the year.
- Local livestock producers are encouraged to lock in contracts with dedicated hay and silage producers to ensure supply.
- After a period of good movement of hay enquires have dropped as supplies of good quality hay are sold out across the region. A lot of the remaining hay is already contracted for sale so shortages are expected until such time as the new season stocks become available. Those still looking for supply will need to factor in additional freight charges as the price of diesel increases.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$270/t). Prices remain steady this week
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$340 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$120 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central South Australia

- Moderate rainfall across the region this week with average falls of around 15mm of rain for the week. Temperatures are gradually increasing but below average so far.
- Across the Yorke Peninsula pulse crops are enjoying this cool wet spring. Early sown beans and lentils as well as late sown lupins are all podding well.
- Crops are looking good overall. Some pest management challenges such as stripe rust are continuing to show up in crops across the region with spraying being undertaken to protect yield and productivity.
- Hay production is commencing so growers are hoping for a couple of weeks of clear weather to maintain quality and support cutting and curing.

- Whilst there is a good supply of green feed available the moisture content of many pastures mean livestock health needs to be supported through supplemently with hay and straw.
- It should be noted, as with other parts of the state there is an expectation of a lower overall production of hay this season due to the world market price incentives toward cereal crops, weather impacts and production costs influencing cropping decisions.
- Enquiries are very quiet.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$195 to \$260/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw +/-0 (\$130 to \$155/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Southwest Western Australia

- Another clear week, with little rainfall across the region. Some areas receiving no rain at all. Clear sunny days with rising temperatures are boosting crop growth across the region.
- Hay cutting continues across much of the region with the cool but sunny conditions allowing for good drying opportunities. Oaten hay is the predominant fodder crop being reported, but other cereal and pasture hays are also being baled.
- Silage cutting of ryegrass and clover pastures is taking place from Collie to Newlands with good conditions for curing, moisture content levels coming in at around 50-60%.
- There is a good supply of green feed available in the region and number of farmers are buying silage are either storing in pits or buried bunkers as insurance against a dry summer.
- Faba bean and lentil crops around the Albany region are looking excellent with plenty of strong growth and good yield potential.
- Wheat crops across the entire region continue support forecasts of a bumper crop. The potential issues in relation to the export infrastructure's ability to deal with the influx are a cause of concern for many growers.
- Little has changed since last week with enquiries still quite flat. There is some fresh cut silage moving locally into bunkers and pits, but this is pre-contracted deliveries. There is still plenty of green feed available, and most on-farm stocks are sufficient for the medium term.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$210 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$480/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$115/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$165 to \$180/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Northwest Tasmania

- Low rainfall across the region this week with average falls of 10 to 15mm of rain. There were a few clear dry days in a row this week which supported hay and silage producers.
- Ryegrass and plaitain pastures around Elliott are coming along well and providing good green feed to dairy cows in the region.
- Cutting of hay and silage has begun around Smithton with growers taking advantage of a few clearer days to get some of the crops cut and drying.
- The wet August and September delayed the usual planting schedules and growers are now taking advantage of the break in wet conditions to access paddocks and assess what can be salvaged.
- The warmer drier days have boosted pasture growth across large parts of the area with sufficient green feed to supply dairy and livestock herds. However, supplemental feeding is ongoing in areas where the paddocks are too wet to allow access or livestock require additional bulk.
- Hay enquiries have slowed in the region but there is optimism as the season begins to kick off. Most growers are in the paddocks starting the season and inspecting damage and assessing crops. The abundance of green feed has also contributed to the lower volumes of enquires.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$275/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$290 to \$350/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$140 to \$200/t) Prices remain steady this week
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$185 to \$240/t) Prices remain steady this week

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