



Australian Fodder Industry Association



17 September 2021

# 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

- Lucerne continues to be the strongest sold fodder across the eastern part of Australia. A wet 2020 summer in Central New South Wales saw good quality dryland lucerne produced. Many farmers preferring to freight lucerne over potentially weather damaged cereal or vetch hay to meet protein needs. Improved conditions in Queensland have seen a return to lucerne production this season. Good catchment in dams and rivers will also give many growers the security of being able to irrigate over the coming summer.
- The seasonal outlook released by BOM is predicting above average rainfall for the eastern parts of Australia as well as parts of Western Australia. A wet spring again this year has the potential to reduce the production of good quality cereal hay.
- Currently the hay industry is at an all-time low with regards to trade, but some farmers are taking the opportunity to seek out existing good quality hay that can be stored for dryer times. This continued trade will cause slight fluctuations in pricing.
- Despite a strong cattle market feedlots are increasing numbers to meet export markets and will need the fodder to support this demand.

### Driving Prices Down

- Domestic trade continues to be at an all-time low. Over the last month as conditions have improved and stock return to paddocks there has been a further drop in any trade. Farmers now looking to new season hay and how that will be priced before committing to further purchases.
- A significant amount of last season's weather damaged hay is on the market at a reduced price. It will be unlikely now to see that hay move so close to the new season.
- Good spring conditions will see many farmers producing and conserving as much silage as they can themselves, particularly along the NSW Coast and Victoria.
- Australia continues to do well with no significant drought or natural disaster requiring the high volumes of hay being traded to all states that we have seen previously over the last ten years.

### Local News

- Spring like conditions being felt in most states this week. Milder daytime temperatures and no early hot winds. Western Victoria continues to struggle in parts where rust red leather leaf will downgrade oaten day crops appearance but not feed value, as the region continues to struggle due to the lack of rain this season.
- Despite the reduction in hay plantings this season regular growers with good undercover storage will still aim to produce and store as much premium hay as possible.
- Boarder closures and permit requirements continue to be a concern for contractors as we approach the new silage and hay season.
- Silage is underway in Northern Victoria, with Southern Victoria to follow towards the end of September depending on conditions.
- In the north demand in the Atherton Tablelands remains steady with a small amount moving locally. Following the ongoing rainfall in Northern QLD many parts including the Tablelands continue to have an influx of fresh grass. The Darling Downs region reporting one of the best

starts to a season following good rainfall for the first half of the year. Barley crops have started to be cut in the area for hay.

- Southern Australia is again on track for a good season with timely rain, most regions are reporting good growth. Northern Victoria have started to cut silage, with many growers looking to turn these paddocks around for hay with good conditions. Several key factors still needed to take place and a relatively dry spring to improve on last year's season.
- Western Australia has recorded one of its best season breaks. Rain has continued to fall during August but not the record falls recorded in July. High yields expected through the region as the season continues to progress well. Prices remain strong for all fodder types in WA.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchasing to be sure of the quality of the feed.

## Regional Commentary

### Atherton Tablelands

- Atherton has been plagued by ongoing light rain and mild temperatures. Mareeba has continued to receive dryer weather with tops of 32 degrees.
- Conditions have been up and down for growers in the Atherton area wanting to bale rhodes grass with overcast conditions making it difficult for growers to get the required drying time.
- Plenty of green feed in the region for grazing stock following winter rain across most of the Atherton area.
- Trade continues to be well down as many farmers further west have had improved conditions and have produced some hay which has been enough to carry current stock numbers through rather than freight hay in from the Tablelands.
- No changes to prices this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$330).
- 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

- No rain recorded this week across the Darling Downs.
- Majority of the Darling Downs is on track for a good season, St George has missed out on significant rain over the last four weeks. Some growers have irrigated new season crops, more rain would be ideal now.
- Barley crops continue to be cut for hay, reports that these crops are producing good hay.
- Many crops are later this year with some only being in the ground now for six weeks following late cotton crops. Reports of mice climbing new season crops and chewing heads as soon as they appear. Growers are having to air bait to control mice numbers.
- Majority of new season fodder is going into storage for personal use as demand in the area continues to be well down.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$60 to \$70/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

- No rain for the North Coast with conditions becoming increasingly dry. Daytime temperatures continue to increase with over 27 degrees recorded at the start of this week.
- Growers continue to cut silage in the region. Most silage being cut at present is by dairy farmers, to conserve and use later. Crops have been slower with dry conditions and warm days. Cereal crops needing rain now to at least make an average yield.
- Reports not as much silage will be made this season with demand down and many still carrying over from last season.
- Trade continues to be steady with local coastal growers selling to smaller farming operations and equine clients over the last two months.
- Cereal hay, straw, and lucerne prices quoted are for supplies to be carted into the region.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$300/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 (\$200 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.

## Central West NSW

- Storm activity earlier in the week with Orange recording some light falls. Northern parts of the region remained dry this week.
- High yields are forecast for the region. Timely rainfall across the majority of the Central West now sees new season crops on track. Milder daytime temperatures this week and cold nights have slowed growth, but this is currently a favourable situation as crops are already reported to be large. Orange recorded -2.2 and -1.4 degrees on two mornings this week.
- No increase in mice at this stage in region but growers and farmers continue to be vigilant. Hay production will be well down with many growers preferring to go through to grain due to current attractive prices and minimal ongoing trade of fodder.
- Trade is minimal in the region with reports of some hay moving to the Toowoomba region. Many farmers in southern Queensland and Northern New South Wales have been active in looking at new season hay that has been grown locally rather than looking to freight from further south.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$210/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$310 to \$360/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$60 to \$80/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$160 to \$200/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**

- A dry week for Bega with daytime temperatures slowly increasing again.
- Warmer weather is assisting with drying paddocks out and increasing growth in grasses and pasture. Contractors and farmers in the region are preparing for another big silage season as many continue to conserve fodder for dryer times.
- Most farmers have finished feeding out silage and stock have started to return to grazing paddocks. As farmers head into summer there is plenty of water available for irrigating. Conditions have also been favourable for those that grow lucerne on the flat country.
- Trade continues to be low with reduced amounts of cereal hay coming onto the coast for dairy farmers. Depending on conditions dairy farmers will look for good quality straw this season. Smaller farming operations continue to purchase small squares of fodder.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$290 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$480 to \$520/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Goulburn/Murray Valley**

- No rain recorded this week in the Goulburn Valley.
- Conditions have been ideal this week for growers wanting to cut silage.
- Very minimal rain needed now, paddocks are still wet. Growers wanting to make hay will need big windows this year for drying time with heavy crops being reported. Hay season to start in approximately three weeks as many crops have started to go to head in the last ten days.
- Small amounts of good quality lucerne continue to move into New South Wales primarily the North Coast.
- No changes to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$100/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$230 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Gippsland**

- No significant rain recorded in the last seven days for Gippsland.
- Silage is starting to be cut in the region. Growers and farmers set to make a significant amount again this season.
- Rain has been timely over the last month and has boosted pastures that have been set aside for silage in the north, while the south has continued to be too wet.
- Cereal and vetch hay continues to be traded into Gippsland from the Mallee for dairy farmers calving in cattle. Farmers only taking what they need to get through now.
- No changes to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$210 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$550 to \$650/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$85/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Southwest Victoria**

- Rain further south with Horsham receiving over 35mm this week. Warrnambool recording less than 10mm.
- Good rainfall is still needed now in the Wimmera and Mallee for cereal crops to finish well with only 10mm recorded in some parts during September. Reports that growers are turning sheep onto vetch crops due to the lack of rain.
- Pasture is slow growing in the south, but growers are reporting a good season ahead. Silage season is still two weeks away for this part of the state.
- Minimal trade with some farmers still buying in feed in the Warrnambool region and other southern parts until pastures are more viable.
- No changes to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$220/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$60 to \$80/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$150 to \$180/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Southeast South Australia**

- Light rain early in the week around Keith.
- Crops are looking good and expected to yield well at this stage. Reports still that silage and hay production will be well down on previous years.
- Paddock feed has improved for stock as spring conditions hit the region. This continues to impact demand as farmers utilise what feed they have.
- Mainly opportunist buyers that have storage are taking advantage of any good quality fodder on the market. Some inquiry for straw from farmers but a majority at this stage are not wanting to buy significant amounts of fodder so close to the new season.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$120/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Central South Australia**

- Rain this week in the north of the region, with up to 10mm recorded.
- More rain would be ideal now for these winter crops as they head into their last weeks of the growing season. Growers and contractors now preparing for the new hay season to start. The reduction in how much has been produced and what will be taken for export will be known by the end of next month.
- Local trade has slowed as paddock feed continues to improve. Many now waiting to see what the new season hay season will bring before committing to any more fodder purchases.
- Exporters will only take a reduced amount of new season cereal hay and it will need to be a premium product.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$170 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$450/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Southwest Western Australia**

- Up to 10mm of rain has fallen in the northern parts of the Southwest this week. Milder conditions have continued in the west, with warmer weather forecast for the coming week.
- Waterlogging has been a significant widespread problem this season. Conditions are starting to improve, warmer weather needed now following ongoing rain and generally cold weather. Crops are doing well, and it is now only weeks away from the start of hay season.
- Minimal domestic trade at present with reports still on the demand for straw. Only a small amount of straw stored undercover this season, as the chicken industry continues to seek out a good quality product.
- The season is still on track to be a success in the west with big yields already being forecast for grain and hay growers. Mixed reports on how much hay will actually be produced this season.
- No changes to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$490). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to 180/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/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.

## **Northwest Tasmania**

- A dry week for the Northwest this week, rain forecast for the coming weekend with predictions of 25 – 40mm. The region could handle 10 – 15mm of rain as recent wind has dried topsoil out.
- Further south of Launceston is dryer and growers have started to make pasture silage. Cereal crops that are to be made into silage are not ready at this stage.
- Growers are not seeing inquiry for new season hay as many farmers will produce what they can for themselves and then purchase when they must. Conditions are relatively favourable for a good spring and summer at this point for cattle and sheep farmers.
- Demand continues to be steady as some farmers continue to purchase a load at a time while they wait for paddock feed to improve. Demand for chaff has increased into equine clients.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$220 to \$280/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$350/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$200/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.