



Australian Fodder Industry Association



29 October 2021

# 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	5
Darling Downs	5
North Coast NSW	6
Central West NSW	6
Bega Valley	7
Goulburn/Murray Valley	7
Gippsland	8
Southwest Victoria	8
Southeast South Australia	9
Central South Australia	9
Southwest Western Australia	10
Northwest Tasmania	10

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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

- Late spring rain hampering hay production in the southern parts of the country in particular Western Victoria where minimal rain fell during the growing season is seeing a replica of last season. This region produces hay for the Western Districts and Gippsland, farmers will have to look elsewhere if the Mallee and Wimmera cannot provide a quality product this year.
- A shortage of new season vetch which is favored by farmers because of its protein content could see more lucerne traded to fill this gap in the coming year.
- Opportunist trade continues, where farmers can store hay, they are seeking out any available good quality fodder from previous seasons.
- The cost of production is set to increase in the coming year with fertiliser, chemical and fuel all earmarked to climb dramatically in price.

### Driving Prices Down

- New season prices are not expected to increase dramatically as many farmers wait now to see how much is produced and the quality of new season hay before committing.
- A significant amount of last season's weather damaged hay is on the market at a reduced price. With the potential for more lower grade hay again this season, growers ideally would have preferred to have traded last year's weather damaged carryover.
- Good spring conditions will see many farmers producing and conserving as much silage as they can themselves, particularly along the NSW Coast and Victoria.
- A mild October and rain have meant many farmers have not had to irrigate grass yet. Stock continue to graze and be supported by paddock feed at this point. Farmers able to utilise water for summer months.

### Local News

- Wet conditions in the West and Tasmania continue to impact the new hay season.
- The hay season is well underway in most regions now with many growers having to make the decision to cut cereal crops before advancing too far. Ongoing rain events through New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia this growing season means many heavy crops will also be laying on damp ground and will require significant drying time.
- Border closures and permit requirements continue to be a concern for contractors as they work to understand the changing rules and regulations that they and staff must comply with when moving between regions and states.
- Silage season continues to be made in some parts of Queensland, New South Wales and Southern Victoria. Again, many farmers that would not traditionally make silage have found they have needed to avoid more weather damaged hay this season.
- 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 seasons following good rainfall for the first half of the year. Oaten crops have started to be cut in the area for hay.

- New South Wales reporting good crops following timely rainfall. South Australia impacted by dryer conditions, further in the Southeast crops are on track to yield well. Northern Victoria will start cutting within the fortnight. 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 been timely for the west this season. 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

- Dry conditions across the Tablelands this week.
- Growers have been able to cut and bale rhodes grass this week with good drying temperatures reaching up to 29 degrees during the day. Growers currently trying to find a market for cereal crops that has been grown in the region this year.
- Plenty of green feed in the region for grazing stock following ongoing 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. Reports that amount of hay being freighted in previous years is not being seen this season.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- 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

- Light rain and thunderstorm predictions for the Darling Downs this week.
- Reports that this is one of the best hay producing seasons in three to four years. Growers producing good quality cereal hay in particular barley. Cereal hay will continue to be baled for the remainder of the month. Silage season was up with many only finishing now. Spring rain has interrupted hay production, but no damage reported.
- Confirmation that new season hay is going into storage for personal use as trade continues to be minimal in the region. Many feedlots now producing their own feed as well as sourcing from News South Wales.
- Growers now looking to summer cropping, with good soil moisture profiles and available irrigation it has potential to be a good season as well. Growers will continue to bale new season straw taking advantage of a good clean product despite minimal enquiry locally.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$420/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.

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## **North Coast NSW**

- Only light rain again this week for the North Coast.
- Growers cutting cereal hay further west. Yields down due to limited rain during the growing season, recent rainfall was too late and only impacted production.
- Dairy farmers looking to make silage now for personal use as grass improves following the recent rain. Not as much silage is predicted to be made this season as farmers still have carryover.
- Trade continues to be steady with local coastal growers selling to smaller farming operations and equine clients over the last two months due to the dryer conditions. Reports new season cereal hay freighting in from Central New South Wales. Coastal farmers securing progressive loads for the next twelve 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: +/- (\$250 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/- (\$380 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/- (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/- (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Central West NSW**

- No rain recorded this week for the Central West.
- Good conditions over the last fortnight for growers wanting to cut and dry hay. Reports of a small amount of rust in crops but to be expected with significant rain, heavy crops and spraying windows lost with continued wet conditions.
- Enquiry from produce stores and dairy farmers about new season hay, wanting to know what fodder will be available in the coming months as they start to run out of current stores.
- Local trade continues to be minimal as good grazing increases in the region and low stock numbers.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/- (\$180 to \$210/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/- (\$310 to \$360/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/- (\$60 to \$80/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/- (\$160 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
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## **Bega Valley**

- No rain this week for the valley, October has been a good month for the region with 65mm falling.
- Conditions have been ideal for growers as grass continues to grow following good rainfall and average daytime temperatures of 20 degrees.
- Good grazing conditions for stock following ongoing timely rain. 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. 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**

- Storms predicted this week across the valley with varied falls, mostly dissipating as it tracked further east.
- Hay season is well under way as many growers made the decision to cut hay ten days ago as crops were quickly advancing. Warm conditions over the last seven days have helped with drying. A significant amount of pit and rolled silage has been made over the last two months.
- Crops are reportedly yielding well and will need big windows this year for drying time. Spring rain continues to be predicted every seven days making it difficult.
- Trade is minimal at present majority of local farmers have plenty of conserved fodder and good grazing grass for stock.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/- (\$380 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$70 to \$100/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -\$15 (\$220 to \$260/t). Prices have eased this week.

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## **Gippsland**

- Light rain only in the north this week.
- A dryer week has enabled growers in the north to continue making silage. The south and western parts of the Gippsland are still significantly wet. Growers now grazing paddocks that were set aside for silage due to the wet and will work towards producing pasture hay once grazed off.
- Corn plantings for chopped silage again to be reduced due to the ongoing wet conditions in the south. Farmers have feed out majority of last season's silage and are looking to secure good quality fodder for the next twelve months.
- Growers and traders trying to ascertain the value of new season hay. 2020 cereal hay freighting into the south for farmers as they need.
- Changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$230/t). Prices remain steady week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$550 to \$600/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**

- Stormy conditions this week with a significant storm crossing the Mallee late this week. Rain now hampering those trying to make hay.
- Silage continues to be made in the south of the region. Growers are locking up paddocks now for pasture hay that will be cut towards the end of November. Warmer days now will enable farmers to graze more feed as it continues to improve.
- Approximately 20% of vetch that was planted this year in the Mallee has been left for hay. Limited rain saw growers spray out crops or graze off. Many growers taking crops through for grain now with the late rain.
- Farmers have also taken advantage of any reasonable quality cereal and vetch hay left in the Mallee and storing for use over the coming year in the southern parts of the state. Concerns most hay made in the west up until now has been weather damaged.
- 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**

- No Significant rain to report this week for the region.
- Reports crops are not as big as anticipated and yielding forecasts are starting to drop. There have been no major rain events across the Southeast since the end of July. Small amounts of rain have fallen but the cold conditions and overcast weather have impacted crop growth. Growers will be cutting hay earlier with the season quickly coming to an end.
- Livestock are grazing and this continues to impact local trade. Farmers without established pastures will quickly run out of feed with dry conditions. Farmers may opt to take advantage of strong market prices and sell cattle rather than feed over the coming summer months.
- Mainly opportunist buyers that have storage are taking advantage of any good quality fodder on the market. No significant enquiries for new season hay, many will be anticipating pricing and quality.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/- (\$180 to \$210/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**

- No rain to report this week for the Central South.
- With a late break many crops were planted later this year and are still up to five weeks from where they would normally be. The western part of the region including the York Peninsula have not had adequate rain since the end of July and the season has quickly come to an end. Growers are now cutting hay that will yield significantly less on what was originally predicted. Provided spring rain doesn't become an issue there will still be good quality fodder produced. Burra was predicted to yield 5 – 6/t per hectare but are now forecast 3 – 4/t.
- The season is well under way now in the Central South. Parts of Barossa received an isolated rain event three weeks ago which has benefited crops in that area.
- Exporters will only take a reduced amount of new season cereal hay and it will need to be a premium product. It continues to be an opportunist market and some trade is taking place for this reason.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$180 to \$1200/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**

- The last fortnight has again brought rain to the west with the coastal regions recording 40mm and further inland recording 5 - 10mm. There have also been reports of small hailstorms above Geraldton.
- Conditions continue to be mild in the west for this time of year and growers are needing bigger windows to dry hay. Wet and gusty conditions continue to hamper hay production.
- In the north crops have only been impacted slightly by rust, further south in the York region new season cereal crops have been plagued by waterlogging. Any later crops will potentially yield better and avoid the current spring rain.
- In general, the season is still on track to finish well in the west. Mixed reports on how much hay will be produced this season. Growers who decreased plantings due to limited export opportunities are now looking at good yielding crops and finding tonnes produced will be on par with 2020. With export only taking reduced amounts of premium hay this season some growers could be storing downgraded hay due to recent weather damage.
- No changes to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$290/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.
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## **Northwest Tasmania**

- The Northwest has recorded 100mm of rain for the month of October. Conditions are wet and with more rain forecast in the coming days paddocks will be waterlogged.
- Silage season continues to remain on hold now until conditions become dryer. Feed has been slow to grow with ongoing cool conditions but with warmer weather growers are indicating that this will improve quickly. Growers will consider not cutting for silage, instead topping paddocks to improve quality again and going through to pasture hay.
- Concerns that it could be a wetter than average spring and summer. Crops are ready to be cut for hay but at this point it could be another two weeks before growers can start.
- Demand continues to be steady as some farmers continue to purchase what they need to get through until the wet conditions ease.
- 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.
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