



Australian Fodder Industry Association



12 July 2024

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

- The ongoing drier than usual conditions in South West Victoria and South Australia are continuing to keep the prices in those regions elevated, with a flow on effect to other parts of the state and country as supplies move into those areas. Freight is adding a substantial additional cost to fodder supplies.
- Protein and cereal hay supplies continue to tighten, though new supply does continue to appear on the market as growers look to current trends and evaluate their own needs. Some exporters are continuing to release export quality hay to the domestic market and this is at a higher price due to quality.
- Demand is strong as expected at this time of year as cattle and dairy farmers look to good roughage to carry calving stock through the colder months. While recent rains are welcomed in dry areas, it will do little to build pastures before winter, and a green drought is being experienced in many areas. This is exacerbated by some fodder producers holding back additional supply for their own use.

Driving Prices Down

- Conditions in Western Australia have turned around significantly in the last month with the good and steady rain more pastures are becoming available for grazing and further reducing demand. However producers are still looking to rebuild storage and ensure a steady availability over winter so prices continue to stabilise rather than drop in most cases.
- Older, somewhat lower quality fodder supplies continue to be available in the marketplace, and are being picked up by farmers looking to include them in feed mixes and fill the winter gap

Local News

- Western Australia continues to benefit from ongoing rain events and warmer temperatures helping to rebuild pastures. However South Australia and South West Victoria continue to be dry even after some recent rains, this has not been enough to turn around pasture availability in any significant way.
- Tasmania's dry conditions continue for most of the state and supplies are tight, though the North West does have good pasture availability. Fodder continues to be sourced from the mainland, but the process can be slow due to biosecurity measures.
- With the phase out date of the sheep live export trade now being confirmed there is some concern around the number of graziers who will move out of sheep and into cropping or away from farming with the flow on effect for the fodder industry with lower demand and higher supply.
- The El Niño–Southern Oscillation is currently neutral. Sea surface temperatures in the central Pacific have been cooling since December 2023. This cooling is supported by a cooler than average sub-surface in the central and eastern Pacific. In June, the rate of cooling has decreased. La Niña Watch is in effect due to early signs that an event may form in the Pacific Ocean later in the year. A La Niña Watch does not guarantee La Niña development, only that there is about an equal chance of a La Niña developing. Early signs of La Niña have limited relevance to mainland Australia and are better reflections of conditions in the tropical Pacific.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

Regional Commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- Some light falls in the region of around 15mm of rain, these were over a couple of days with most of the week relatively dry, though somewhat overcast. However temperatures continue to trend a little above average for this time of year.
- Pastures continue to be green in the region, and are supplying local herds with good feed options, this is being supplemented with fodder for nutritional needs, but most pasture feed system appear to be doing well on currently available pastures.
- Hay has been cut in the region this week with the forecast string of dry clear days prompting growers to try and clear as many paddocks as possible. If the rains hold off this should be a good supply of reasonable quality product.
- Oat crops are being sown throughout the region into good moisture and the expectation of a good start.
- Recently sown canola and wheat has emerged in the region, taking advantage of the good soil moisture and continues warm to put on some growth post emergence.
- Feed grain corn is coming off around Atherton; there have been some quite windy days which have led to some brittleness in the stalks.
- Input costs continue to remain a concern; petrol is steady at \$1.96 per litre. Urea prices are high but seeing some drop to around \$900p/t with blended at over \$1100p/t. Growers are weighing up the return on usage.
- Enquiries are fairly low but steady, with green feed availability continuing to temper demand, but livestock and dairy farms picking up available hay when it is made to bolster their stores. Straw continue to be sought, though indications are there a fair amount still available. Feedlots and export ships continue to be steady customers with regular deliveries moving.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$450/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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

- Light to moderate widespread rainfall this week with most areas receiving at least 15mm of rain, and the western downs and border region recording up to 25mm of rain. Temperatures are colder, though the minimum temperatures are still above average for this time of year.
- Grass is still readily available in pastures in the region due to the mix of good growing conditions, however colder temperatures are slowing growth.
- Recently harvested cotton paddocks are being turned around in preparation for the next sowing schedule. Comments indicate the cotton harvest was a good one, with a fair amount of cottonseed availability.
- Wheat crops along the border with NSW are looking excellent and showing good growth with the excellent soil moisture and residual warmth moving them along.

- Some additional opportunistic cereal hay that was on track to be cut this week has been delayed due to the widespread rainfall.
- Enquiries are as expected in the winter period with herds needing supplemental feed as the pastures slow down, good on farm stores and the extended pasture growth is tempering some demand.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +5 (\$300 to \$350/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$ (\$350 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +5 (\$90 to \$140/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$345/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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North Coast NSW

- Moderate to heavy rainfall across the region this week with the coastal areas seeing up to 50mm of rain, while inland recorded widespread falls of between 20 – 25mm of rain. Daytime temperatures are showing above average but overnights are cold.
- Pastures in the region continue to be green, and though for most that is providing good green feed availability, some regrowth is watery due to the ongoing rain events and saturated soils which are causing a green drought in those pastures.
- Cotton harvest in continuing in the inland parts of the region though continued rainfall is causing additional delays with the harvest. Comments suggest yield is good and cottonseed should be readily available.
- Growers in the region are indicating some excellent growth on cereal and fodder crops, however inland parts in the south of the region which saw a number of high rainfall events are concerned about the crops having wet feet.
- Chickpeas continued to be sown in the region, with a number already emerging and showing good early vigour. Comments suggest the area is seeing a fairly high amount of chickpeas going in this season as part of a double crop.
- Enquiries in the region are continuing to be robust as cooler temperatures and the on-going effect of earlier wet conditions are showing up in a winter feed gap. Continuing to offset this is the availability of green feed and reasonable on-farm supplies. Cereal Hay is in some demand as well as protein hay and straw.
- Some change to prices this week
- Cereal hay: +5 (\$310 to \$370/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +5 (\$370 to \$420/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +5 (\$90 to \$130/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central West NSW

- A split rainfall this week with the north of the region seeing falls of 15 – 25mm of rain, while the southern parts recorded 5 – 10mm of rain for the week. Temperatures are continuing to drop in line with winter conditions.
- Pastures continue to be green in the region though the recent rains are continuing to exacerbate some issues with watery regrowth in the north, while the south would like some additional rains to bolster growth, though as soil temperatures drop this growth is being stalled.
- Maintenance activities continue to be undertaken for much of the paddocks and pastures in the region, with spraying and spreading on-going to keep the plants healthy and encourage growth as colder temperatures slows growth down. There have been reports of an abundance of wire weed and mustard in crops around Lake Cargelligo which are being mitigated.
- Cereal crops on the eastern parts of the region are showing good growth and taking advantage of the abundant soil moisture, however there are some concerns in regard to repeated rain events on these crops.
- Late sown Oat crops in the south are waiting on some reasonable rainfall to see germination and emergence.
- Enquiries in the region continue to be in line with season conditions with colder temperatures and slowing pastures driving demand, however comments suggest there appears to be an equilibrium emerging with prices settling as buyers and sellers meet. Demand is still being driven out of the unseasonal drier parts of Victoria and the usual demand out of the Bega Valley.
- No change to prices this week
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$395/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$370 to \$440/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$120 to \$155/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Bega Valley

- Light rainfall for most of the region this week with the Valley recording between 5mm and 10mm of rain, though to the north higher falls of upwards of 20mm of rain have been recorded. Foggy mornings and temperatures are at winter levels and some light frosts have occurred.
- Pastures in the region continue to provide good green feed options for local herds, though as temperatures drop that growth is slowing as is expected during winter. Pastures to the north of

the Valley continue to be very wet with limited grazing opportunities. Fodder continues to be fed out to supplement nutritional requirements.

- Second cut silage is being baled in the Valley, though comments indicate that these bales are not moving into the market place as they are required for on-farm use in most cases.
- Winter wheat in the region continues to provide some good feed and will continue to help in filling a winter feed gap. Comments indicate that some early stripe rust seen in some of the recently sown wheat varieties appear to have been killed off by the frost, but will need mitigation when temperatures warm.
- Enquiries are high as expected at this time of the year with the winter temperatures. Good pastures and reasonable on-farm storage is tempering some urgent demand, however some supply lines remain tight and local supply is not sufficient to meet need so fodder continues to come in from other parts of the state and interstate.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$450/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$460 to \$530/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +10 (\$180 to \$250/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$390/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Widespread light falls in the region with most areas receiving around 10mm of rain for the week. Temperatures in the region are unseasonable, with colder than average nights, but warmer days.
- Pastures in the region continue to green up with the low but regular rainfall. However the regrowth continues to be slow and low in nutrition. More rain is needed on dryland pastures to give the pastures a boost.
- Irrigated pastures continue to provide some good green feed as soil temperatures are maintained by higher than usual daytime temperatures and dry feed is still readily available.
- Oat crops in the region look to be powering along reasonable well on the back of consistent if low rainfall and the above average daily maximum temperatures maintaining some reasonable soil warmth.
- Lambing is moving through the region with graziers looking for good protein hay reserves to bolster lamb and ewe health.
- Enquiries are following the seasonal trend in the region, with some local demand due to the slow pasture availability but the majority continuing to be from the south west and into South Australia where conditions are continuing to require fodder reserves. Protein and cereal hay is in some demand and some export quality hay continues to be available.
- Some change to pricing this week

- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$320 to \$370/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$370 to \$425/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +10 (\$270 to \$310/t). Prices increase this week.

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Gippsland

- Widespread light to moderate rainfall across the region this week with all areas seeing at least 10mm of rain, and the central parts recording up to 20mm of rain. Temperatures are back to winter averages with light frosts recorded and foggy mornings.
- Pastures continue to provide good green feed opportunities in the region, with dryland pastures showing excellent growth and availability for local herds and flocks. Some slowdown is being recorded where frosts have dropped soil temperatures but warmer daytime temperatures are keeping growth moving.
- Seeding is starting in the central parts of the region for early spring feed and hay and silage production crops into good soil moisture.
- Paddocks of forage crops such as beet, kale, and turnips are provided good feed for herds in the southern parts of the region.
- Dairy cows continue to be agisted in the region as the conditions in the south west of the state remain less than favourable for pasture feed.
- Enquiries in the region are on par with winter conditions, with a steady turnover of local demand, but as has been the case for the last few months, most of the demand continues to come out of the south west of the state where conditions remain unfavourable and fodder is needed.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$430 to \$480/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +5 (\$150 to \$180/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +5 (\$230 to \$285/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southwest Victoria

- After some good falls last week, the region has reverted back to be mostly dry, with light, although widespread, falls of less than 5mm of rain for the region. Temperatures are within

winter range, though no frost recorded this week, and daytime temperatures are staying slightly above average.

- Pastures in the region continue to show some green with some areas that had been locked up and had still had viable feed options springing back up with limited feed availability, after being sprayed with promoter. Graziers in the region are moving some sheep out of containment gradually, but more rains and warmth is needed for a substantial turnaround.
- Some pastures which were dry sown are showing a spread of green as germination and emergence takes place after the recent rains, however optimism is tempered by the need for additional moisture and soil warmth.
- Ryegrass pastures are being sown in the region on the back of the rains last week with the forecast for some additional rains to help with germination. Mixed enterprises around Terang are seeing some pasture rebounding and are reducing silage for dairy herds.
- Comments suggest that incursions of kangaroos into farming land in the region is very high with the native species coming into locked up pastures that were set for lambs and clearing them out. This is adding to the already low feed availability.
- Enquiries in the region have not changed in the last week as the ongoing lack of good grazing opportunities and cold temperature combine to create a severe tightening in the availability of fodder. Supplies continue to come into the region from other parts of Victoria as well as SA and the Riverina.
- Some change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$390/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +5(\$370 to \$410/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$145/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +3 (\$245 to \$295/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southeast South Australia

- Much drier across the region this week with widespread low falls of less than 5mm of rain recorded, with the southern coastal tip seeing no rain at all this week. Minimum temperatures are below average for this time of year.
- Pastures in the region are continuing to show some green, and very limited grazing ability. The light rainfall will keep any growing pastures moving, but more is needed to see a significant change in the feed outlook. Fodder continues to be fed out, and some animals remain in containment feeding.
- Viable pastures and paddocks on the region are moving into maintenance and mitigation activities as producers look to promote growth and future yield.
- Canola and cereal crops in the region have emerged on the back of some of the recent rains, however growth looks to have slowed, or stalled, as little follow up rains have arrived and temperatures are low.

- Lambing is moving through the region for those graziers who chose to join sheep. Lambs are being closely monitored due to the conditions.
- Enquiries in the region continue to be robust as expected due to the season and the conditions. Recent rains have lifted optimism; there will not be a difference in green feed for some time so fodder is still going out. Some urgency has dropped, but demand is still stable. Export quality hay is still available in the market.
- Some change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +3 (\$100 to \$140/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$275 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central South Australia

- Much drier across the region this week with widespread low falls of less than 5mm of rain recorded, with parts of the Fleurieu and Yorke Peninsulas seen no rain at all. Minimum temperatures are below average for this time of year.
- Pastures in the region are showing green, but are offering very limited green feed availability, though dry feed is still readily available. Without continued rainfall, the grass quickly shuts down after a short period of growth. Fodder continues to be fed out.
- Containment feeding is continuing in the region for a number of livestock producers and graziers as the pastures are not yet able to support sustained grazing.
- Cereal crops around Murray Bridge have emerged well and are looking good, canola and lentil crops sown in the same region have also emerged but are not showing as much vigour. Closer to the border near Loxton where crops were sown in early April they have emerged well and are showing good growth and potential.
- Hay production crops are being sown in and around Langhorne Creek to take advantage of the low but sustained rainfall to start the growing process.
- Enquiries in the region remain strong, greening pastures is dropping some urgency, but animals are still be fed out and stores being replenished. Vetch and lucerne are being sought, and cereal hay is in fairly high demand and some export quality continues to move into the marketplace.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$395/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$95 to \$135/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Southwest Western Australia

- Widespread moderate falls across the region this week with a band of rain falling along the western coast with falls of up to 30mm of rain recorded, these totals tapered off to the east and inland. Temperatures continue to be a little above average.
- Pastures in the region have continued to respond to the ongoing rain and warmer than usual temperatures with a burst of growth that is now becoming more viable as pasture feed for the local herds and flocks. Fodder continues to be fed out for nutritional needs, but pastures are now filling more of the feeding requirements.
- Even with the continued rainfall the soil moisture deficit is showing in germinating and emerging crops with deeper sown seeds showing much better growth than anything shallow sown. Additional rains will be needed to connect and complete the soil profile.
- Medic and clover pastures in the southern tip of the region are showing excellent growth after the rains and continued warmth, these pastures are providing some good feed for local flocks.
- The phase out of the live sheep export industry continues to be a topic of conversation for many in the fodder supply chain in the region as the ramification of the effects of some graziers exiting the industry are being discussed.
- Enquiries in the region are still high as the pastures recover from the long dry spell, and producers look to replenish some of their depleted conserved fodder. This will be a slower process as the prices begin to rebalance. Cereal and protein hay remains in fairly high demand and is moving well.
- No change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$450/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$135/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week

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Northwest Tasmania

- A reversal of the recent weather trends this week, with the Northwest seeing light rainfall while the rest of the state saw more moderate falls. The northwest corner recorded less than 10mm of rain for the week while eastern and southern Tasmania recorded between 15 and 30mm of rain. Temperatures are within seasonal averages and frequent frosts have been recorded.
- Pastures in the region continue to be green and are providing green feed to local herds; however the frequent frosts this week is seeing soil temperatures drops in the some areas and leading to a stalling of continued growth in those pastures.

- Conserved silage stocks are being opened and fed out to herds in the parts of the region, as well as some supply moving to dairy farms in the drier areas of the state.
- Wheat crops are being sown in the central parts of the region which has seen some recent rains after a dry start to the season.
- Soil remediation and preparation is being undertaken in the region in preparation for the spring sowing schedule.
- Enquiries in the state remain high, both due to the continued dry conditions in the south of the state and the onset of winter and the colder conditions stalling some pasture growth, Fodder is continuing to be shipped from the mainland to meet some of this demand as local supply is insufficient.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +5 (\$295 to \$360/t) Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$390/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +8 (\$100 to \$140/t) Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: -5 (\$285 to \$365/t) Prices decrease this week.

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The Australian Fodder Industry Association (AFIA) is the independent, national peak body for Australia's fodder industry.

Since our establishment in 1996 our network of members, sponsors, supporters and engaged participants has worked for over 25 years to help the fodder industry grow

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