



Australian Fodder Industry Association



11 October 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](http://www.afia.org.au)

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## NATIONAL SUMMARY

### Driving Prices Up

- Vetch and lucerne hay are likely to be in short supply this season which may result in higher prices.
- Many producers are continuing to rebuild on-farm stores or supply export or pre-contracted buyers. Those producers filling on-farm storage may monitor the market and make hay available in marketplace later in the season.

### Driving Prices Down

- Grain farmers in areas impacted by frost, including those in central and southern New South Wales and northern Victoria, are cutting cereal crops and canola for hay.
- The first of the early season's cereal hay has entered the market with a range of pricing. Some hay producers without on-farm storage capacity, are offering a lower price with the aim of moving hay off-farm to avoid any weather damage.

### Local News

- The Australian Oilseed Federation (AOF) reports that large amounts of canola are being cut for hay as a result of frost. Most of the 2024 new season hay is yet to hit the marketplace, including that which is the result of frost-impacted crops. The next AOF crop report is due on 25 October.
- The BOM has released a Climate Driver Update, reporting that the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is neutral, with both sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the central equatorial Pacific Ocean and atmospheric patterns at ENSO-neutral levels. While some atmospheric indicators such as pressure, cloud and trade wind patterns over the Pacific have been more La Niña-like over the past few weeks, there has yet to be a consistent/sustained signal. The Bureau's model suggests SSTs are likely to remain within the ENSO-neutral range throughout the forecast period to February 2025. The next update will be released 15 October.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

## – Regional Commentary

### **Atherton Tablelands**

- Rain showers and cooler temperatures have been experienced over the past week.
- Pastures in the region are green and are taking advantage of good soil moisture.
- Input costs remain a concern in the region, however petrol has dropped again to \$1.83 per litre.
- Enquiries in the region are slow. The usual customers, feedlots and the mills are continuing to receive fodder but requests have steadied. In addition, local enquiries are quiet, with the current availability and on-farm stores tempering need.
- No change to prices this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$400/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**

- Dry again in the region this week, with most days clear and sunny. There have been some patchy rain showers over the past week, with Nobby receiving a rain shower on Thursday. Some areas are in need of further rain in the coming fortnight.
- Pastures continue to be green in the region, though the recent dry spell is seeing some drying of the soil, but there is plenty of currently available subsoil moisture to keep the grass growing.
- Lucerne cutting and baling in the region is well underway with the clear dry days producing some excellent curing conditions. Vetch crops are also being taken down in preparation for baling.
- Sorghum planting is well underway in the region, with some growers indicating the good soil moisture and warmth has seen a much earlier start and end of their planting schedule.
- Enquiries in the region have dropped again this week; there is a steady turnover but with the new season moving through and the continued availability of green feed, producers are looking to pick up occasional loads. Regular buyers such as feedlots and mills continue to drive demand as well as the drier south of the country. Some are looking to shift hay off the paddocks and some hay will travel north.
- Some change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$300 to \$400/t). Price increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +25 (\$350 to \$500/t). Significant price increase this week.
- Straw: +10 (\$100 to \$160/t). Price increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$325/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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## North Coast NSW

- Rain has fallen in the area over the past week with Lismore receiving 22mm and 27mm falling in Dorrigo.
- Grass continues to grow in the region with the pastures seeing good regrowth with the small falls and good subsoil moisture and spring warmth. The area has a green tinge and crops are looking good.
- Hay production is continuing in the region, though some light showers and overcast days are making it a bit of a stop/start process.
- As expected along the coastal strip the amount of hay that will be produced is down due to the earlier adverse conditions during planting. Comments indicate that further west the season is looking fairly good and should make up the shortfall and give an average season across the region.
- Enquiries in the region have quietened a bit further this week, with the availability of pastures and some of the new cut hay beginning to filter in to the marketplace. The south is still driving demand for good parcels.
- Some change to prices this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$320 to \$330/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$370 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Central West NSW

- Cooler temperatures resulting in frost were reported in some areas, with the temperature in Orange dropping to -3 degrees on Sunday evening/Monday morning. At this stage it is too early to assess the full frost impact, but the cooler temperatures were not wanted.
- Another low rainfall week is beginning to see a slight slowdown in the pastures however the good subsoil moisture is keeping the grasses, especially anything deep rooted, moving fairly well.
- Hay and fodder production is continuing in the region with more crops now moving into prime cutting timing, the conditions remain favourable for cutting and curing, though some overcast days is leaving the cut in the windrows longer.
- Wheat and cereal crops in the region, especially in the eastern parts are looking quite good and have taken advantage of reasonable rains and extended sunshine to put on some height and mass.
- Enquiries in the region are steady with good pasture growth and the new season hay production starting to move into sheds. Demand continues to be coming from the southern states, as well as the Bega Valley.

- No change to prices this week
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$345 to \$385/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$135 to \$155/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Bega Valley**

- Little to no rain fell in the region this week with Bega seeing just over 3mm of rain, which fell on the weekend. After some early overcast days, the remainder of the week was clear and sunny, though temperatures are still slightly below average.
- Pastures in the region are still providing green feed availability, and are servicing local herds well, though fodder continues to be fed out for roughage and supplemental needs.
- Grass and cereal silage production is continuing in the region with reports indicating very good yields. These crops are staying on-farm for many or with limited over the fence trading.
- Some early maturing oat crops in the region are now ready for hay production and after some overcast days were cut this week.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$490 to \$540/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$200 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$390/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Goulburn/Murray Valley**

- Mostly dry across the region this week, with widespread but light falls which did little but wet the ground. Shepparton recorded 3mm of rain this week, while further to the east in Benalla almost 10mm of rain was recorded.
- Pastures in the region are struggling with the climatic conditions with anything dryland browning off. Irrigated pastures continue to show green and are providing some feed opportunities.
- Hay production in the region is moving forward as growers look to harvest crops already slated for hay production as well as opportunistically flipping some non-viable grain crops.

- Crops in the region that have been deemed to be unviable for grain production continue to be flipped to either hay or, more often, grazing for local herds.
- Further to the east near Kerang vetch crops are being cut with good yields and a high demand as the limited availability of protein hay becomes apparent.
- Local enquiries are steady as continued lack of rain sees pastures beginning to show stress. Protein hay remains in fairly high demand.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -8 (\$315 to \$355/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$160/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-10 (\$270 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Gippsland**

- Light to moderate falls across the region this week, with almost all falling on the weekend. Most areas saw upwards of 20mm of rain, with falls in Leongatha, Sale and Bairnsdale all recording that average, while Tamboon recorded 12mm of rain.
- Unlike many parts of Victoria, the grasslands in Gippsland are robust and viable and are providing good green feed opportunities for local herds.
- Additional dairy cows from the south west of the state as well as some from South Australia are now being agisted in the region, with the area seeing good conditions for these herds. Comments suggest these herds may stay until close to the end of the year to allow the pastures in their place of origin to recover sufficiently.
- Silage cutting continues to move through the region with the earlier growing conditions producing an excess of grass, which will now go into pits and bales, though some is being sent to the south west.
- Enquiries in the region are remaining fairly low with plenty of good green feed, with silage production building up on-farm stores again.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$340 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$460 to \$490/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$180 to \$210/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Southwest Victoria**

- Low but consistent rainfall across the region this week, with limited daily falls but most days seeing some rain. Hamilton recorded 10mm of rain, with only one day without rain for the week, while Dartmoor saw over 25mm of rain and no days without some rainfall.
- Pastures in the region are now seeing some additional growth and vigour, however there are still large parts of the area which continue to struggle to provide good green feed availability.
- Frosted crops are still slated for hay production in the region, though this has been delayed by the damp and overcast conditions. This is offering some additional fodder options in the short term for livestock producers looking to rebuild supply.
- Paddocks are being chopped for silage around Heywood this week, with most of the crops going into pits for ensilage on farm and little to nothing moving into the marketplace.
- Enquiries in the region remain steady, with producers having some pasture growth. Hay continues to come into the region from intra and interstate.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 (\$330 to \$390/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$425/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$115 to \$165/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$265 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady week.

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## **Southeast South Australia**

- Another low rainfall week in the region with widespread falls of less than 5mm of rain, though the southern tip and the border saw up to 15mm of rain for the week, with Mt Gambier recording 15mm of rain, while Penola received 8mm of rain.
- Pastures continue to show the effect of low rainfall and warmer than usual temperatures, stocking rates are low in any available pastures, though the southern tip of the region continues to have the most viable options due to continued low rainfall.
- Mixed enterprises that include some sheep are currently destocking due to the drought conditions and the inability to maintain current stocking levels on depleted pastures.
- Irrigated lucerne crops near Padthaway have put on good growth with some warmer temperatures and are being cut and baled around limited rainfall, and high winds. The demand for these bales is high both locally and interstate.
- Enquiries in the region remain strong with the pasture providing limited feed. Fodder continues to come into the region.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$390/t). Prices remain steady this week.



- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$410 to \$445/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$175/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$285 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Central South Australia**

- Dry conditions are continuing in the region with some areas seeing no rainfall this week and where there were falls, all were less than 5mm of rain. Temperatures continue to trend above seasonal averages.
- Pastures in the region are continuing to show the effects of extended dry conditions, with the small amount of rain that has fallen doing little to reverse the conditions or provide any prospect of a turnaround in the feed availability in the short term.
- With a number of previously slated grain production crops being moved into forage, either through hay production or grazing, there is some belief that this increase in feed options may help alleviate the local shortage in the short to medium term.
- There is some concern being raised that although the current situation of increased cereal and canola hay being produced is welcome, there will still be a lack of good quality protein hay available in the region.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$340 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$450/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$165/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Southwest Western Australia**

- Light to moderate rainfall across the region this week, with Bunbury and Manjimup both recording 10mm of rain, while the southern coastal strip saw closer to 15mm of rain. Several clear, dry days throughout the week.
- Grass continues to grow in the south west with the good rainfall, increased subsoil moisture profile and warming days seeing growth picking up as the season progresses. Herds continue to be well serviced by pastures, with limited additional nutritional feeding.
- Oat crops in the region are looking good based on better soil moisture and warm temperatures. Some of these crops are now being cut and baled with reportedly good yields. Exporters are actively looking for good oat parcels.

- Comments indicate that that warm temperatures in September have led to some haying off in wheat crops in the region, with croppers hoping for some additional quick rainfall to allow the grains to fill, otherwise the crops will be cut for fodder.
- Enquiries remain fairly constant.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$340 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$145/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Northwest Tasmania**

- Widespread moderate rainfall across the region this week with all areas recording at least 25mm of rain. Marrawah saw 30mm of rain, while Sheffield recorded 35mm of rain. Temperatures are slightly below seasonal averages.
- Pastures in the region are continuing to provide some good green feed opportunity to local herds, with reasonable subsoil moisture and temperatures beginning to increase means that growth is starting to move again.
- Lucerne pastures sown as part of a cropping rotation program in April around Ulverstone have shown good growth and are now ready for a first cut. These crops will then be fertilised to boost growth for a second cut.
- Reports indicate that contractors are in some demand for over sowing as livestock farmers aim at building feed.
- Enquiries in the state remain stable with the recent rains and the pasture growth lessening some demand. Lucerne remains is short supply.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$410/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$410/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$120 to \$160/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$370 to \$460/t) Prices remain steady 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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