



Australian Fodder Industry Association



22 November 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

- Limited vetch planting this season has reduced supply, driving up demand for lucerne and other protein-rich hays, with prices expected to remain firm.
- The beef sector's demand for hay is strong due to herd growth and export opportunities.

Driving Prices Down

- Recent storms and wet conditions have delayed harvests in the north, leading to bleached, lower-grade hay with thicker stems and higher NDF. Overall, high-quality hay volumes are down, as adverse weather and frost have pushed many high-yielding crops toward grain production instead of hay.

Local News

- The Wimmera and Mallee regions are already classified as a high fire risk due to the dry conditions and limited soil moisture. The southwest, central Victoria and northern country is drying out quickly. The biggest concern coming from thunderstorms.
- Parts of southern NSW and Victoria were hit by rain last weekend which meant many farmers were waiting until Tuesday this week to get back into the paddocks.
- Wild weather last weekend impacted eastern Australia with a vast line of storms from northwest Queensland to southern Victoria that marched towards the east coast. A total of approximately 2.5 million lightning strikes were recorded Australia-wide on Sunday by Weatherzone's Total Lightning Network, as a well-defined line of storms formed along a trough.
- Widespread falls in the 10 to 25mm range were recorded across the whole of eastern NSW except for the far northeast and southeast corners. Many locations in central Victoria and eastern NSW also saw falls in the range of 25 to 50mm, and there were even a few spots in both states that topped 50mm.
- The alpine areas of both NSW and Victoria received a welcome drop after a relatively dry month, with 63mm at Thredbo Top Station, and 88.4mm at Mt Hotham, its heaviest November daily rainfall total in almost two decades.
- Tasmania also received handy falls in all forecast districts, with totals topping 50mm at some locations in the state's west.
- The BOM has released a Climate Driver Update, reporting that the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral, with sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the central equatorial Pacific Ocean at ENSO-neutral levels. Atmospheric indices, such as those related to patterns of surface pressure, cloud and trade winds, are broadly consistent with an ENSO-neutral state. While some atmospheric indices have displayed La Niña-like signals over recent months, a consistent/sustained shift has not been observed. The next update will be released on 26 November.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

REGIONAL COMMENTARY

Atherton Tablelands

- The Tablelands has experienced predominantly dry conditions with minimal rainfall. These conditions have adversely affected fodder and silage crops, leading to reduced pasture growth and lower yields.
- The lack of sufficient moisture has also impacted the quality of harvested fodder, necessitating careful management to maintain nutritional value. Farmers are advised to monitor soil moisture levels closely and consider supplementary irrigation where feasible to support crop growth
- Temperatures are trending higher than usual in the low to mid 30s.
- Enquiries in the region remain slow. Sheds are full of hay and little hay is moving in the marketplace.
- No change to pricing 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

- Temperatures were consistent across the region ranging from the mid 20s to low 30s.
- Recent rain and thunderstorms meant Dalby received 69.6mm of rainfall, Goondiwindi received 70.4mm, and Miles received 122.8mm of rainfall. Warwick also received 75.4mm of rain in two days.
- The wet conditions have disrupted harvesting schedules, leading to delays in fodder production and a subsequent decrease in supply. This reduction in availability has caused an increase in fodder prices, affecting local livestock producers who rely on these supplies. Additionally, the moisture from the rain has raised concerns about the quality of stored fodder, as damp conditions can lead to spoilage if not properly managed.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/- (\$360 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$160/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +15 (\$240 to \$280/t) Prices increase this week.

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North Coast NSW

- Predominantly warm and humid conditions this week, with temperatures ranging from 18.9°C to 30.0°C.
- The region has seen varying levels of cloud cover and occasional showers, particularly in the northern areas. For instance, Coffs Harbour recorded temperatures between 18.9°C and 27.2°C, while Port Macquarie experienced a high of 30.0°C on November 17. Ballina observed temperatures up to 28.8°C during this period. These conditions are typical for the region during this time of year.
- Growers are reporting some of the best yields they have seen this season.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +5 (\$290 to \$330/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$370 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$120 to \$170/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +25 (\$260 to \$300/t). Prices increase this week.

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Central West NSW

- A range of weather conditions have been experienced this past week, including warm temperatures and varying rainfall. Dubbo recorded temperatures between 17.2°C and 34.7°C, with a high of 34.1°C on November 17. Orange experienced temperatures ranging from 14.4°C to 32.9°C during this period. These conditions are typical for the region during this time of year.
- Most of the barley and canola is now under a tarp in the region, with growers hitting peak wheat harvest until storms came through over the weekend.
- An estimated 40% of the crop has been completed and the region is starting to see a steady flow of daily receivals.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +15 (\$280 to \$320/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +35 (\$250 to \$290/t). Prices increase this week.

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Bega Valley

- Predominantly dry conditions over the past week, with light rainfall totalling 4.4mm. Temperatures were ranging between low to mid 20s and most days were clear.
- Recent weather patterns have been favourable, with moderate temperatures and adequate rainfall supporting crop growth.
- Farmers are actively harvesting silage and hay to ensure sufficient feed for livestock during the upcoming months. The quality of the harvested fodder is reported to be good, contributing positively to the region's agricultural output.
- Overall, the current harvest season is progressing well, with farmers capitalising on favourable conditions to secure quality fodder for their operations.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$370 to \$400/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 \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Apart from unseasonably high temperatures last weekend, reaching into the mid 30s, temperatures across the region have cooled to range between mid – high 20s.
- The region is actively engaged in its harvest season, focusing on a variety of crops including apples, pears, and grains.
- The grain harvest, particularly wheat and barley, is underway. Recent forecasts estimate Victoria's wheat crop at 3.4 million tonnes and barley at 2.6 million tonnes, reflecting a decrease from previous years due to variable weather conditions.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +15 (\$290 to \$330/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -10 (\$110 to \$140/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: +34 (\$260 to \$300/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Gippsland

- Pricing has jumped back up this week across the region, returning to the pricing experienced prior to Melbourne Cup.
- Yarram, Trafalgar, and Warragul have seen moderate temperatures with occasional rainfall. Yarram recorded temperatures ranging from 8.9°C to 29.6°C, with light showers on certain days. Similarly, Trafalgar and Warragul experienced comparable conditions.
- The intermittent rain has provided necessary moisture for crops but has also caused minor delays in harvesting schedules. Farmers have had to adjust their operations to accommodate these weather patterns, ensuring that crops are harvested during drier periods to maintain quality.
- The warmer and drier conditions in Cardross have facilitated uninterrupted harvesting activities. However, the lack of significant rainfall has necessitated increased irrigation efforts to sustain crop health and yield.
- The conditions in Hillside have generally been favourable for harvesting, allowing farmers to proceed without significant weather-related interruptions.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +15 (\$300 to \$340/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +80 (\$450 to \$500/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +45 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +35 (\$270 to \$310/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southwest Victoria

- In Codrington temperatures fluctuated between 10.3°C and 33.9°C, with a peak of 33.9°C on November 16. Subsequent days saw cooler temperatures, with highs around 17.6°C and lows near 11.1°C. Light rainfall was recorded on November 17 and 18.
- Similar to Codrington, Hamilton experienced temperatures ranging from 10.3°C to 33.9°C. The following days were cooler, with highs around 17.6°C. Light rainfall also occurred on November 17 and 18.
- The initial high temperatures and subsequent light rainfall provided favourable conditions for drying crops, facilitating harvesting activities. However, the cooler temperatures and light rainfall in the days following November 16 introduced minor delays in some harvesting schedules.
- Demand for hay in the region has dropped off.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$290 to \$350/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +20 (\$390 to \$430). Prices increase this week.

- Straw: +/-0 (\$115 to \$165/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +30 (\$260 to \$300/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southeast South Australia

- Cereal hay and lucerne hay prices have returned to pricing levels experienced at the beginning of the month.
- The weather conditions across the region, have been varied with warm temperatures and intermittent rainfall. The weekend weather was marked by dry conditions with temperatures ranging from 12°C to 28°C, especially around Mt Gambier and Penola. This warm and dry weather allowed farmers to continue harvesting without significant delays.
- Light to moderate rainfall occurred, with totals ranging between 5mm and 15mm in parts of Naracoorte and Keith. This brief rainfall slowed down harvesting as the crops became damp, causing minor delays in the field. That said, this rainfall was beneficial for moisture retention in the soil.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +80 (\$350 to \$390/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +49 (\$410 to \$445/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$105 to \$155/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$215 to \$265/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central South Australia

- There was a mix of warm temperatures, dry conditions, and some light rainfall over the past week.
- The sunny weekend conditions were ideal for the harvest, allowing crops to dry out and be harvested without weather-related delays.
- Temperatures remained moderate, between 13°C and 25°C, with some light showers in the region. The rainfall was generally minimal, contributing up to 5mm in some parts like Barossa and Freeling. The rainfall helped replenish soil moisture.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$250 to \$300/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$340 to \$390/t). Prices decrease this week.

- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Southwest Western Australia

- Prices have improved considerably since last week, returning close to the same figures as two weeks ago.
- The area has been variable, with a mix of warm temperatures and occasional rainfall with highs ranging from 26°C to 35°C.
- Some areas, such as Witchcliffe and Brunswick, experienced light showers during the week, amounting to around 5mm to 10mm of rain. This rainfall was beneficial for soil moisture.
- Growers have been taking advantage of the ideal harvest conditions ahead of forecast wet weather.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +40 (\$280 to \$350/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +30 (\$370 to \$420/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +20 (\$120 to \$150/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +65 (\$270 to \$310/t). Prices increase this week.

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Northwest Tasmania

- The weather in Longford has been relatively mild, with temperatures ranging from 10°C to 25°C. There were light showers recorded, with about 5–10mm of rainfall across the region.
- These brief showers helped maintain soil moisture levels, which were beneficial for ongoing crops but caused minor delays in harvesting activities, particularly for silage and hay. The cooler nights and mild days have supported good conditions for pastures.
- Smithton experienced moderate conditions, with daytime highs between 12°C and 22°C. Rain was light but consistent, contributing to around 7mm of rainfall during the period.
- The wet conditions slowed down harvesting slightly, especially for hay. However, the rain was not heavy enough to cause significant disruption, and farmers were able to resume work once the fields dried.
- Consistent moisture in the soil has supported ongoing crop health, ensuring that there will be adequate feed for livestock in the coming months.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +25 (\$310 to \$350/t) Prices increase this week.

- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$380 to \$430/t) Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$160/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +45 (\$280 to \$320/t) Prices increase 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

For more information contact AFIA:

info@afia.org.au www.afia.org.au



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