



Australian Fodder Industry Association



11 April 2025

# 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

- **Straw interest grows:** This week, there's a noticeable increase in straw demand across Victoria, and parts of NSW and SA. Straw is now about \$200/t cheaper than Oaten hay, and it is enjoying its highest popularity since November. Barley straw from header trailings is especially popular because it offers better digestibility and higher energy.
- **Pasture hay on the rise:** Pasture hay prices have climbed again after a steady fortnight. Many are holding out for rain, particularly in the dry southern regions. This trend might continue until regular rainfall kicks off hay seed germination.
- **Price jumps in Southwest Victoria:** Ongoing analysis suggests a growing shortage of feed, which has pushed fodder prices up significantly in Southwest Victoria.

### Driving Prices Down

- **No price drops yet:** Like last week, there is no sign of prices dropping. However, we are keeping an eye on the USA's tariffs being imposed on Australia, which might impact fodder prices if the export meat market takes a hit.

### Local News

- **Dry outlook:** The BOM predicts minimal rainfall (under 5mm of rain) for areas inland of the Great Dividing Range over the next week.
- **Moisture issues:** Modelled data shows a severe moisture deficit (decile one) in pasture paddocks across eastern Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania this year. Subsoil moisture is lacking, highlighting a tough start to autumn.
- **Rain needed in Southwest Victoria:** Farmers here have seen some light rain, but it has not been enough for seed germination. More rainfall is critical before mid-April to support growth.
- Registrations are now open for the **AFIA National Fodder Conference** being held from Tuesday, 22 to Thursday, 24 July 2025, at the Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort, Gold Coast. Download the Sponsorship Prospectus from the AFIA website here: <https://afia.org.au/events/afia-national-fodder-conference/>
- **Red Fire Ant Invasion of QLD and NSW:** The National Fire Ant Eradication Program has produced a **Material movement advice tool** which is available for use on their website. This tool will help you understand if you are taking suitable steps to reduce the risk of spreading fire ants. Click [HERE](#) to access the tool.

**Hay permit suspension:** The [Group Biosecurity Emergency Permit](#), which allows movements of hay from specified lower risk areas in the fire ant biosecurity zone of Southeast Queensland under certain conditions, is suspended for one month, effective from 12.30 pm Thursday 13 March 2025. This follows the NSW Government's indefinite suspension of turf movement from *Queensland Fire Ant Infested Areas* in November.

Under the [Biosecurity Act 2014](#), everyone has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of fire ants. [Fire ant biosecurity zones are also in place](#) to help manage the movement of materials known to spread fire ants, such as soil, hay, mulch, manure, quarry products, turf, and potted plants.

- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to ensure the quality of feed.

## REGIONAL COMMENTARY

### **Atherton Tablelands**

- From midweek, expect a shift in weather conditions with heavier showers. By Friday, inland areas like Mareeba and Atherton could get 5-10mm of rain, while Cairns and Cooktown may see 20-40mm of rain. Either way, wet conditions will impact most of the Tablelands. Though this will boost pasture, expect potential slowdowns in hay transport due to boggy conditions.
- Strong wind warnings are in place for the Peninsula, Cooktown, and Cairns coasts, and minor flooding continues along the Suttor River. These factors might affect marine and road transport in the approach to the weekend.
- Favourable recent conditions see ample pasture growth and steady market demands.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$380/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**

- Mostly sunny and warm conditions continue across the region with light showers producing less than 1mm per day. That said, the region has already experienced between 100% to 275% more rainfall than usual this month
- While some restrictions of hay movement remain in place due to Red Fire Ants gaining ground, hay is still being sold in unaffected and low risk areas.
- Winter seeding is underway as the soil is moist.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$465 to \$515/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$230 to \$290/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$300/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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## North Coast NSW

- With more rain on the horizon, some farmers are finding this the perfect time to sow their winter crops, while others are finding their ground is too wet and have decided to take a holiday.
- Daytime temperatures are sitting in the low to mid 20s with the evenings dropping down to the mid-teens in some towns.
- Wetter pastures have been favourable for cattle farmers across the region, this in turn has reflected in good cattle prices and saleyard activity.
- Trading cattle across the region has also increased due to the available pasture growth.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Central West NSW

- Last week saw mostly sunny days with temperatures climbing from the low to mid-20s. Expect further warming into the weekend, with Cowra and Forbes reaching 31°C and Condobolin hitting 32°C.
- Clouds hang overhead, but rain is expected to stay below 1mm, suggesting ongoing dry, warm conditions. Ideal for harvest, but means managing water resources for livestock and crops is crucial.
- Graziers are actively preparing for winter cropping, with many completing their seeding. This activity is well-timed with the current dry weather providing optimal ground conditions.
- While pasture growth might slow under these reported weather conditions, hay prices remain firm. Keep an eye on market demand as it could shift if the dry spell lingers.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$470/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +5 (\$120 to \$170/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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quality of feed. We recommend feed testing and viewing of fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

## **Bega Valley**

- Sunny conditions across the region continue with minimal to no rainfall expected until mid-next week in coastal areas. Daytime temperatures remain in the low to mid-20s, but will drop throughout the region by next Wednesday.
- Once again, the market is holding steady with not much movement of hay; however, preparations for the winter harvest season are in full swing with growers in the region in the middle of dry seeding.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$355 to \$415/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$550/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +5 (\$220 to \$260/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Goulburn/Murray Valley**

- Again, this week conditions remain dry and sunny across the region with no sign of rainfall. Daytime temperatures continue to comfortably sit in the low to mid-20s.
- There is movement of hay across the region, with some external hay producers also advertising large amounts of high-quality Lucerne, Vetch, Wheat, Oaten, and Barley hay available for transport into the area.
- Local growers are selling down to the point where their remaining stored fodder is kept for their own purposes over the winter.
- Pasture hay had a slight uplift last week, but it has stalled, and Cereal, Lucerne, and Straw hay have all seen a rise.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +10 (\$300 to \$340/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +5 (\$395 to \$475/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +10 (\$130 to \$160/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Gippsland

- Dry, mild conditions remain for another week, with only minimal rainfall predicted by mid-next week, with no more than 5mm of rain expected in parts.
- West and South Gippsland continues to enjoy some lovely Autumn weather with mostly sunny days and temperatures sitting in the mid to high 20s.
- Similar conditions are being experienced in east Gippsland, however cloud cover is expected next week.
- The market sees an increase again in Pasture hay this week, along with all other key hay types.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +10 (\$350 to \$380/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +5 (\$465 to \$515/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +10 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Southwest Victoria

- Reports suggest that rainfall for southwest Victoria year-to-date rests at decile one. So far this year, Casterton has received 18mm of rain, Edenhope 27mm, Warrnambool 46mm and Terang 43mm of rain accordingly.
- Graziers in these areas are finding signs of green on the horizon, but not enough growth at this stage to germinate available seed. More rain is needed before the middle of April to ensure germination.
- Limited rain in May will mean a limited volume of pasture growth and a widening feed gap for the colder winter months. Sheep producers in the region report that feeding sheep costs up to \$2 per animal. Some graziers, near Balmoral, are destocking in response to this.
- Round bales of Pasture hay have been popular across southwest Victoria. Local supplies have hit over \$300/t delivered, with Oaten hay selling for a minimum of \$380/t delivered.
- The BOM is forecasting a 50 percent chance of exceeding median rainfall for April in Victoria, but a 35 to 40 percent chance for the April to June period. This may be a concern when prolonged, regular rainfall is needed to lift the region out of drought.

- The market continues to move, and we are seeing a further increase in Straw this week, with a significant bump up for Cereal hay, and a slight increase for Lucerne.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$340 to \$380/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +5 (\$405 to \$485). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +15 (\$135 to \$205/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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### **Southeast South Australia**

- The BOM is forecasting a 50 percent chance of exceeding median rainfall for April in southeast SA, but a 35 to 40 percent chance for the April to June period. This may be a concern when prolonged, regular rainfall is needed to lift the region out of drought.
- Another bump up for Pasture hay this week and increases for all hay types.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +10 (\$390 to \$440/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +15 (\$460 to \$490/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +5 (\$165 to \$215/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +5 (\$305 to \$395/t). Prices increase this week.

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### **Central South Australia**

- Reports that rainfall for the entire agricultural region of SA year-to-date rests at decile one.
- Round bales of pasture hay have been popular fodder across SA. Local supplies have hit over \$300/t delivered, with Oaten hay selling for a minimum of \$380/t delivered.
- Some farmers do have hay to sell, but are holding on to what they have for on-farm use at present. If they still have enough to sell in a few weeks' time, it will go on the market.
- Reports state that growers are planning to start seeding on Monday, however, if conditions do not change, they will have to wait until after Easter.



- There is absolutely no subsoil moisture, however the market is steady.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$410 to \$470/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$180 to \$260/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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### **Southwest Western Australia**

- Across the region there will be scattered showers and some storms, daytime temperatures are still sitting in the mid 20s to low 30s, however they will drop next week to the low to mid 20s.
- There has been enough rainfall for seeding to commence and/or continue for winter crops. However, at the AFIA Hay Meetup in York last Saturday, Munroe Patchett from Gilmac mentioned that there is currently an over-supply of Oaten Hay in stores for next year, therefore growers need to have a backup plan of what else to grow – perhaps cereal hay. Contracts will be honoured for existing oaten hay orders.
- The market remains steady again this week given the state of flux brought on by the USA tariffs. Some farmers are not impacted, while others wait to see the impact on China and how this plays out with the Australian market.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$220 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$160/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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### **Northwest Tasmania**

- Reports that rainfall for the entire agricultural region of Tasmania year-to-date rests at decile one. While it is very dry in the Central North of Tasmania (no subsoil moisture at all), the Northwest has had some rainfall.
- Those who have access to irrigation are using it on their crops, however many are still holding off on seeding in the hope that rain will fall soon.

- Reports state that the mass panic buying that was experienced this time last year due to a dry spring has not occurred this year, even though it is drier than last year. Farmers purchased fodder earlier this year and are holding back on buying more.
- Hay is moving, but there is no real bounce in demand or price changing. If there is no rain by the end of April and the frosts set in, it will get tough as many are feeding their winter stores now to livestock. Demand will then go up and the prices will soar.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$220 to \$280/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$440/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$160/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$235 to \$265/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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Australian Fodder Industry Association

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:

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