

# Hay Report

10 October 2025

DELIVERING  
*for* DAIRY



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# Summary

## Driving Prices Up

- There is no significant upward pressure on prices this week. However, as the new hay season begins, several factors could still shift the balance of supply and demand.
- Reduced lucerne competition is expected this year, as rising production costs may limit volumes, increasing interest in alternative protein hays.

## Driving Prices Down

- Hay prices have continued to ease after reaching record highs in July, as the market resets following a dry winter and a late break in many regions.
- Spring rainfall has been patchy across NSW, Victoria and South Australia, with many areas missing the top-up moisture needed to support strong yields. In many zones, early nitrogen applications lacked follow-up moisture. Cereal crop yields are under pressure, and some growers are weighing up whether to cut for hay or push through to grain.
- In Queensland, NSW and Victoria, grain is still sitting in storage from last season, but hay is tighter. Limited carry-over and patchy early production are helping to hold prices steady.
- With low water storage and more growers relying on temporary irrigation, demand for purchased hay is expected to remain subdued for now. Many buyers are likely to hold off until late summer.

## Local News

- **National weather summary and outlook**
  - September rainfall was below average across much of southern and southeastern Australia, including key hay regions in central South Australia and northern Victoria, resulting in soil moisture and streamflow levels that were well below average.
  - Victoria has experienced its warmest January to September on record, which is accelerating crop development but stretching already limited moisture reserves.
  - While parts of Queensland and coastal New South Wales have recorded strong rainfall, many southern regions are entering spring with falling water storage levels, some down by 50 percent on last year, adding pressure to irrigation decisions.
  - The outlook for above-average spring rain has eased across New South Wales and Victoria, while Western Tasmania received some relief in September. For most hay producers, the next 4–6 weeks remain critical for finishing cuts and managing fodder supply heading into summer.
  - View and download the latest Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update via The Bureau of Meteorology [HERE](#).
- Buyers are encouraged to **feed test and view fodder** before purchase to ensure feed quality.

# Regional commentary

## Atherton Tablelands

- Cloudy skies and regular light daily drizzle are typical across the region. While growers expect spring storms by now, the long-range forecast is falling short, and soils are starting to dry out. Conditions are favourable for paddock work, but growers are adjusting schedules to ensure hay can dry properly before baling.
- Rhodes grass hay is moving off farm. Small square bales are selling for \$12 each from Dimbulah, with freight into southern markets, such as Coffs Harbour, adding roughly \$10/bale. Prices are currently holding steady, but if the dry weather persists, an increase is likely.
- Demand for white lupins remains strong, with Tablelands-grown product preferred over darker southern types. Local supply is still around a month away.
- Some growers are reconsidering summer plantings, leaning towards crops like sugar cane instead of replanting grass. This shift could reduce local hay production and influence pricing. Barley crops also need to be cut for hay in the coming week.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.

Please note: Hay in the Atherton Tablelands is traditionally priced at \$/bale, so checking bale weights for conversion is important. The price range indicated is for feeds of varying quality. We recommend testing and viewing the feed before purchase to ensure its quality.

## Darling Downs

- Warm, dry conditions persist, with a daily chance of showers and possible damaging winds forecast. The BOM Fire Danger rating has increased to High, prompting some growers to pause cutting and baling as a precaution.
- Silage is 60 to 70 percent complete. The combination of a soft winter and dry finish has compressed the hay season into a short, intense window. Producers are working to stay ahead of seasonal storms, with most hay expected to be finished within the next fortnight. Freight is busy moving silage and hay from paddock to shed and feedlot.
- Hot conditions mean some barley is now being cut for silage. Strong yields of 10–15 t/ha are being sold to feedlots at around \$85–\$90/t, easing short-term hay demand.
- One North West NSW-based straw and cereal hay producer operating across the region reports a bumper crop forecast. With baling about to begin, yields of 5–6 straw bales per acre and several thousand bales are expected to sell into the local market. While straw trading has been quiet, it is set to increase, with limited early supply currently selling for \$150–\$180/t. Note that straw pricing below is indicative of product originating from the Downs, of which there is little to none available at present.
- Pricing changes for Cereal and Pasture hay are indicative of a national trend.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$290 to \$390/t). Prices decrease this week.

- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$530 to \$670/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$230 to \$290/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$270 to \$340/t). Prices decrease this week.

Please note: Unless stated otherwise, prices are per tonne, sourced, and delivered locally. The price range indicated is for feeds of varying quality. We recommend testing and viewing fodder before purchase to ensure the quality of feed.

## **North Coast NSW**

- Mostly warm and sunny conditions are expected to continue, with temperatures ranging from 25°C to 35°C heading into the weekend and a high fire danger risk. A high chance of rainfall sees in next week, with 15mm of rain expected in Lismore on Sunday, giving remaining crops a freshen up before baling finishes.
- Warmer conditions are pushing early barley harvests forward. While some silage production is underway, sluggish demand for cereals like chickpeas and barley means growers may hold or warehouse the product longer, delaying new-season hay supply from entering the market.
- Supply to North Coast feedlots is expected to ramp up in the coming weeks as a major grower in the Northwest prepares to harvest a strong straw and cereal hay crop. Yields are forecast at 5–6 bales per acre. While little straw has traded so far this season, off-farm prices are reportedly sitting at \$150–\$180/t, with more product set to become available soon. Note that straw prices below are indicative of product originating from the North Coast.
- Pricing changes for Cereal and Pasture hay are indicative of a national trend.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$290 to \$390/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$240 to \$300/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## **Central West NSW**

- Central West Slopes and Tablelands remain dry, with limited new growth and delayed crop development across most areas. Despite this, there is a chance of a freshening up for the remaining crops. With a medium chance of showers across the region from Sunday, Parkes and Dubbo are expecting 5mm of rain to green up the grass, ready for cutting.
- We will be closer to knowing the outcome of this seasonal harvest in the next Hay Report.
- A North West NSW grower supplying into the Central West is preparing for a large cereal hay and straw harvest. Baling is set to start shortly, with high yields projected. The straw market has remained steady in recent weeks, but activity is expected to pick up as supplies begin to

move into feedlots. Off-farm straw is currently trading around \$150–\$180/t; however, the pricing below is indicative of straw originating in the Central West.

- There is a growing number of listings for new-season hay across online marketplaces. Oaten hay from Ungarie is listed at \$350/t, Vetch from Coonamble at \$420/t, and Wheaten and Barley hay from Condobolin at \$300/t.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$360 to \$460/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$425 to \$555/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$170/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## **Bega Valley**

- Sunny, stable weather continues again this week, and is ideal for continued cutting and activities. However, due to continued dry weather coupled with daily winds of up to 35km/h, the BOM continues to grade the Fire Danger risk as High in the Illawarra/Shoalhaven area and Moderate in the far south of the region. This may result in a reduction of haymaking activity.
- The BOM forecast of a 70 per cent chance of exceeding median minimum temperatures for all of Victoria and southern NSW, except the Mallee, suggests that frosted grain crops being cut for hay are unlikely this season.
- Despite producing the most expensive hay of all reportable regions, prices for key varieties continue to decrease, with Cereal and Pasture hay now at late May levels. Like all other regions, straw and Lucerne prices have stagnated this week, but are now back to levels seen in early May and mid-June, respectively.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$450 to \$570/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$500 to \$640/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$220 to \$270/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$420 to \$540/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## **Goulburn/Murray Valley**

- The BOM forecast of a 70 per cent chance of exceeding median minimum temperatures for all of Victoria and southern NSW, except the Mallee, means it is unlikely that frosted grain crops will be cut for hay this season.

- Competition from Lucerne as a protein hay source may be reduced a little this season as the cost of production is on the rise. The warmer weather outlook will mean lucerne stands will be thirsty, with evapotranspiration rates already reaching 25mm of moisture at Kyabram.
- Temporary water prices in the Murray system have more than doubled since April, putting pressure on irrigated fodder producers in the Goulburn and Murray valleys. With Hume and Dartmouth dams sitting at their lowest levels in five years, some buyers are holding off on hay purchases in hopes of a longer growing season, a trend that may delay demand until January.
- There is a growing number of listings for new-season hay across online marketplaces. Barley and Wheaten hay from Cohuna is listed at \$450/t, Vetch hay from Pyramid Hill at \$410/t, and Straw from Echuca at \$225/t.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$360 to \$480/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$410 to \$570/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$270 to \$430/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## Gippsland

- Conditions remain highly variable across Gippsland. Some areas have ample feed growth, while others face severe water shortages and poor soil moisture after the driest year on record.
- September rainfall shortfalls have put the season on a knife-edge. While hay growth is limited, a high chance of rain is forecast for next week, especially in West and South Gippsland, with up to 5mm of daily rainfall expected in the Latrobe Valley across the weekend, and 8mm of rainfall in Warragul.
- The East remains dry, but Orbost and Bairnsdale are expecting falls of up to 7mm and 6mm on Sunday to give remaining crops a freshen up.
- The BOM forecast of a 70 per cent chance of exceeding median minimum temperatures for all of Victoria and southern NSW, except the Mallee, means it is unlikely that frosted grain crops will be cut for hay this season.
- Competition from Lucerne as a protein hay source may be reduced a little this season, as the cost of production is on the rise. The warmer weather outlook will mean lucerne stands will be thirsty, with evapotranspiration rates already reaching 20mm of moisture at Rosedale.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$390 to \$540). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$490 to \$600/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$115 to \$175/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$310 to \$470/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## Southwest Victoria

- Despite recent rains and more on the way, Southwest Victoria remains critically dry, with rainfall since February at record lows. Poor soil moisture may have a chance to improve with a high likelihood of daily showers across the region into next week. Colac is expecting 7mm of daily rainfall over the weekend, and Warrnambool up to 9mm of rain.
- Recent rainfalls of 50–60mm near Condah have left paddocks boggy, delaying hay and silage work in parts of southwest Victoria and making conditions difficult for fodder harvesting.
- With fodder reserves low and pasture grasses maturing quickly, some livestock producers pushed ahead with silage during last week's showery conditions to secure feed for next year.
- Warmer nights are on the cards, with the Bureau forecasting a 70% chance of minimum temperatures staying above the median across most of Victoria and southern NSW (excluding the Mallee). This reduces the risk of frost-damaged grain crops being diverted to hay.
- Vetch cutting is now underway in the north of the region, and while planting was down this season due to lentil competition, softer prices and lower demand for lentils could see vetch take back area in future rotations.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$380 to \$520/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$420 to \$580). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$300 to \$410/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## Southeast South Australia

- The Southeast remains in drought, with rainfall since February still sitting in the lowest 5–10% on record. Most of the region has seen a limited response from earlier rainfall. The north is drier and warmer, but showing better paddock conditions for cutting and baling.
- Root zone moisture remains low across much of the South East. Crop and pasture growth is still delayed, with hay production well below average.
- Patchy shower activity across the weekend and into early next week may bring limited short-term relief, particularly in southern areas like Mt Gambier and Naracoorte. However, rain totals look low (0–5 mm of rain), with winds and cool temperatures likely to restrict immediate growth response.
- These conditions narrow the recovery window for second cuts and summer feed. Warm, dry conditions in the north are allowing some growers to continue hay operations, but southern producers are still managing the risk of underdeveloped crops and missed cuts.



- Forecasts indicate a slightly higher likelihood of above-average October rainfall. Any widespread, follow-up rain in the next 2–3 weeks will be critical for improving hay yields and quality. Still, producers remain cautious, especially as input costs and risk of poor returns remain high.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$465 to \$515/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$480 to \$620/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$355 to \$435/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## Central South Australia

- While dry conditions continue in the region, signs for new season hay are positive. Production has just commenced in the Mid North, with contractors two days into baling near Minlaton. July rainfall lifted yield expectations significantly after concerns in August about poor season prospects. Root zone moisture remains limited, and further rain would be beneficial; however, overall yields are now expected to be better than last year. Quality is yet to be determined, though early hay from the southern part of the region appears to be of good quality.
- Hot, windy conditions and lack of subsoil moisture are pushing some growers to consider cutting crops for hay, aiming to rebuild on-farm reserves after last year's drought. Biomass is available this season, unlike last year, but decisions hinge on upcoming rain. The local hay market remains quiet for now, while baling commences.
- Pricing changes for Cereal hay are indicative of a national trend.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$290 to \$390/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$425 to \$495/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$200 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Southwest Western Australia

- The Southwest continues to benefit from one of its best seasons in years. Strong rainfall through August improved soil moisture and supported consistent pasture and hay growth across most areas. Earlier signs of waterlogging in lower zones have eased.
- Conditions are now mild and mostly dry, with little rainfall expected into next week. Light winds and low to mid-20 °C temperatures are creating ideal conditions for curing and baling.

- With the season well advanced and paddocks in good shape, cutting and baling are likely progressing at pace. Contact with growers has been limited this week, suggesting most are focused on harvest.
- Regional yields remain on track to be above average, although quality will depend on how quickly crops can be cut and cured while conditions remain favourable.
- Cereal hay supply may lift slightly this season, as some growers continue to cut early grain crops in response to flat grain prices, storage pressures and freight constraints. Domestic and export markets will closely monitor quality differentiation as supply increases.
- Pricing changes for Cereal and Pasture hay are indicative of a national trend.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$220 to \$300/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$190/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$290 to \$340/t). Prices decrease this week.

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## Northwest Tasmania

- Conditions have shifted across the Northwest this week, with widespread rainfall bringing what may be the long-anticipated October break. After a dry winter and cold start to spring, this consistent run of showers is welcome news for growers still eyeing a first cut.
- Rainfall totals remain modest across most areas, but steady falls and mild temperatures are encouraging new growth and helping to replenish soil moisture levels. Winds and cooler days remain a factor, but the broader trend signals a more favourable turn.
- Early-season yields are still expected to fall below average due to so much lost time, frost setbacks, and slow spring recovery. However, if current conditions hold, there is still a chance for a late but worthwhile cut in the coming weeks.
- Pricing changes for Pasture hay are indicative of a national trend.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$200 to \$300/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$400/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$190/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -10 (\$260 to \$320/t) Prices decrease this week.

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#### **Acknowledgement**

Dairy Australia acknowledges the funding from levy payers and contribution by Commonwealth Government.

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