Dairy Australia

Hay Report

13 November 2026



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1. Summary

1.1. Driving Prices Up

- Dry conditions and low soil moisture in Central West NSW, southwest Western Australia and northwest Tasmania may increase livestock reliance on purchased fodder through summer.
- Cereal and pasture hay supply is low in northwest Tasmania. Some buyers are considering sourcing Victorian hay, although freight and biosecurity costs will add substantially to the delivered price.
- Southeast South Australia has produced less hay than usual, with buyers seeking sound, shedded hay from outside the region. Demand may build if conditions turn dry.
- Repeated rain is shortening haymaking windows in southern and eastern regions. Further weather damage may widen the value gap between sound, well-stored hay and lower-grade lines.

1.2. Driving Prices Down

- High hay yields across southern regions are increasing available supply. Rain-affected quality and more hay stored outside are reducing the value of lower-grade lines.
- Rain after cutting has reduced cereal hay quality in parts of Central South Australia. High volumes of lower-energy hay have fewer market options and are weighing on values.
- Improved pasture growth in the Darling Downs and North Coast NSW is reducing immediate hay buying and slowing demand for hay from Atherton and southern regions.
- Export demand remains quiet in Central South Australia and southwest Western Australia. Current cereal hay offers are too low for many growers to cover production, baling and handling costs.

1.3. National Weather Summary and Outlook

- Root-zone soil moisture remains above average across central and eastern Australia following recent rainfall.
- Large parts of Western Australia and Queensland recorded above to well above average rainfall from September to October.
- Tasmania recorded its fifth-driest September to October period on record. September to October was also the warmest on record for New South Wales and Tasmania, equal warmest in South Australia and second warmest in Victoria.
- December to February rainfall is likely to be above average across south-east Queensland and much of eastern New South Wales. Small areas of central South Australia and southwest Western Australia also have an increased chance of above average rainfall, particularly in December.
- Days and nights are very likely to be warmer than average across almost all of Australia from December to February. Higher temperatures will increase evaporation and may reduce soil moisture where rainfall is limited.
- The severe weather season runs from October to April, increasing the risk of thunderstorms, tropical cyclones, flooding, heatwaves and bushfires.

  Download The BOM's Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update for more information.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to ensure feed quality.

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2. Regional commentary

2.1. Atherton Tablelands

- Hot, dry conditions are forecast for Atherton and Mareeba through to Saturday, which has created a short opportunity to resume baling, contract work and crop operations before heavier falls return.
- Recent warm weather has enabled some corn harvest activity and small areas of grass hay to be baled. Local reports indicate some grass paddocks have yielded better hay than expected and will no longer graze it as a last resort.
- Growers are working within a limited curing window. Further rainfall may delay remaining hay work and reduce the chance of securing another irrigated Rhodes grass cut before Christmas.
- Hay movement has slowed as buyers in southern areas – Darling Downs and northern NSW – manage rain-affected conditions and stronger pasture growth, reducing immediate buying interest.
- Small round bales are reported at $40 to $60 per 100kg bale, with better-quality hay advertised from $45 to $65 or more. Big square bales are reported at $120 to $170 per 500kg bale. Growers indicate small-round prices of $70 to $80 are needed to improve returns.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +30 ($240 to $340/t). Prices increase 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.

2.2. Darling Downs

- Severe thunderstorms are forecast across the Darling Downs over the coming week, with Dalby and Toowoomba expecting up to 25mm of rainfall daily. Wet conditions are likely to delay field operations and restrict paddock access.
- Recent rainfall has improved the outlook for pasture growth, and the expectations of better on-farm feed availability through late spring and summer. This may reduce immediate demand for purchased hay as buyers assess new pasture growth.
- Storm activity has placed harvesting and fodder operations on hold in some areas. The next week of rainfall will be important in determining when growers can return to paddocks.
- Hay movement from the Atherton Tablelands into the Darling Downs has slowed. Buyers are managing wet conditions and waiting to see how pastures respond before making further hay purchases.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($350 to $540/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($600 to $700/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($200 to $300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($300 to $400/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.3. North Coast NSW

- Severe thunderstorms are forecast across the North Coast NSW over the next week, with Lismore and Grafton expecting up to 20mm of rain each day. Further rainfall will delay haymaking, winter-crop harvest and other paddock operations.
- Earlier widespread rainfall has improved soil moisture and pasture growth across northern New South Wales. This is improving the outlook for on-farm feed through late spring and summer.
- Minor to moderate flooding remains in some catchments following October and early November rainfall. Waterlogged paddocks and road access issues are limiting harvest activity and hay transport in affected areas.
- Continued wet weather is also increasing crop disease risk and may affect the quality of standing winter crops where harvest is delayed.
- Stronger restocker interest at saleyards indicates producers are expecting more pasture feed heading into summer. This may lead some buyers to delay hay purchases while fresh pasture establishes.
- Hay movement from the Atherton Tablelands into northern New South Wales has slowed. Buyers are focused on managing rainfall and assessing pasture growth before committing to further hay orders.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($250 to $450/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($400 to $500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($130 to $170/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($230 to $310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.4. Central West NSW

- Central West NSW remains dry after below-average rainfall since September. Low soil moisture and rising temperatures are increasing reliance on irrigation and limiting pasture and fodder growth heading into summer.
- Dry conditions are likely to reduce the chance of further hay growth where irrigation is not available. This may tighten local hay supply later in the season, particularly if hot weather continues.
- Forbes, Parkes and Condobolin experienced hot, dry conditions this week, which continued to draw down already limited soil moisture. Patchy light showers are forecast for Forbes from Saturday as conditions cool, while storms may develop around Parkes and Condobolin with only a slight chance of rain. Any rainfall is unlikely to replenish soil moisture or cause prolonged delays to hay curing and harvest, though storms may briefly interrupt baling.
- Demand for hay within the region may strengthen if dry conditions persist and pasture growth slows. Producers with quality hay available may find greater interest from livestock operators looking to secure feed ahead of summer.

- Earlier demand interest from the Darling Downs was shaped by freight costs and available supply. Improved pasture conditions in northern demand areas are now likely to reduce this pressure.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($240 to $330/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($360 to $480/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($115 to $175/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($175 to $285/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.5. Bega Valley

- Spring rainfall has been less than half the seasonal average in parts of the Bega Valley, and hay production is well down. This may bring local buyers into the market as summer approaches, particularly where pasture growth has been limited.
- October maximum temperatures were 2 to 4°C above average across the region. The warmer, dry conditions have reduced soil moisture and added concern to late-season pasture and fodder growth prospects.
- Rain is forecast from Friday, with up to 20mm of rainfall expected on Sunday in Bega and further falls possible next week. This will give soil moisture a chance to recover and may encourage a late pasture response.
- Expected early grain harvest is unlikely to have a direct effect on the hay market at this stage. The key watch point is whether forecast rainfall produces enough pasture growth to reduce local hay buying in the weeks ahead.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($310 to $430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 ($430 to $570/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($215 to $265/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($230 to $360/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.6. Goulburn/Murray Valley

- The hay season has been long, although ‘stop-start’, across northern Victoria. Intermittent rain and cooler weather delayed curing and baling, with some hay left on the ground while growers have waited for conditions to dry.
- Despite the challenges, plenty of hay has been made around Echuca and other parts of the region. Strong supply is weighing on prices, while good spring pasture growth is reducing immediate buying interest from livestock producers.

- October maximum temperatures were 2 to 4°C above average. Recent rain has improved soil moisture, although some paddocks remain too wet after winter and growers are keen for drier conditions to finish seasonal work.
- The forecast is mostly sunny and warm over the next few days, with a chance of light showers on Friday and Saturday across the region. This should allow remaining haymaking to wrap up on time in some places, provided showers stay light.
- Many growers expect to finish fodder work early next week and move straight into grain harvest. Barley harvest is expected to begin from mid-November in parts of the region, with crops generally looking promising where paddocks have not been excessively wet.
- With hay supply available and pasture feed still growing, the market is likely to remain buyer-led in the short term. Weather through the final haymaking window will determine the quality of remaining bales and growers' ability to move stock before harvest takes priority.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 ($160 to $280/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($340 to $490/t). Prices remain steady his week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($85 to $105/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($125 to $285/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.7. Gippsland

- Some concern remains over the hay season as growers deal with the fallout from October rainfall. While rain has eased soil moisture deficits, it has also disrupted winter crop harvest, horticulture work and haymaking across Victoria and South Australia. Growers now need a reliable dry break to finish operations and protect hay quality.
- At Krowera in South Gippsland, a dairy farm received nearly 200mm of rainfall, turning the season around after a very dry September. The farm completed silage cutting 25 days earlier than last year, although production was about one-third lower from the same area. Hay cutting is expected to begin soon, with improved pasture growth boosting feed availability for dairy and livestock businesses.
- October maximum temperatures were 2 to 4 degrees above average across the region. This has supported pasture growth where soil moisture has improved, but it also increases the need for dry weather to allow hay to cure and harvest to progress.
- Warragul, Yarram and Sale had a mild, mostly dry window this week, but showers are forecast to return through the weekend and into next week. Rainfall is expected to be light around Warragul, with more persistent showers possible at Yarram and heavier totals forecast near Sale. This is likely to continue slowing hay cutting, curing and baling, particularly in eastern Gippsland.
- New season cereal hay is entering the market as sheds fill and some stock may need to be stored outside. This has placed downward pressure on prices this week. If wet weather continues to delay harvest and more hay comes onto the market, prices may soften further, especially for hay with weather damage or limited storage options.
- Some change to pricing this week.

- Cereal hay: -10 ($190 to $340). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($410 to $520/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($115 to $175/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($125 to $295/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.8. Southwest Victoria

- Hay growers remain frustrated by the impact of October rain, which has disrupted winter crop harvest and haymaking across the region. While recent rainfall has improved soil moisture in some areas, more dry weather is needed to complete harvest and protect hay quality.
- Light showers are forecast most days into next week around Heywood, Hamilton and Colac. This is likely to continue limiting hay curing, baling and grain harvest opportunities.
- October maximum temperatures were 2 to 4 degrees above average across the region. Minimum temperatures were also above average to very much above average, with some parts of southwest Victoria recording its highest October minimum temperatures on record.
- Existing August to October rainfall deficiencies are expected to persist through November in south-west Victoria. Spring rainfall has been less than half the average in some areas, and hay production is well down. This may create local demand for hay despite increasing new season supply.
- A late frost on Sunday 8 November affected parts of the region. Production risks are expected to be patchy, with the greatest potential impact on crops in low-lying frost pockets.
- After a dry September, rainfall at Inverleigh has restored soil moisture, improved crop yield prospects and provided runoff into dams for the first time in two years. One local mixed farming business made silage in October from excess pasture without rain damage and may also cut barley for silage.
- Despite the improvement in seasonal conditions, growers are looking for warmer, drier days before windrowing begins in some parts next week. Further showers could delay activity and increase the risk of weather damage to standing crops and hay.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 ($150 to $290/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($320 to $480). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($90 to $140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($145 to $225/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.9. Southeast South Australia

- Some hay growers remain frustrated by the impact of October rain, which has interrupted haymaking and winter crop harvest. Naracoorte and Robe are likely to receive showers from Friday, reducing opportunities for hay curing, baling and harvest work.

- August to October rainfall deficiencies are expected to persist through November across the far southeast of South Australia. Spring rainfall has been less than half the average in some areas, and hay production is reported to be well down. This may create stronger local demand despite wet conditions affecting harvest activity.
- A late frost on Sunday 8 November affected parts of the region. The risk to production is expected to be patchy, with flowering winter crops and sensitive horticultural crops most exposed in low-lying frost pockets.
- Grain crops are generally reported to be in good condition, although some areas have been close to becoming too wet. Harvest is expected to begin in the third week of November, earlier than usual, with canola likely to be the first crop harvested. Final yields will depend on spring conditions and whether growers can access timely harvest windows.
- Wet hay combined with warm temperatures has caused some hay bale combustion in the region. This is both a product-loss and farm-safety risk. Producers should check hay moisture before baling, monitor stored bales closely and separate any suspect bales from sheds and other stored fodder.
- Hay production in the southeast has reportedly been limited, with growers from the Mid-North (Central SA Districts) moving fodder into the region. Stock numbers are building, and buyers are seeking shedded hay from outside the area. If the region returns to dry conditions, demand could strengthen quickly in the coming weeks, particularly for sound, well-stored hay.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($175 to $255/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($280 to $440/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($95 to $145/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($170 to $240/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.10. Central South Australia

- Hay growers remain concerned about the impact of October rain on quality, even where yields have been strong. Plenty of crop has been grown, but rain after cutting has reduced water-soluble carbohydrates and energy in some cereal hay. This is leaving growers with high volumes of lower-quality product and limited market options.
- Jamestown has had a fairly warm, sunny week. Conditions are expected to become cloudier and cooler from Saturday, but dry weather should continue to provide suitable opportunities for hay and grain harvest into next week. The Barossa Goldfields is also expected to turn cloudier and cooler from Friday, while remaining favourable for harvest activity.
- Industry feedback indicates cereal hay yields of 11 –12 tonnes per hectare in some areas, despite below-average rainfall for the year. However, high yields have not delivered higher returns where quality has been affected by rain. Hay that was cut and baled in dry windows has generally held up better.
- Export demand remains limited, with buyers selective on quality and indicative offers reported around $130 to $140 per tonne for cereal hay. This is below what many growers consider viable given

production, machinery and baling costs. Some hay has moved to Queensland, but freight can make Central South Australian hay less competitive than supplies closer to feedlots.

- Reported local cereal hay prices are around $160 per tonne, with some growers expecting values may need to fall further to generate cash flow. A more workable cereal hay midpoint is considered closer to $170 per tonne, while some growers would be satisfied with $205 per tonne for decent shedded hay.
- Lucerne values remain stronger, with reports of around $415 per tonne locally. Premium lucerne from the south-east has been purchased at up to $500 per tonne for processing into small squares. Vetch is competing directly with lucerne, with values around $340 per tonne.
- Hay sheds are full across much of the region, and significant volumes remain outside. This is limiting grower appetite to bale more cereal hay or straw unless a buyer is confirmed. Straw values near $175 per tonne are considered reasonable, but storage remains the main constraint.
- Hay bale fires have been reported east of Freeling, including around Sandilands and Lameroo. These incidents are linked to hay being baled before it was fully cured. Wet bales stored in warm conditions can heat rapidly and pose a serious fire risk. Producers should test moisture before baling, monitor stored hay closely and keep suspect bales away from sheds and other fodder.
- Some exporters are investigating straw for the Korean market, but demand remains uncertain. Lower-grade cereal hay with some straw content may be more attractive to buyers than straight straw, particularly while cereal hay supplies remain high.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -35 ($125 to $215/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($400 to $520/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($130 to $220/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.11. Southwest Western Australia

- Harvest activity is expected to continue through November. As cereal crops are taken off, growers will be assessing whether any remaining standing crops or crop residues are suitable for hay or straw. Dry conditions will be important to protect fodder quality and allow baling to proceed without weather damage.
- August to October rainfall deficiencies are expected to persist through November along parts of Western Australia's west coast. Soil moisture deficits and above-average temperatures are increasing pressure on pasture growth, irrigation water and on-farm feed reserves. This may support demand for hay if dry conditions continue into summer.
- Manjimup is expected to be dry and cloudy from Friday, with no rainfall forecast. Katanning may receive light rainfall on Saturday before drier conditions return next week. These falls are unlikely to materially improve pasture growth or root zone moisture. The region is reaching a key point for useful late-season rainfall.
- Cereal hay production remains closely tied to expected returns. Some growers are producing hay only for confirmed contracts or their own processing needs, rather than committing larger areas to the open market.

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- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($180 to $240/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($540 to $740/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($110 to $170/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($220 to $270/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.12. Northwest Tasmania

- Fodder supplies are low early in the season, with dry conditions limiting pasture growth and new season hay production. While there is a healthy carryover of old-crop silage, hay, especially cereal and pasture, is in shorter supply and demand for silage is steady as an alternative feed source.
- Low-cost Victorian hay may find some demand in Tasmania, particularly if dry conditions continue. However, freight and biosecurity requirements make imported fodder expensive. Sea freight alone has been reported at around $62 per bale, with significant costs to move trucks across Bass Strait. This will lift the delivered price of Victorian hay into the state.
- Some Tasmanian buyers are expected to seek Victorian cereal hay in coming weeks, with interest reported for new season and sound shedded old-season hay. Meadow and grass (Pasture) hay are also in short supply, with prices holding at their highest levels since July 2025. Promised hay volumes are not always becoming available, as some growers are directing crops into silage instead.
- New season lucerne silage is moving, and more silage is being made than initially expected. A further useful rainfall event would support pasture growth and improve prospects for hay later in the season. Without it, hay availability is likely to remain tight and livestock producers may need to rely more heavily on silage, straw and imported fodder.
- Root-zone soil moisture remains very much below average in parts of Tasmania. Above-average October temperatures and reduced water availability are adding pressure to feed reserves. August to October rainfall deficiencies are expected to persist through November, with no clear indication of wetter or drier conditions from December to February.
- Smithton is expected to remain mild, dry and windy this week. Wind may increase moisture loss from pastures and soils. Waratah is expected to become cooler next week, with overnight minimums as low as 2°C and an increased frost risk.
- Irrigated lucerne is expected to perform well where water is available. However, growers are concerned about dam levels and whether water allocations will remain available through summer. Some irrigators have been advised to use water within shorter timeframes, reflecting concern that summer rainfall may not replenish storages.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($260 to $300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +5 ($300 to $390/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +10 ($100 to $140/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +80 ($300 to $360/t). Prices increase this week.

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