Dairy Australia

Hay Report

14 August 2026

Table of Contents

1. Summary 2
1.1. Driving Prices Up........ 2
1.2. Driving Prices Down 2
1.3. National Weather Summary and Outlook 2
2. Regional commentary........ 3
2.1. Atherton Tablelands........ 3
2.2. Darling Downs 3
2.3. North Coast NSW 4
2.4. Central West NSW 4
2.5. Bega Valley........ 5
2.6. Goulburn/Murray Valley 5
2.7. Gippsland 6
2.8. Southwest Victoria........ 6
2.9. Southeast South Australia 7
2.10. Central South Australia 7
2.11. Southwest Western Australia........ 8
2.12. Northwest Tasmania 8

AFIA
Australian Fodder Industry Association

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

1. Summary

1.1. Driving Prices Up

- Wet conditions on dairy farms are increasing demand for dry, shedded hay, including Mallee fodder and vetch.
- Renewed export interest is creating fresh interest in Victorian hay as crops move towards an early harvest.
- Tasmanian buyers are starting to plan for new-season hay following the latest long-term forecast, which predicts dry conditions and may increase demand.
- Strong rainfall has improved grower confidence across Victoria and southern New South Wales, helping growers hold current asking prices.

1.2. Driving Prices Down

- High-yielding oat crops across northern Victoria point to greater new-season fodder supply, with some crops expected to produce about two tonnes per hectare above average.
- Unsold hay remains abundant in sheds across most regions, outweighing the recent lift in demand from dairy farmers.
- Better-quality Rhodes grass production and movement from North Coast NSW may add to available grass hay supplies in the north.
- Tasmanian straw has rebalanced this week, while large volumes of current-season hay remain available in most regions, keeping prices flat despite new-season buying enquiries.

1.3. National Weather Summary and Outlook

- From September to November, rainfall is likely to be below average across much of the agricultural production regions of southern and mid to north-eastern Australia.
- There is also an increased chance of unusually low rainfall for parts of south-west Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and coastal regions of central and northern Queensland.
- For the same period, there is an increased chance of exceeding average rainfall over much of Western Australia extending into the interior of the Northern Territory and South Australia. The likelihood is highest in October and November.
- Maximum and minimum temperatures are highly likely to be above average across most of southern Australia during September to November, with northern Australia more likely to see average to cooler-than-average daytime temperatures. Periods of frost are still possible.
- 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.

2. Regional commentary

2.1. Atherton Tablelands

- Above-average rainfall across much of Queensland has driven strong pasture growth and kept livestock demand firm. High livestock prices are encouraging producers to retain or buy stock while feed is available.
- Continued wet conditions are disrupting hay operations around Atherton. Light daily showers, limited drying windows and wet paddocks are delaying access, planting and cutting, while increasing the risk of water-affected hay.
- Some oat crops have been cut, but harvest remains incomplete and rust is emerging in some paddocks. Reports indicate some hay is being downgraded to mulch because conditions have reduced quality.
- Mareeba is warmer and drier than Atherton, giving growers better opportunities to work paddocks. However, many growers remain behind schedule after a prolonged wet period.
- Hay movement south appears to be increasing, including large square bales. Growers are also retaining lower-grade hay for on-farm livestock use, particularly with a drier spring forecast possible for coastal central and northern Queensland.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 ($200 to $300/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.

2.2. Darling Downs

- Light rainfall forecast will provide little benefit to crops or declining root zone soil moisture. Growers need meaningful rainfall soon to maintain yield potential.
- Dry, sunny conditions around Goondiwindi are allowing fieldwork to continue, but cooler nights and limited rainfall are slowing crop development. Winter crops remain behind normal growth following the late seasonal break.
- Soil moisture is declining across south-east Queensland and northern New South Wales. Irrigated crop prospects are also being watched closely as water storages fall.
- Hay production is expected to be lower if dry conditions continue, which is likely to increase reliance on Victorian, South Australian and southern New South Wales hay. Freight remains a major part of delivered hay costs into Queensland and northern New South Wales.
- Reports indicate buyers are prepared to source better-quality southern hay despite higher transport costs. Lucerne supplies remain available in southern regions, although premium-quality lines are less common than lower-grade product.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($230 to $430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($600 to $700/t). Prices remain steady this week.:
- Straw: +/-0 ($150 to $200/t). Prices remain steady this week.

- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($220 to $270/t). Prices remain steady 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 inspecting the fodder before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.3. North Coast NSW

- Conditions remain mixed across the region. Ongoing rain around Lismore is delaying fieldwork, with more than 10mm of rain per day forecast from Saturday. Growers need a more reliable dry period to cut and bale hay at the required quality.
- Rhodes grass cutting is beginning where paddocks are dry enough. Reports indicate product is moving north to the Atherton Tablelands, where wet weather has limited production of quality hay.
- Stored hay from last season is close to being cleared in some areas. This is maintaining demand for new-season Rhodes grass hay, with reported values around $360 per tonne.
- Good ground cover is meeting much of the immediate on-farm feed requirement, so there is no widespread urgency from buyers at present. However, available carryover stocks are reducing.
- Further inland around Glen Innes and across the southern and western parts of the region, light rainfall and frosts will do little to replenish soil moisture. Declining root zone moisture remains a concern for winter crop and hay yield prospects.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($300 to $350/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($400 to $500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($120 to $160/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($230 to $310/t). Prices remain steady 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 inspecting the fodder before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.4. Central West NSW

- While some rain is expected near Goulburn from Sunday, dry conditions are likely to continue across many hay-growing areas.
- Recent rainfall around Parkes and Forbes has been followed by clear, very cold conditions, with overnight temperatures forecast to fall to around 1°C. Frosts have been common across NSW but are generally reported as less severe and less frequent than normal.
- Growers are managing increased fungal disease risk in cereal and canola paddocks, with some applying fungicide up to three times. Weed control is also underway, adding to crop input costs.
- Limited rainfall and a lower chance of above-average rainfall from September may constrain pasture and crop growth, particularly in the eastern parts of the region.
- A dry spring would reduce hay yield potential and limit new-season supply. Buyers may need to seek hay from other regions if local production falls short.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($300 to $390/t). Prices remain steady this week.

- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($410 to $540/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($140 to $200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($215 to $315/t). Prices remain steady 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 inspecting the fodder before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.5. Bega Valley

- Recent falls in farming areas are lifting confidence, with farmers describing the latest rain as both adequate and timely for crops, pastures and soil moisture. Rand in southern NSW had a welcome 37mm of rain early week.
- According to the Bureau of Meteorology, frosts have been prevalent during late July and early August in eastern South Australia, northern Victoria and NSW but growers point out they have been fewer than normal and not severe.
- Some local growers were spraying for both fungal diseases and controlling weeds. Paddocks are being sprayed with fungicide up to three times as disease pressure hits canola and cereals this season.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($350 to $470/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($485 to $625/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($240 to $290/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($265 to $395/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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

2.6. Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Recent rainfall has further boosted confidence across northern Victoria. Falls of 40mm to 74mm of rain were recorded last week across key farming areas like Benalla, Bendigo, Echuca and Rochester.
- Oat hay crops around Elmore, Rochester and nearby districts are powering ahead. Some growers expect yields closer to seven tonnes per hectare, compared with an average of five tonnes per hectare. If favourable conditions continue, there could be plenty of cereal hay available this season.
- Soil moisture profiles are now full in many paddocks. Some low-lying areas remain wet or waterlogged, which may cause localised crop losses. Spraying has also been delayed until paddocks dry enough for machinery access.
- Containment feeding is underway on dairy farms to reduce bogging and paddock damage. This is supporting demand for stored mid- to high-quality cereal hay from the Mallee and north central Victoria. Vetch hay is also proving popular for feeding milking cows through the wet winter.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($225 to $345/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($410 to $570/t). Prices remain steady this week.

- Straw: +/-0 ($115 to $135/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($170 to $330/t). Prices remain steady 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 feeding, testing, and viewing fodder before purchase to ensure feed quality.

2.7. Gippsland

- Recent rainfall of 25mm to 50mm has kept soil moisture profiles full across the region. Crops are well placed heading into spring, and growers are more confident about hay yield prospects.
- Some growers believe one further useful rainfall event in September could carry crops through to harvest and produce yields above last season.
- Only light rainfall is forecast over the next eight days. Timely spring rainfall will remain important for pasture growth and hay production.
- Small square cereal and pasture hay continues to find buyers. Lucerne is less available, with growers reporting limited sales activity and few tonnes being offered.
- Growers are clearing old-crop hay ahead of what could be a strong new season. Rainfall during spring cutting remains a quality risk, as wet windrows can be difficult to cure and may be harder to sell into domestic and export markets.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($255 to $405). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($490 to $600/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($135 to $195/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($155 to $325/t). Prices remain steady 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 the feed before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.8. Southwest Victoria

- Wet paddocks are creating difficult conditions for dairy farms across the region. Containment feeding is being used to limit cattle traffic and reduce bogging, creating some additional demand for hay.
- This demand is primarily being met by hay from northern Victoria. However, volumes required are small compared with the large quantity of unsold hay still stored in sheds.
- South of Hamilton, dams are full and creeks and drains are flowing. Some paddocks remain inaccessible to four-wheel drive vehicles. Growers near Simpson report exceptionally wet conditions.
- Soil moisture profiles are full, and pastures are in good condition. Farmers report promising feed in paddocks and adequate stock water, although the forecast for a drier spring remains a concern.
- Spring cutting conditions will be important for new-season hay. Rainfall falling on cut windrows can delay curing, affect quality and make hay harder to market to domestic and export buyers.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($215 to $355/t). Prices remain steady this week.

- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($400 to $560). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($120 to $170/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($175 to $255/t). Prices remain steady 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 the feed before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.9. Southeast South Australia

- Recent rainfall has kept soil moisture profiles full across much of the region. Crops and pastures are well placed heading into spring, and growers are more confident about hay yield prospects.
- Some growers believe one more useful rainfall event in September could carry crops through to harvest and deliver yields above last season.
- Growers report frosts have been less frequent and less severe than usual, limiting concern for hay and grain crops so far.
- Wet conditions have increased fungal disease, weed and pest management work in cereal and canola crops. Many growers are applying fungicide more than once, while also managing weeds and pests such as green peach aphids. Timely spraying will be important to protect crop yield and hay quality.
- Some areas received more than 100mm of rain over the weekend, causing localised flooding. While the rainfall has added to soil moisture reserves, waterlogged paddocks may delay spraying and affect crops in low-lying areas.
- The outlook indicates below-average rainfall may be more likely from September to November across much of the agricultural zone. For hay growers, a drier spring would assist haymaking, provided crops have enough stored moisture to maintain yield.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($210 to $290/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($360 to $520/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($125 to $175/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($190 to $260/t). Prices remain steady 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 inspecting the fodder before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.10. Central South Australia

- Widespread recent rain has added to already favourable soil moisture. Crops and pastures are carrying good reserves into spring, and growers are considering locking in hay sales before harvest.
- Growers say a further timely rainfall event in September could be enough to finish many hay crops well and put yields ahead of last season.
- Reports indicate frosts have been lighter and less frequent than usual. At this stage, frost damage is not a major concern for hay crops.

- Disease, weeds and insect pests remain key crop-management issues. Cereal and canola growers are making repeated fungicide applications in some paddocks, while also treating weeds and green peach aphids. Crop health through spring will be important for both hay yield and quality.
- Some parts of South Australia received more than 100mm of rainfall over the weekend, causing localised flooding. While this has added to moisture reserves, saturated or flooded paddocks may limit access for spraying and affect crops in low-lying areas.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($245 to $305/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($430 to $550/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($160 to $250/t). Prices remain steady 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 inspecting the fodder before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.11. Southwest Western Australia

- Conditions remain mixed across the region. Recent rainfall has improved crops in some areas, but falls have been patchy. This variation means hay yield prospects will differ sharply between districts.
- Soil moisture is declining in parts of south-west Western Australia, and the seasonal outlook remains dry. Many crops are now entering stages where follow-up rainfall will be needed to support grain fill and maintain yield potential. Recent rain has been welcome but may not be enough to substantially change the outlook in drier areas.
- Oaten hay crops around Northam are reported to be looking reasonable, although they have not moved ahead as strongly as growers would like. Hay cutting is expected to begin from mid-September in earlier paddocks, with later crops likely to be cut closer to October.
- Demand for hay is evident in parts of the state, including around Albany. Some growers have already sold their available hay, while others are still holding last season’s wheaten hay and seeking export opportunities. This points to continued demand for suitable hay, particularly where dry conditions limit new-season supply.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($190 to $280/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.

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 inspecting the fodder before purchase to ensure its quality.

2.12. Northwest Tasmania

- Conditions remain mixed across the region. Showers around Smithton and Waratah are helping pasture and crop growth, but rainfall has been patchy elsewhere. Some northern Midlands paddocks that are usually wet are now dry enough to drive through, showing that further rainfall is needed ahead of spring.

- The fodder market remains mostly unchanged. Most hay and straw has already been committed, with one operator estimating that about 90 per cent of available supply is pre-purchased.
- There has been some enquiry for silage and fodder, but buying activity remains steady rather than urgent as dairy cows calve and farms manage seasonal workloads. More enquiries are focused on planning fodder needs for next season, rather than securing current supplies.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($160 to $200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($290 to $370/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +15 ($100 to $120/t). Prices increased this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($240 to $260/t). Prices remain steady 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 inspecting the fodder before purchase to ensure its quality

1800 004 377
dairyaustralia.com.au

Disclaimer
The content of this publication is provided for general information only and has not been prepared to address your specific circumstances. We do not guarantee the completeness, accuracy or timeliness of the information.