Dairy Australia

Hay Report

20 November 2026



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Australian Fodder Industry Association

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1. Summary

1.1. Driving Prices Up

- Northwest Tasmania has limited local hay available, with farms building fodder reserves ahead of summer. Victorian hay may provide supply, but freight will add to delivered costs.
- Southeast South Australia has produced limited hay, with buyers seeking shedded fodder from outside the region as stock numbers build.
- Repeated rainfall is delaying cutting, curing and baling across eastern and southern regions. This may reduce the volume of sound, well-stored hay available.
- Low export returns may reduce future hay plantings in Central South Australia and southwest Western Australia, particularly where open-market production does not cover costs.

1.2. Driving Prices Down

- Recent rainfall has improved pasture growth and on-farm feed availability in the Darling Downs, North Coast NSW, Gippsland and parts of Victoria. This is allowing some livestock producers to delay hay purchases.
- High hay yields, full sheds and new-season cereal hay entering the market are increasing supply across the Goulburn-Murray Valley, Gippsland and southwest Victoria.
- Export demand remains weak in Central South Australia, the Goulburn-Murray Valley and southwest Western Australia, with lower exporter bids weighing on cereal hay values.
- Rain-affected hay is being sold where growers need to clear stock, adding lower-quality hay to an already quiet domestic market.

1.3. National Weather Summary and Outlook

- December to February rainfall is likely to be above average across much of inland south Queensland and eastern New South Wales.
- Below average rainfall is likely for most of northern Australia and Tasmania from December to February.
- For most other areas, there is no clear signal for either wetter or drier conditions, meaning there are roughly equal chances of above or below average rainfall.
- Root-zone soil moisture remains well above average across central and eastern Australia following recent rainfall.
- Australia's total water storage is currently 70%. Storages across the Murray–Darling Basin are currently at 68%, slightly higher than this time last year.
- Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be above average across most of Australia. The elevated heat risk will become increasingly important for summer-crop management, increasing evaporative stress and soil moisture deficits in regions experiencing rainfall deficiencies.

  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

- Warm conditions continue, with showers expected to bring up to 15 mm of rainfall on Friday. Wet weather is forecast through the weekend before clearing from Tuesday, which may limit field access and crop drying.
- Local growers are working through late corn harvest and lupin drying in short weather windows. Recent drizzle has interrupted drying more than the usual for this time of year.
- Lupin yields have varied widely across the district. Reports indicate overly wet soils and retained seed may be contributing to lower-than-expected results in some crops.
- Grazing remains available for livestock, with some producers planning to graze animals on remaining crop residue once harvest is complete. This reduces immediate reliance on purchased hay.
- High fertiliser costs remain a concern, with urea recently reported around $900–$920 per tonne. This may make fodder-crop planting decisions harder, despite the need for reliable farm income.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 ($240 to $340/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

- Severe thunderstorms and widespread rainfall across south-east Queensland and northern New South Wales have delayed harvest and restricted paddock access. Minor and initial flood warnings remain in place across affected catchments.
- Rainfall has improved root-zone soil moisture, summer crop prospects and pasture growth. This points to better on-farm feed availability into summer, although deeper soil moisture remains below average and further rainfall is needed.
- Wet conditions may affect winter-crop quality where harvest is delayed, with disease risk increasing in standing crops. Hay and other harvest operations will remain weather dependent.
- Dalby is forecast to receive intermittent rainfall into next week, including up to 7 mm of rainfall on Tuesday, alongside temperatures in the mid-30s. This may continue to interrupt hay operations.
- Toowoomba is expected to see intermittent rain, with up to 9 mm of rainfall forecast on Tuesday. Conditions are forecast to become much warmer from next Monday, which may improve drying opportunities if rainfall eases.
- Hay movement from the Atherton Tablelands into the Darling Downs has slowed. Buyers are managing wet conditions and waiting to assess pasture growth before committing to 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.

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- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($300 to $400/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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2.3. North Coast NSW

- Severe thunderstorms and widespread rainfall across northern New South Wales have improved root-zone soil moisture, summer crop prospects and pasture growth. Further rainfall is still needed to rebuild below-average deeper soil moisture.
- Minor and initial flood warnings across northern New South Wales are creating paddock access issues and delaying harvest activity. Wet conditions also increase crop disease risk where winter crops remain unharvested.
- Lismore has had a clearer week, allowing harvest activity to resume. Showers may return from Saturday, with up to 15 mm of rainfall forecast on both Tuesday and Wednesday, likely creating further interruptions.
- Similar conditions are expected around Kyogle. Continued damp weather at cutting and drying stages is likely to reduce hay quality and limit reliable baling opportunities.
- Buyers are managing current rainfall and assessing pasture growth before placing further hay orders. This is slowing short-term demand while on-farm feed prospects improve.
- 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

- The region has remained dry after below-average rainfall since September. Low soil moisture and higher temperatures have increased reliance on irrigation and limited pasture and fodder-crop growth.
- Rainfall is forecast across the region this weekend and into Monday. Parkes may receive up to 20 mm of rainfall on Friday and Monday, while Condobolin may receive up to 30 mm of rainfall on Friday and a further 9 mm on Monday.
- The forecast rain is welcome after a dry spring and could improve soil moisture ahead of summer. However, storms and showers may interrupt the final stages of hay and grain harvest.
- Harvest is nearing completion around Forbes. Reports indicate reasonable oaten and vetch hay yields, with supplies now stored, while irrigated lucerne production is gradually building.
- Irrigators will remain busy through summer to maintain lucerne and prepare for new fodder crops. If dry conditions persist, demand for fodder may increase, although available hay may not meet higher quality requirements.

- Prices remain steady this week, with slow demand limiting movement despite the region's dry conditions.
- 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.

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

- Rain is forecast from Friday, with up to 15 mm of rainfall expected. Showers may continue each day through to Wednesday. Similar conditions are forecast further inland around Cooma.
- The rainfall will be welcome after a dry start to spring, but repeated showers may limit hay cutting, curing and baling opportunities.
- Conditions remain mixed across the region. Strong livestock prices, feed reserves and crop prospects are boosting confidence in some areas, while dry districts continue to face feed shortages and limited planting opportunities.
- Local producers are being encouraged to make decisions based on current farm conditions, rather than relying on seasonal forecasts. Warm temperatures and ongoing dryness are increasing pressure on paddocks, livestock and feed supplies.
- Any useful rainfall could support pasture recovery and reduce the immediate need for purchased hay. However, if follow-up rainfall is limited, demand for fodder may strengthen as summer approaches.
- Hay prices are steady again this week, with market demand remaining slow.
- 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.

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 and isolated hail have disrupted winter-crop harvest, horticulture activity and hay operations across northern Victoria. Improved soil moisture has supported strong spring pasture growth in some areas.
- Elmore may receive up to 35 mm of rainfall on Friday, while Kerang could receive up to 25 mm. Lighter falls are possible through the weekend before drier conditions return from Monday. Wet soils, further

rain and cool overnight temperatures will delay cutting and baling and increase quality risk for hay still in paddocks.

- Some Elmore paddocks remain uncut. Further rainfall may reduce hay quality, although some cereal hay has avoided rain damage despite higher fibre levels this season.
- Oaten hay harvest costs have reportedly risen about 30 per cent this season, with diesel prices above $2.75 per litre in northern Victoria.
- Export buying remains subdued, with contracted prices reportedly around $240 per tonne delivered to plant for top-grade hay and $150 per tonne delivered to plant for lower grades.
- Pasture and cereal hay prices have eased slightly this week as high yields, full sheds and low export offers keep demand subdued. Some growers are selling rain-affected hay where they need to move stock, while others are storing hay and waiting for around $220 per tonne ex-farm.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 ($155 to $275/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: -5 ($120 to $280/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 feeding, testing, and viewing fodder before purchase to ensure feed quality.

2.7. Gippsland

- Recent rainfall and isolated hail have disrupted winter-crop harvest and horticulture activity across Victoria. Improved soil moisture is supporting strong spring pasture growth, but more rainfall will delay fieldwork.
- Warragul and Sale are forecast to receive up to 30 mm of rainfall on Friday, with showers likely to continue through Monday. This will pause hay harvest activity and may slow drying where hay is already cut.
- Most Gippsland dairy farms have received enough rainfall to support good silage and hay volumes and extend grazing. As a result, domestic demand for stored hay remains difficult to find.
- New-season cereal hay is entering the market as sheds fill, with some hay likely to be stored outside. This is adding to available supply and may continue to weigh on local hay demand.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 ($185 to $335). 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: -5 ($120 to $290/t). Prices decrease this week.

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2.8. Southwest Victoria

- August to October rainfall deficiencies are likely to persist through November in south-west Victoria. However, recent rainfall has eased soil moisture deficits in some areas and supported spring pasture growth.
- October minimum temperatures were well above average across parts of south-west Victoria, with some areas recording their warmest October nights on record. Continued warm conditions may support drying opportunities when rainfall clears, although soil moisture and pasture growth remain variable across the region.
- Recent rainfall and isolated hail have disrupted winter-crop harvest and horticulture activity. Further rainfall is likely to cause additional delays to hay harvesting and baling.
- Hamilton is forecast to receive up to 15 mm of rain on Friday, followed by light showers through to Monday. Colac may receive up to 20 mm of rain on Friday, with further rainfall possible. Hay harvest is likely to pause while conditions remain wet.
- Domestic demand for stored hay remains difficult to find. Some enquiry from Tasmania may move a small volume of new-season cereal hay, but sheds are filling and local demand remains subdued.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 ($145 to $285/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: -5 ($140 to $220/t). Prices decrease this week.

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2.9. Southeast South Australia

- August to October rainfall deficiencies are likely to persist through November across the far south-east of South Australia. Recent showers are improving conditions in some areas but continue to interrupt hay operations.
- Naracoorte is forecast to receive daily showers before conditions dry from Monday, with cooler temperatures expected. Robe is also expecting showers and cooler conditions. Hay cutting and baling opportunities will remain limited until paddocks and curing hay have time to dry.
- Wet hay combined with warm temperatures has led to reports of bale combustion in the region. This creates a serious product-loss and farm-safety risk. Check hay moisture before baling, monitor stored bales closely and move suspect bales away from sheds and other stored fodder.
- Hay production in the Southeast has reportedly been limited. Growers from the Mid-North are moving fodder into the region as stock numbers build and buyers seek shedded hay from outside the area.
- If drier conditions return, demand could strengthen quickly in coming weeks, particularly for high energy, well-stored hay.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 ($170 to $250/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($280 to $440/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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- 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

- Domestic demand for stored hay remains difficult to find. Export demand is also weak, with lower buying interest from North Asia and aggressive pricing from international competitors reducing exporter bids.
- Large exporters are reportedly offering contracted growers around $240 per tonne delivered to plant for top-grade hay, down about $75 per tonne, and $150 per tonne delivered to plant for lower-grade hay, down about $30 per tonne.
- Grower response to lower prices has been mixed. Some growers with rain-affected, lower-quality hay already baled are delivering where they need to clear stock or cannot find a better market. Others are holding hay in storage and waiting for prices to improve.
- Exporters and growers report a difficult market, with large volumes of hay made and limited buyers confirmed. Weak returns are creating concern about whether hay prices will cover production costs. If these conditions continue, some growers may reduce hay plantings or exit hay production, which could tighten supply in future seasons.
- Hay harvest is well underway. Jamestown is expecting some late-week showers, followed by hot conditions before a cooler start to next week. Temperatures are forecast to rise again from Wednesday. Kapunda is expecting a similar pattern. Aside from short weather interruptions, harvest should continue with limited disruption.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 ($120 to $210/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 is in full swing across Western Australia's grain belt. Periodic rainfall has caused local delays for broadacre crops, but generally dry conditions remain favourable for harvest, logistics and grain quality retention.
- August to October rainfall deficiencies are likely to persist through November along parts of Western Australia's west coast. Soil moisture deficits and above-average temperatures are also increasing irrigation demand and pressure on water supplies.
- Manjimup is expecting showers late this week, followed by lighter, drizzly conditions through to Wednesday. Temperatures will cool considerably. The rainfall is not expected to replenish soil moisture or fill dams ahead of year-end sowing.

- Katanning is forecast to receive sparse showers on Friday and Saturday, clearing by Sunday. Conditions should be slightly cooler but are not expected to disrupt harvest operations.
- 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.
- Most hay in the region is produced for export. Low new season offers are causing concern among growers and continue to limit confidence in producing hay for the open market.
- 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

- August to October rainfall deficiencies are likely to persist through November across much of Tasmania. Below-average root-zone soil moisture, warmer conditions and reduced water allocations continue to affect key production areas. A dry outlook is also forecast for December to February.
- Smithton is forecast to receive steady rainfall through to the middle of next week, while Waratah could receive around 30mm of rain on Sunday followed by daily showers. Mild temperatures should support soil moisture uptake. These falls may improve sentiment and begin to ease dry soil conditions, but more sustained rainfall is needed to rebuild pasture and hay production potential.
- Local demand for hay remains strong, but supplies are difficult to find. Many farms are looking to build fodder reserves ahead of summer, including lower-quality hay, due to concerns about hot, windy conditions, drought and fire.
- Unlike some southern mainland regions where sheds are full, limited hay is available in north- and mid- Tasmania. Many producers are holding onto existing fodder stocks and seeking additional supply through online platforms and local networks.
- Hay resellers are looking to Victoria for cereal hay, where supply is more available. This may provide some relief for local buyers, although freight and delivered prices will remain important.
- Contractors report the market is at a standstill between vendor expectations and buyer willingness to pay. Attempts to lift prices by around 10 per cent have met buyer resistance, despite demand for cereal hay.
- Some local cereal crops are still green and at the milky stage, unlike more advanced crops on the mainland. Circular Head is cutting significant volumes of silage and hay, while areas further south have produced less due to dry, windy conditions.
- Forecast rainfall of up to 50mm of rain on Monday may improve sentiment. However, growers should remain cautious about assuming these falls will create significant new hay supply. Recent scattered showers have eased immediate pressure on buyers, but fodder availability remains tight.
- No change to pricing this week.

- Cereal hay: +/-0 ($260 to $300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 ($300 to $390/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 ($100 to $140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 ($300 to $360/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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