

Hay Report

30 October 2026



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1. Summary

1.1. Driving Prices Up

- Repeated rainfall across southern hay regions is damaging hay in windrows, reducing colour and feed value. This may widen the gap between premium hay and downgraded lines.
- Atherton Tablelands haymaking has been interrupted by severe thunderstorms and rainfall. Most recent cuts are already committed, leaving little uncommitted hay available.
- Some growers in South Australia and Western Australia may reduce hay offered to export or open markets where returns do not cover production, handling and freight costs.
- Dry conditions, low soil moisture and irrigation constraints in parts of Tasmania and Western Australia may affect fodder production and stored-hay demand later in the season.

1.2. Driving Prices Down

- Continuous rainfall across Queensland and northern New South Wales is improving pasture prospects and reducing immediate supplementary hay buying and demand for southern hay.
- Cereal hay prices have eased in Central South Australia as rain affects hay quality and weaker northern buying reduces confidence in interstate demand.
- Strong oaten hay yields and substantial fodder availability in the Goulburn-Murray Valley are adding to local supply and contributing to lower prices in that region.

1.3. National Weather Summary and Outlook

- Low pressure troughs, thunderstorms and cold fronts brought widespread rainfall across eastern, northern and southern Australia last week.
- Weekly falls of 10mm to 100mm of rain were recorded across much of Queensland, northern and eastern NSW, southern South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and southwest Western Australia.
- October rainfall to date has been well above average across parts of inland Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, north-east New South Wales and eastern Queensland.
- Root-zone soil moisture has improved substantially across central Australia, Queensland and northern New South Wales following recent rainfall.
- November to January rainfall is likely to be above average across much of Western and central Australia, South Australia, southern Queensland and north-eastern New South Wales.
- Below-average rainfall is likely across most of Tasmania and parts of southern Victoria from November to January.
- Warmer-than-average days and nights are likely across most of Australia through November to January, increasing evaporation and moisture loss where rainfall is limited.

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

- Severe thunderstorms and widespread rainfall have continued across key production areas, limiting dry windows for haymaking.
- Some producers are grazing short oat and barley crops that are unlikely to make suitable hay. Other growers may make the same call where wet weather has restricted crop growth or prevented timely cutting and baling.
- These crops can still provide useful short-term cattle feed on farm. However, grazing failed hay crops does not add saleable hay to the market.
- Much of the hay cut during the past three weeks has already been committed to contracted buyers. Contractors are continuing to seek additional supply.
- With limited dry weather and strong contracted demand, little uncommitted hay is likely to be available from the Atherton Tablelands in the near term.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$280/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

- Widespread rain has halted cereal harvest across southern Queensland and northern New South Wales. Headers are parked while wet conditions continue, and further rainfall is forecast into next week.
- Harvesting areas received significant rainfall last week, and this ongoing rain is reducing cereal grain weight and quality. Some drought-affected cereal crops may now be cut for hay, which could add to local hay availability once paddocks dry enough for cutting and baling.
- Flooding and wet roads are disrupting freight and slowing deliveries. Despite this, reduced grain movement has not prompted stronger hay buying activity.
- Rain has improved pasture confidence across northern grazing regions, while both easing soil moisture deficits and improving summer crop prospects.
- Recent cattle sales at Blackall and Emerald were cancelled due to wet-weather road disruptions. Graziers are also holding stock in anticipation of pasture growth, which is reducing immediate demand for supplementary hay.
- Hay prices remain highest in the north, reflecting earlier drought demand from Queensland and northern New South Wales. However, improved seasonal conditions and potential local hay production may reduce the need for hay freighted from southern states, particularly outside existing supply agreements.
- 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

- Rain has delayed cereal harvest across northern New South Wales, with crops losing weight and quality as wet conditions persist. Headers are parked across the wider region, and further rain is forecast into next week.
- In the northern inland, patchy storms have brought more than 100mm of rain in some areas over two weeks. The rain has replenished empty farm dams and improved prospects for green cereal crops, while delaying decisions on oaten hay already cut and lying on the ground.
- In Lismore, a fortnight of rain has halted most hay harvesting. Crops ready for cutting have lodged in wet conditions, and growers are now trying to cut available hay and salvage quality before more rain arrives.
- Month-to-date rainfall of 150–250mm across northern demand regions has caused local flooding and disrupted road access. Wet roads are restricting hay freight and slowing deliveries, but this has not lifted market activity.
- The opening summer rainfall and additional hay from droughted cereal crops are expected to reduce demand for interstate hay outside existing long-term supply arrangements. High northern hay values continue to ease further south where supply is more plentiful.
- 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

- Fodder producers have returned to harvest following patchy rain over the past seven to 10 days. Clear, warm conditions this week have been ideal for cutting and baling, but the window may be short.
- Forbes and Parkes are clear and warm this week, with daytime temperatures in the mid to high 20s and cool overnight temperatures. Up to 25mm of rain is forecast from Saturday, followed by light daily showers into the following week.
- Condobolin and West Wyalong are reaching the low 30s before showers arrive. Around 20mm of rainfall is forecast for Saturday.
- The forecast rain may improve soil moisture and summer pasture prospects. However, it could delay hay curing and increase the risk of weather damage to hay already cut or on the ground.

- According to the BOM, this region continues to rely on stored soil moisture following below-average rainfall during September and October to date. If conditions continue to remain dry and temperatures rise, growers will become increasingly reliant on irrigation and may see restricted growth and lower resilience heading into summer. Evaporative stress and moisture deficits during flowering can affect yield potential if not offset by irrigation.
- Hay demand for Central West fodder is expected to ease as ongoing October rainfall improves pasture confidence in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales. This may reduce the need for hay to move north from the Central West.
- 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.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 (\$240 to \$330/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$360 to \$480/t). Prices decrease 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

- A few clear days this week are giving growers a chance to cut, cure and bale hay before rain arrives on Saturday and continues into next week.
- The forecast rain may replenish very dry soil moisture and create better conditions for new-season pasture and fodder growth. However, it may interrupt curing and baling for hay already cut. Check that hay is fully cured before storage.
- Bega recorded 18mm of rainfall last week. For cereal hay already cut and in windrows, this is the second rain event, with quality damage likely. Growers with carry-over quality hay may review their asking prices as the gap between premium and weather-affected hay widens.
- Rain across northern New South Wales and southern Queensland, along with additional hay from droughted cereal crops, is likely to reduce interstate demand for hay from southern regions.
- Some local buyers have delayed purchases, expecting more new-season supply and lower prices. With demand currently flat and wet weather affecting hay on the ground, it remains unclear whether those expectations will be met.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 (\$310 to \$430/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$430 to \$570/t). Prices decrease 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

- Clear days and cool nights are giving growers a short harvest window this week. Shepparton is expected to reach 28°C on Friday before rain arrives, with up to 6mm of rainfall forecast on Saturday and further showers possible into next week. Echuca and surrounding districts are expected to see similar conditions.
- Growers are working to bale hay before the rain. A large area of recently cut hay across northern Victoria and southern New South Wales was exposed to last weekend's rainfall. The effect on hay quality is still being assessed. Hay cut and left in windrows during the rain is likely to have some weather damage. Once paddocks dry, some hay may need to be raked again before baling.
- Some crops were baled ahead of the rain and are likely to enter the local market. Reports from Moama indicate strong oaten hay yields in some paddocks, at around eight to 10 tonnes per hectare. There is already a substantial volume of fodder available across the region.
- While rainfall has not been ideal for hay on the ground, it has been useful in paddocks needing moisture to finish cereal crops.
- The expected movement of hay from southern states into northern New South Wales and southern Queensland is less certain. Opening summer rainfall in northern markets, together with extra hay made from drought-affected grain crops, is expected to reduce interstate buying interest.
- Goulburn-Murray water storages were at 77 per cent of their 9.79 million megalitre capacity early this week. This provides a useful starting point for irrigation planning, although conditions differ between storages. Growers and livestock operators using Lake Boga should note the current blue-green algae warning and follow local water-use advice.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$170 to \$290/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$340 to \$490/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$85 to \$105/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -5 (\$125 to \$285/t). Prices decrease this week.

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2.7. Gippsland

- Gippsland received useful rainfall last week, with 34mm of rain recorded at Yarram and 22mm at Maffra. More than 25mm of rainfall is forecast across southern growing regions over the weekend, easing soil moisture deficits.
- The rain will help pasture and fodder crops where moisture has been short. However, cereal hay already cut and in windrows has now been exposed to a second rain event in many areas. Weather damage is likely to affect colour, feed value and suitability for higher-value markets.
- The gap between premium hay and weather-affected hay may widen. Growers holding decent carry-over stocks are likely to reassess values as the new-season quality picture becomes clearer.
- Late winter rain delayed first-cut silage for some Gippsland dairy and fodder producers. Crops are bulkier after being cut later than usual, but higher stem and fibre content is reducing quality.

- Some producers expect to make two silage cuts before finishing with hay. Further rainfall could encourage regrowth and improve the chance of a stronger-quality second cut, provided paddocks can dry enough for timely harvest.
- Hay moving from southern states into northern New South Wales and southern Queensland is less certain. Rain in northern demand areas, combined with extra hay made from drought-affected grain crops, may reduce the need for interstate purchases.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$200 to \$350). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$410 to \$520/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$115 to \$175/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -5 (\$125 to \$295/t). Prices decrease this week.

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2.8. Southwest Victoria

- Light rain and cool overnight temperatures are forecast across much of the region this week. Heywood and Hamilton may receive up to 5mm of rainfall on most days, while Colac is forecast to receive around 9mm on Saturday. Further showers are expected into next week.
- The rain will be welcome for cereal crops still filling grain and later crops now flowering. It may also add some run-off to farm storages, where low dam levels have been a concern following a dry spring.
- Conditions remain uneven across the region. Some areas have received useful falls, while districts south of the Divide remain much drier than normal. Recent days in the high 20s have dried pastures quickly.
- Hay and silage yields around Camperdown and Cobden are well below last year's exceptional levels. Contractors report first-cut silage at about five round bales per acre from long-term pastures, compared with eight or nine bales per acre and multiple cuts last season. Yields are also reported to be below the longer-term average.
- Recent rain may help pasture recovery and later fodder growth, but it is unlikely to fully restore silage volume after a dry start to spring. Beef producers facing low pasture availability and declining dam supplies may continue to review feed and water plans.
- Hay moving from southern states into areas is less certain. Early summer rainfall in northern demand areas, along with more hay from drought-affected grain crops, may reduce interstate buying interest.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$160 to \$300/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$320 to \$480). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$140/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -5 (\$145 to \$225/t). Prices decrease this week.

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2.9. Southeast South Australia

- Light showers are forecast most days around Robe and Naracoorte, while temperatures remain in the low to mid 20s. More than 25mm of rainfall is forecast for many growing regions across South Australia, Victoria and southern and central New South Wales over the weekend.
- The rain may benefit soil moisture and support new pasture and fodder growth, but it has paused harvest for many. For hay already cut, curing or in windrows, repeated rain events are likely to reduce quality and delay baling.
- Pasture silage and hay now being made across dairy and beef areas of South Australia and Victoria may also be affected. Wet material may need further drying time, and some crops may not meet the quality expected before the rain.
- As the difference between sound and weather-affected hay becomes clearer, premiums for quality hay may increase. Growers with suitable carry-over stocks are likely to review values.
- Hay movements from southern regions into northern New South Wales and southern Queensland are less certain. Rainfall in northern demand areas and additional hay from drought-affected grain crops may reduce the need for interstate hay.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -20 (\$175 to \$255/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$280 to \$440/t). Prices increase 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

- Scattered storms and showers are bringing patchy rainfall to isolated parts of south-eastern Australia, amid otherwise warm and dry conditions.
- Freeling through to Jamestown is forecast to receive showers from Friday, although falls are expected to be lighter than in many southern districts.
- Recent rain has affected cereal hay already cut and lying in windrows. Oaten hay from South Australia's Mid North has been particularly exposed. Further rain may reduce colour, feed value and suitability for export or premium markets.
- Pasture silage and hay being made in dairy and beef regions of South Australia and Victoria may also be downgraded where crops have been cut or are unable to dry before further rainfall.
- As testing confirms the extent of weather damage, the gap between optimal and downgraded hay is likely to widen. Quality premiums may increase, and growers holding suitable carry-over stocks may reassess their sale values.
- Some growers are reportedly receiving as little as \$160 per tonne delivered to hay exporters after testing. At these prices, returns may not cover production, baling, handling and freight costs for all growers, which could reduce the volume of hay offered to the export market.

- Hay flows from southern states into northern New South Wales and southern Queensland are less certain. Opening rain for the summer wet season, together with additional hay from drought-affected grain crops being cut, may ease demand for interstate hay.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$160 to \$250/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

- The west has avoided much of the wet weather affecting eastern Australia. Katanning has been warm and sunny, although light showers are forecast each day from Saturday. While falls are expected to be small, they may disrupt cutting, curing and baling schedules.
- Manjimup is forecast to receive slightly heavier daily falls from Friday, including up to 5mm of rainfall on Saturday. Temperatures are expected to ease from the high 20s to the low 20s, which may slow hay drying.
- Harvest is commencing and moving south. Drier conditions will be preferred to support harvest activity, grain quality and freight logistics. Ongoing soil-moisture deficits and warmer conditions are also increasing pressure on irrigation water supplies.
- Cereal hay production decisions remain closely tied to expected returns. Some growers are producing hay only for known contracts or their own processing needs, rather than committing larger areas to the open market.
- Reported cereal hay prices may not cover input, baling, handling and freight costs for some growers. This could limit cereal hay supply from parts of the Wheatbelt.
- 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

- The long-range outlook indicates below-average rainfall is likely from November to January for most of Tasmania. This will remain a concern in areas where soil moisture and water availability are low.
- Smithton received useful rainfall last weekend, with further intermittent falls forecast in the week ahead. A heavy fall of around 20mm of rain is forecast on Saturday before conditions ease. This should help finish lucerne and cereal hay crops, but may continue to delay cutting, curing and baling.

- Cressy and Waratah are forecast to follow a similar pattern, with slightly heavier rainfall and cooler overnight temperatures. Minimum temperatures at Cressy may fall into single digits, although conditions are not currently cool enough to present an immediate frost risk.
- Irrigated lucerne is expected to perform well this season. Results will become clearer over the next few weeks as growers assess whether forecast rainfall has delivered enough moisture to support crop finish and hay quality.
- In the southern Midlands and Derwent Valley, root-zone soil moisture remains well below average. Producers continue to use irrigation strategically as warmer conditions increase water use and reduced allocations limit available supply. A dry summer would add pressure to fodder planning and may increase demand for stored hay.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$300/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$120/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$240 to \$260/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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