

Hay Report

17 April 2025

DELIVERING
for DAIRY

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Summary

Driving Prices Up

- Very little change to pricing across the country. Where Cereal, Lucerne, and Straw hay have climbed in recent weeks, they appear to have stopped, while Pasture hay had a slight increase across Victoria. Most other parts of Australia experienced no change at all.

Driving Prices Down

- Nothing is driving prices down as demand is increasing across the country.

Local News

- The BoM's Climate and Ag update states that year-to-date rainfall is above average for Queensland, with anomalies, greater than 800mm, across western and northern parts of state. Rainfall has also been above average (anomaly greater than 100mm) across north-west Western Australia, some areas of the Northern Territory, northern New South Wales and eastern Victoria.
- Year-to-date rainfall is below average for Tasmania, large parts of the Northern Territory, South Australia, Victoria and western and inland areas of Western Australia. Conditions remain poor in western Victoria and northern Tasmania due to low soil moisture.
- AFIA National Fodder Conference: Registrations are now open for the AFIA National Fodder Conference being held from Tuesday, 22 to Thursday, 24 July 2025, at the Sheraton Grand Mirage Resort, Gold Coast. Visit our website to book your ticket now!
<https://afia.org.au/events/afia-national-fodder-conference/>
- Red Fire Ant Invasion of QLD and NSW:

Bilinga Detection and New Emergency Order: The NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (the department) has been notified by the National Fire Ant Eradication Program (NFAEP) of a field identified fire ant detection at Bilinga, Queensland, approximately 550 m from the NSW border.

Two nests were diagnosed as positive for fire ants by a field crew and specimens have been confirmed by diagnostic entomologists. A direct nest injection team from the NFAEP destroyed the nests.

A 5km zone will be established around the infestation and this will extend the NSW fire ant infested area by approximately 825 ha, necessitating movement controls in those new areas.

The National Fire Ant Eradication Program has produced a **Material movement advice tool** which is available for use on their website. This tool will help you understand if you are taking suitable steps to reduce the risk of spreading fire ants. This includes processing, storing, treating and disposing of materials safely. Click [HERE](#) to access the tool.

Hay permit suspension: The [Group Biosecurity Emergency Permit](#), which allows movements of hay from specified lower risk areas in the fire ant biosecurity zone of Southeast Queensland under certain conditions, is suspended for one month, effective from 12.30 pm Thursday 13 March 2025.

This follows the NSW Government's indefinite suspension of turf movement from *Queensland Fire Ant Infested Areas* in November.

Under the [Biosecurity Act 2014](#), everyone—including individuals and organisations—has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of fire ants. [Fire ant biosecurity zones are also in place](#) to help manage the movement of materials known to spread fire ants, such as soil, hay, mulch, manure, quarry products, turf, and potted plants.

- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to ensure the quality of feed.

Regional commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- Rainfall has eased over the region during the last week after a very wet start to April. This will allow cotton crops to dry out and harvesting to continue, although some quality downgrade is likely. Soil moisture is very much above average.
- Where rainfall has caused waterlogging in cane crops, yields will be reduced. Producers will also be challenged to manage the risk of soil and nutrient loss.
- Not a lot of hay moving, however, peanuts have started going in. Silage has started too, and if it is not too wet there will be good yields. Reports state that oats and lupins will also be going in soon.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.

Please note: Hay in the Atherton Tablelands is traditionally priced at \$/bale, so it is important to check bale weights for conversion. The price range indicated is for feeds of varying quality with the price range generally indicative of quality of feed. We recommend feed testing and viewing of fodder before purchase to be sure of the quality of feed.

Darling Downs

- Another sunny week across the Darling Downs and Granite Belt, with daytime temperatures in the mid to high 20s. Humidity levels have dropped down in to the 60s. Perfect weather to enjoy the Easter break outdoors with family and friends.
- The market is holding steady with quite a bit of fodder being traded across the region, primarily Lucerne, Pasture and Cereal Hay.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$465 to \$515/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$230 to \$290/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$300/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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North Coast NSW

- Other than some light showers this week offering no more than 10mm of rainfall in towns across the region, the Easter holiday period is looking warm and sunny. That said, more light showers are predicted from early next week.
- Daytime temperatures are sitting comfortably in the mid to high 20s. Soil moisture and growing conditions are mostly above average where recent rainfall has been average or above average.
- Despite the fact the rainfall is relatively minimal, the constant wet has pros and cons for farmers. On one hand, it will be good for getting rye grass in, on the other hand, the ground is too wet for large machinery for seeding, so those who can afford to do so, are using drones for seeding.
- Also, there is no feed value in the very wet grass which means dairy farmers are buying hay from outside the area, mainly vetch.
- Soy bean harvesting should have commenced, but for many, the crops are spoiled due to the constant rain. Initially the crops looked great, but are now turning mouldy.
- Not a lot moving, however some is going to rural aid.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central West NSW

- Dry conditions have worsened in inland southern NSW. A light sprinkle of showers is predicted in some parts on Easter Sunday, but conditions will again dry up next week, with temperatures mostly remaining in the mid to high 20s.
- Hay pricing remains steady again this week, but farmers are reporting a steady increase in demand for lucerne hay and silage and resulting increases. We will monitor this closely and expect prices to increase again soon.
- Farmers in the region are also reporting that, due to the ongoing dry conditions, many have accepted that growth going forward will be minimal going into winter.

- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$470/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$120 to \$170/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Bega Valley

- Mostly sunny conditions in the high teens to low 20s, with showers threatening into the Easter weekend and Easter Sunday, where coastal areas may experience up to 10 mm of rain.
- Things are set to get wetter into next week, with up to 40 mm of rain predicted throughout the region from Monday, with the chance as high as 90%, bringing another solid watering of pastures for farmers in the region.
- Hay pricing remains steady again this week.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$355 to \$415/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$550/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$220 to \$260/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- The autumn warmth continues throughout the region, with mostly sunny conditions in the mid to high 20s.
- Like much of the state and southern parts of Australia, Easter weekend brings a moderate chance of rain, as much as 80% in Kyabram on Saturday, yet nowhere is predicted to experience more than 5 mm of rain until Sunday, when Shepparton, Tatura and Yarrawonga are due for up to 10 mm of rain.
- Next week is set to clear again, and temperatures will align more with the season, dropping to the high teens.
- The Loddon region has been experiencing dry conditions and low water levels in storages, with reports suggesting it is unlikely that rationing will end soon. Meanwhile, Goulburn-Murray Water is planning its most comprehensive winter dewatering campaign in more than a decade.

- We have found that oaten hay from the central goldfields area is being sold online at \$345/t. This same marketplace advises that now is the ideal time to get hay listed for sale if farmers have been holding off to this point.
- As echoed in the Gippsland and Southwest regions of Victoria, prices increased last week across the board except for pasture hay, and this week, pasture hay has experienced the only growth in an otherwise steady week.
- It is being reported that prime hay is yet to move towards the dairy market, with farmers 'baulking' on prices and looking to vetch and other cereals for the time being.
- One AFIA member says their hay movement is going west to SA, as the state has limited hay left. They send 10 – 12 loads a day, equal to 2,500 tonnes, into SA, which accounts for 80% of their current workload and supply.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$340/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$395 to \$475/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$160/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +5 (\$280 to \$310/t). Prices increase this week.

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Gippsland

- Dry, cloudy conditions continue, with next to no rainfall, and temperatures in the high teens and low 20s. Like the rest of the south, Easter weekend brings a high chance of showers, with only elevated and coastal locations like Mt Baw Baw, Wilsons Promontory and Dargo due to receive anything over 5 mm of rain.
- Despite this, forecasted continuing showers for the region might bring some much-needed respite to farmers.
- As echoed in the Goulburn Murray Valley and Southwest regions of Victoria, prices increased last week across the board except for pasture hay, and this week, pasture hay has experienced the only growth in an otherwise steady week.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$350 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$465 to \$515/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$180 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +5 (\$285 to \$315/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southwest Victoria

- The Southwest region has experienced significant records for maximum monthly temperatures to date, with Casterton, Mortlake, Port Fairy, Portland, and Warrnambool some of the places set to break the mean maximum temperature for April.
- And while it's unusually warm for this time of year, April rainfall to date is also reaching monthly records, with the lowest recorded in April in Ararat, Casterton, Hamilton, Port Fairy, and surrounding areas.
- The southwest is still facing water shortages, and the situation is especially dire for anyone reliant on runoff. Decreasing stock numbers and agisting stock off farm is commonplace, with one AFIA member destocking one farm reliant on dams completely.
- Farmers are reporting that pricing is pushing buyers away from hay, reminiscent of the last dry which saw the hay market damaged greatly. Hay producers have only just begun to recover from it, where prices pushed too high to be sustainable or viable, forcing end users to source alternative feed.
- It is also reported that the local market hay supply is not completely depleted. However, that assessment won't be relevant without a break in the next few weeks.
- As echoed in the Goulburn Murray Valley and Gippsland regions of Victoria, prices increased last week across the board except for pasture hay, and this week, pasture hay has experienced the only growth in an otherwise steady week.
- We have found that oaten hay, from the northernmost parts of the region, is being sold online at \$345/t, and vetch and canola hay at \$265/t. This same marketplace advises that now is the ideal time to get hay listed for sale if farmers have been holding off to this point.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$340 to \$380/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$405 to \$485). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$135 to \$205/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +5 (\$285 to \$325/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southeast South Australia

- The dry, hot weather conditions deepen this week.
- There is a moderate chance of rain across the region over Easter. While temperatures are set to drop to high teens, with showers from north to south, no more than 5mm of rainfall is predicted; nothing significant to end the drought.

- This worsening drought continues as the South Australian Government offers \$73 million in drought assistance to SA farmers, a portion of which are grants to hay transporting charities. Another \$4 million in funding was allocated for hay freight last week, enough to pay for 1,000 road trains of 50,000 large square bales into SA.
- While the help is gratefully received, some farmers feel it's too little, too late, and the inconsistent quality of hay donations requires industry attention.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$440/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$460 to \$490/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$165 to \$215/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$305 to \$395/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central South Australia

- There has been no recent rain and there is no significant rain forecast for the next 7 days. Soil moisture is in the lowest decile over much of the zone. Conditions are very poor for crops and pastures, including tree mortality, and we are seeing shortages of water for livestock.
- Across the mid-north, daytime temperatures are still 3% - 4.5% higher than average for this time of year. The Mount Lofty Ranges have had some sprinkles, but nothing of significance, and daytime temperatures are also higher than average.
- No prospect of rainfall soon – it is starting to get very concerning for farmers across the region as they keep eating into their winter reserves. Round bales are non-existent.
- The SA Government has released a bit of a helping hand, covering the costs of donated fodder, but it has been regarded as a minimal gesture, offered too late.
- One AFIA member mentioned that they are close to carting hay in from VIC and NSW, however the freight costs are going to be the biggest concern when having to pass on those cost to consumers.
- There has been a fair bit of straw on the market, but that too is drying up.
- Apparently, the NT Government now want to set up a permit system for fodder coming in from SA due to biosecurity concerns, however this has not been publicly communicated and is causing issues for both the sellers and buyers when drivers turn up on the border. No issues have been identified to date that require a permit.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$410 to \$470/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$180 to \$260/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Southwest Western Australia

- Across the region there will be scattered showers and some storms, daytime temperatures are still sitting in the mid 20s to low 30s, however they will drop next week to the low to mid 20s.
- Between 10mm and 40mm of rain has fallen over many locations in the southern part of the wheat belt over the last 10 days. Soil moisture is above average in the south, but below average in the north. Producers have commenced sowing.
- The market continues to hold steady as growers are seeding, and the USA tariff discussions and fluctuations are thankfully not impacting pricing.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$220 to \$300/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$160/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Northwest Tasmania

- While the northwest is getting constant drizzle on a daily basis, other parts of Tasmania are dry with no subsoil moisture to support seeding.
- Cutting for silage has commenced, and as long as the ground is not too wet for machinery, there promises to be good yields.
- The market is picking up as there are more enquiries and a bit more movement.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$220 to \$280/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$440/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$160/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$235 to \$265/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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