

Hay Report

16 May 2025

DELIVERING
for DAIRY

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Summary

Driving Prices Up

- With still no rain on the horizon for those who need it, we are seeing a surge in pricing across all fodder throughout Victoria this week. With increases up to \$50 per tonne for Lucerne and \$35 per tonne for Straw, we can only hope prices stabilise once it finally rains.
- Demand is high as reserves run low or out, and the availability from growers is reducing which is forcing up prices.
- In addition to the demand, freight costs are also adding to the increase in pricing as fodder is transported varying distances to those in need.

Driving Prices Down

- Nothing is driving prices down, but prices remain steady in South Australia for those who are still able to trade locally.

Local News

- Queensland and the northern half of New South Wales are off to a flying start with their winter-cropping programs. Canola and faba beans are already in, and growers are now moving into wheat and barley.
- Dry sowing in SA and Vic is advancing, with growers taking comfort in the fact that history points to a rain event by early June to germinate crops. However, little to no subsoil moisture, has growers in the Riverina region of NSW dropping canola from rotations and looking at shorter-season barley.
- A new collaboration will assist SA Dairy Farmers (SADA) in accessing the Government fodder transport subsidy scheme for the first time. SADA, Rural Aid, Rapid Relief Team, Need for Feed and Farmers Relief Agency will have access to the \$4 million announced in the recent drought support package to assist with the cost of transporting donated fodder across the state.

The changed guidelines include the removal of a 1500 kilometre limit from hay pickup to delivery point, allowing charities to reach more far flung parts of the state during runs assisted by the donated fodder scheme.

- **BoM Update:** For May to July, high streamflow is likely for many sites in the mainland's east, north, and south-west. Low streamflow is likely for the south-east of the mainland and northern Tasmania. Near median streamflow is likely for scattered areas in the southern mainland and the north.

The total water storage level across Australia is at 64% of capacity, a decline of 7% since the same time last year.

Over the 14-month period since February 2024, rainfall has been in the bottom 5 and 10% of periods (since 1900) for most of southern South Australia and western Victoria. Soil moisture is well below average, leading to poor conditions for crops and pastures, tree mortality in South Australian plantations, and water shortages for livestock.

Continuous rainfall, 15 to 50 mm in the past 4 days, along the New South Wales north coast and south-east Queensland coast continues to disrupt production activities for horticultural

crops. This is happening in areas that already have high soil moisture levels, exacerbating waterlogging.

- **Updated biosecurity requirements for hay imports into South Australia:** Under the *Plant Health Act 2009*, hay is now subject to stricter import controls due to pests such as Green Snail and Red Imported Fire Ant risk.

All commercial hay consignments entering South Australia must comply with specific entry requirements, including importer registration with PIRSA, approved documentation (Plant Health Certificate or General Biosecurity Declaration), and submission of a consignment manifest prior to arrival.

Certain consignments may also be subject to inspection or quarantine on entry. These requirements also apply to donated fodder transported as part of drought assistance efforts. Read more on the sa.gov.au website [HERE](#).

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

Regional commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- A mostly sunny outlook for the region with possible showers of less than 1mm per day.
- Daytime temperatures are sitting in the mid to high 20s. To date, Mareeba has received 5.4mm of rainfall this month.
- Growers need to be mindful of Pasture Dieback occurring if they have had significant rainfalls (>600mm average). This process can occur quickly and with subsequent rainfall, broadleaf weeds and/or legumes commonly colonise the affected area.
- There is still not a lot of hay moving, and the market remains very slow.
- 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 checking bale weights for conversion is important. The price range indicated is for feeds of varying quality, with the price range generally indicative of the quality of the feed. We recommend testing and viewing fodder before purchase to ensure the quality of feed.

Darling Downs

- Showers continue to fall across the region until Saturday, after which the sky clears and the sunshine returns.
- Daytime temperatures are starting to drop from the low to mid 20s into the teens, however humidity percentage levels range from the mid 60s to low 80s.

- Growers need to be mindful of Pasture Dieback occurring if they have had significant rainfalls (>600mm average). This process can occur quickly and with subsequent rainfall, broadleaf weeds and/or legumes commonly colonise the affected area.
- Some change to pricing again this week.
- Cereal hay: +25 (\$360 to \$510/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$450 to \$550/t). Prices increase 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.

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

North Coast NSW

- Daytime temperatures are fluctuating from the high teens to the mid 20s as the showers continue fall across the region.
- Temperatures and rainfall are above average for the month to date, with Yamba receiving 147.8mm of rainfall so far.
- Growers need to be mindful of Pasture Dieback occurring if they have had significant rainfalls (>600mm average). This process can occur quickly and with subsequent rainfall, broadleaf weeds and/or legumes commonly colonise the affected area.
- Some change to pricing again this week.
- Cereal hay: +15 (\$280 to \$430/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +25 (\$410 to \$500/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +15 (\$260 to \$320/t). Prices increase this week.

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Central West NSW

- With daytime temperatures trending above average so far this month, we will see a drop from the low 20s to the teens by the weekend and into next week. Possible showers are predicted, with an estimate of up to 5mm of rainfall per day at most.
- The region has seen less than 5mm per town to date in May, with Dubbo the exception receiving 6.8mm.

- Only slight increases in pricing this week to Lucerne and Straw, with both Cereal and Pasture hay remaining steady.
- Reports state that hay reserves are running low and there are lots of enquiries coming out of Victoria. There is also not much straw in the area, but seeding is ongoing with lucerne, and the expected change that is due to come through on the weekend will be welcome.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$390 to \$500/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +10 (\$120 to \$190/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Bega Valley

- With possible showers due both along the coast and inland on Sunday, up to 20mm in some areas, the sun will return until Wednesday when more rainfall is predicted.
- Rainfall is tracking below average for the month and daytime temperatures are above average.
- A slight jump in price for both Lucerne and Straw this week, pushing Lucerne up to \$580 per tonne by some sellers.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$355 to \$415/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$450 to \$580/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +10 (\$220 to \$280/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- While the weather is clearly much cooler with frosts starting to occur, the sun is still shining throughout the day. That said, temperatures are still tracking above average for the month. There is still no rain on the horizon.
- Hay prices have jumped up drastically this week after previously holding steady. There is clear demand and movement of all fodder, with enquiries from across the region and Riverina for sale in South Australia and across Victoria.

- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +50 (\$330 to \$430/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +30 (\$400 to \$540/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +30 (\$140 to \$230/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +35 (\$280 to \$410/t). Prices increase this week.

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Gippsland

- The temperatures in the West and South are dropping which means frost is going to be a concern in some areas. However, there is hope of rainfall on Friday and Saturday of up to 5mm per day.
- In the East, a similar situation with rainfall on Saturday and Sunday before the sun reappears, however more showers are predicted for Wednesday next week.
- If you were unsuccessful in securing your fodder locally last week, you will be kicking yourself given the jump in pricing across the board this week. There is clearly demand coupled with product shortages, however, people are willing to pay the higher prices if they can get their hands on it.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +50 (\$350 to \$500/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +30 (\$460 to \$590/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +30 (\$170 to \$290/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +35 (\$280 to \$410/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southwest Victoria

- Still plagued by higher-than-average temperatures throughout the day and below average rainfall this month, there may be a break in the weather along the coast over the weekend.
- Many are still holding out for a break inland to support all farming activities, and are looking to purchase fodder from those that have reserves.
- Following the trend in Gippsland and the Goulburn/Murray Valley, prices have surged this week across all fodder for the region.
- Significant change to pricing this week.

- Cereal hay: +50 (\$360 to \$480/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +30 (\$410 to \$550). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +30 (\$160 to \$260/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +35 (\$290 to \$410/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southeast South Australia

- Temperatures have been above average for the month while rainfall is below average, with most towns receiving less than 10mm of rain to date.
- Forecasts are predicting frost over the weekend which further exacerbates the issues faced by growers across the region.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$440/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$455 to \$485/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +5 (\$170 to \$220/t). Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$305 to \$395/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central South Australia

- With temperatures still above average for the month and rainfall well below average, conditions are getting very desperate for growers and farmers.
- Reports state that the region is going to run out of hay very soon. A contractor based in Minlaton who ran out of their own hay months ago has been buying it in to sell and for their own farming purposes.
- Enquiries are increasing but there are very few who can supply any fodder. This is mainly impacting those who do not deal on a regular basis are only just realising that there is nothing left on the market in region.
- If growers do not get rain in the next month, it is going to be a disaster for the whole state. Food security is a growing concern.
- Farmers will be able to secure bales of premium-graded cereal hay at Rapid Relief Team's Farmers Community Connect event at Jamestown on Friday 6 June. Rapid Relief Team director Mick Dunn said the initiative aimed to bring local communities together and give them a morale boost while also offering practical support.

- The significant rise for Cereal hay this week is based on comments from contractors and advertisements for sale. There is high demand with little available on the market.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +100 (\$400 to \$500/t). Prices increase 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

- The weather is unseasonably warm for this time of year across the region with total rainfall for May well below average.
- In Calingiri, sources state that it has not rained for 3 to 4 weeks, however, rain has been predicted to fall on the 24th of the month. Canola and barley are already up from recent seeding, whereas wheat is now going in the ground, soon to be followed by oats.
- Nothing much has changed in terms of pricing with the export market. It remains steady.
- No change to pricing again 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

- The region remains dry with very little rainfall to date this month. Smithton, a known cropping area, has had less than 18mm of rainfall in May. Many places are having to irrigate if they can.
- Frost is going to become a problem with temperatures dropping overnight in some areas to 0 degrees or below.
- Sources state that it is still very dry and there is a big demand for fodder. A green drought is currently being experienced across the region as there is no growth due to lack of water.
- Lactalis have made enquiries to purchase silage in TAS to be sent to Victoria to support dairy farmers.
- Very little is being sold at the moment – those who have hay are holding on to it either for their own use or are waiting for prices to increase before they sell. It is possible that people cannot afford to buy fodder at the current prices, despite there being very little change in pricing for weeks.

- Oat silage is selling for 400/tn dry matter. Grass and clover silage is selling for 300-400/tn dry matter.
- Rabbits have been causing issues with eating hay paddocks. Sources say there were 100 rabbits per acre. The problem appears to be under control due to baiting and poison as there are no foxes to help keep numbers down. Feral cats have also been urinating on hay causing problems for growers.
- Significant change to pricing again this week.
- Cereal hay: +35 (\$240 to \$330/t) Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$390 to \$440/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +20 (\$130 to \$180/t) Prices increase this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$235 to \$265/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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Dairy Australia Limited ABN 60 105 227 987
Level 3, HWT Tower
40 City Road, Southbank Vic 3006 Australia
T +61 3 9694 3777 F +61 3 9694 3701
E enquiries@dairyaustralia.com.au
dairyaustralia.com.au



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