

Hay Report

6 June 2025

DELIVERING
for DAIRY

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Summary

Driving Prices Up

- Price increases have continued across most hay types, particularly for pasture hay, though the rises have been more modest this week. The market continues to ration limited supply to those able to pay current record-level prices.
- Although parts of central and western New South Wales and north-east Victoria have received some rain, confidence remains low in the south-east and west. Until longer-term rainfall patterns improve, fodder availability and pricing pressure are expected to continue.
- Large parts of southern South Australia, western and central Victoria, and south-west Western Australia remain without meaningful fodder growth. While some areas received rainfall recently, they are still several months away from re-entering the market with any significant supply. Farmers in these regions continue to rely heavily on handfeeding and supplementary grain feeding.

Driving Prices Down

- In NW Tasmania, straw is reported to be more available this week, prompting price drops. Cereal hay is harder to find but has seen a slight local price shift. Other regions remain steady.

Local News

- Rains are coming to the Southeast of the country: Expected rainfall across the weekend promises relief to many key fodder-growing areas experiencing drought. However, success hinges on what actually falls, and even with decent rain, any boost in hay supply and market movement is still months away.
- WA-SA hay trade paused: Green snail quarantine restrictions have paused hay deliveries from WA to SA. Authorities are working on a plan to allow limited movement, but the delay is adding pressure to eastern supply.
- SA waives fodder inspection fees during drought: South Australian farmers won't pay the usual \$167/hour fee for incoming fodder inspections, easing pressure as dry conditions continue. Inspections remain in place to guard against pests.
- Victorian drought zone expanded: The Victorian Government has officially expanded the drought zone to include parts of central Victoria, Wimmera and west Gippsland.
- Federal Government drought funding announced: The Federal Government has committed an extra \$36 million to extend the Future Drought Fund Communities Program to help drought-affected communities in South Australia and Victoria stay connected and supported.

An additional \$800,000 will go toward improving access to Rural Financial Counselling Services in the hardest-hit areas.

- BoM update: Dry winter continues in key growing regions, with soil moisture and rainfall well below average across the south-east and west, putting pressure on crops, pastures, and livestock.

- Red Fire Ant Invasion is continuing to be an issue for QLD and NSW. Ants were discovered in machinery in Darling Downs this week; they were transported in from a known fire ant biosecurity zone.
- Buyers are encouraged to feed test and view fodder before purchase to ensure the quality of feed.

Regional commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- A run of mostly sunny days with cool mornings and moderate winds from the southeast. A few showers may pop up near the coast from Friday through the weekend, but inland areas will mostly stay dry. Max temps will sit between 22°C and 28°C.
- Fire danger is moderate. UV levels are high, so sun protection is needed from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. if working outdoors.
- While there is no known fire ant activity this far north, continued biosecurity awareness is important. Movement of landscaping or nursery materials into the region should be handled with care.
- 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

- Cool, sunny days continue with light winds and patchy morning frost. A weak trough may bring a slight chance of showers over the weekend, mostly in the east, but it is not expected to impact fodder operations. Daytime temps will hover between 17°C and 22°C.
- Fire danger is moderate. UV levels are in the moderate range. Sun protection is recommended from 10:00 a.m. to 1:40 p.m.
- Red fire ants were detected this week in machinery moved to Cotswold Hills from a known biosecurity zone. Farmers are urged to inspect equipment, hay, soil, and other materials sourced from southeast Queensland and report any signs of fire ants without delay.
- No change to pricing again this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$510/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$550/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$260 to \$340/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

- Rain moves in from the coast starting Wednesday, with Yamba, Lismore, and Grafton each expecting around 5 mm of rainfall. Showers will linger into Thursday before easing on Friday, with a mostly clear weekend ahead.
- After several weeks of wet weather, growers in the region are nearing the point of planting new crops. Last week, there were concerns that more rain could push planting back further. However, with only light falls expected this time, soil conditions should give growers more confidence to move ahead when the timing is right.
- Although outside the current fire ant detection zone, the region shares close freight and trade links with southeast Queensland. Farmers are advised to watch for signs of fire ants and be cautious when sourcing materials across the border.
- No change to pricing again this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$410 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$260 to \$320/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central West NSW

- Cool, dry days with patchy morning frost beginning on Thursday, to last throughout the week. Forbes reported -2°C on Thursday morning. Light morning showers are possible in the south on Saturday, with a high chance of showers throughout the region on Sunday. This could slow down cutting and baling early next week.
- One local grower reports that planting progress has been slow, with only about 50% of intended crops sown so far.
- Lucerne was selling at \$500/t ex-farm out of Forbes, but supplies are now exhausted. No cereal or straw hay is available, and all large bales have been sold.
- While a few small bales remain, demand has softened, particularly among hobby farmers and horse owners, possibly due to rising living costs. It has been a slower season overall for small bale sales.

- The trend of steady increases continues, with rises less pronounced than last week. While the straw price has halted for the first time in a month, other hay types continue to climb. Demand remains firm across the region.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$390 to \$510/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$430 to \$560/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$190 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +30 (\$390 to \$450/t). Prices increase this week.

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Bega Valley

- After some clearer, drier days, light showers are expected from Thursday. Coastal areas are likely to pick up around 5 mm before conditions ease on Friday.
- Further south towards the Victoria border, Timbillica and Narrabarba may see some rain on Saturday. Then on Sunday, a front moving up from the south is forecast to bring another 5 mm across much of the region.
- The trend of steady increases continues, with rises less pronounced than last week. While the straw price has halted for the first time in a month, other hay types continue to climb. Demand remains firm across the region.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$460 to \$620/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$500 to \$630/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$280 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +30 (\$475 to \$565/t). Prices increase this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Dry conditions look set to ease, with a high chance of showers across the region starting Friday, with 5mm of rain expected and into the weekend, with 10mm of rain expected daily.
- Northern country growers are set to be hit by a severe frost on Thursday and Friday morning, with temperatures in some parts expected to fall below -5°C. Young crops and sensitive growth are at high risk of damage.

- Dry and warmer-than-usual conditions have prompted Emergency Management Victoria to extend the fire danger period in parts of the Goulburn Valley. This is a rare move, last seen in 2019.
- The trend of steady increases continues, with rises less pronounced than last week. While the straw price has halted for the first time in a month, other hay types continue to climb. Demand remains firm across the region.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$410 to \$510/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$460 to \$600/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$190 to \$270/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +30 (\$370 to \$520/t). Prices increase this week.

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Gippsland

- Wet weather is building from Friday, with western and southern parts likely to see around 5 mm of rain. Heavier falls are expected over the weekend, especially Sunday, with coastal areas set for up to 10 mm of rain daily. Eastern Gippsland is tracking slightly higher, with inland totals up to 10 mm of rain and coastal areas pushing 15 mm of rain on Sunday.
- Strong wind/gale warnings remain in effect for coastal parts of the east. Take care if working near exposed zones.
- All parts of Gippsland experienced widespread frost on Thursday morning, with temperatures falling to around -2°C. Crop and pasture damage is likely across the region.
- Fire risk has increased across the region due to unseasonably warm and dry conditions. Emergency Management Victoria has extended the fire danger period, particularly in the south-west part of the region.
- The trend of steady increases continues, with rises less pronounced than last week. While the straw price has halted for the first time in a month, other hay types continue to climb. Demand remains firm across the region.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$410 to \$600/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$520 to \$650/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$210 to \$340/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +30 (\$370 to \$520/t). Prices increase this week.

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quality of feed. We recommend testing and viewing fodder before purchase to ensure the quality of feed.

Southwest Victoria

- Mild and mostly dry conditions will give way to steady, daily rain, a welcome reprieve for the region. Between Wednesday and mid-next week, southern coastal areas could see up to 25 mm of rain per day, adding up to totals near 50 mm. Further inland, daily falls are expected around 15 mm of rainfall, while northern parts may receive 5 – 10 mm of rain per day, depending on how far inland the system tracks.
- A damaging frost moved through early Thursday with temperatures dropping to -2°C. Pasture and early crops in exposed areas are likely to show signs of stress.
- Fire risk is increasing in south-west Victoria due to ongoing warm and dry conditions. Emergency Management Victoria has extended the fire danger period in some areas. This is the first time extensions have been issued in the region since 2019, presenting additional pressure for local CFA crews.
- Cropping conditions remain uncertain across the region. Some Horsham growers are weighing up resowing options after dry conditions and frost damaged early plantings. Many are waiting to see if this weekend's rain forecast delivers enough moisture.
- The trend of steady increases continues, with rises less pronounced than last week. While the straw price has halted for the first time in a month, other hay types continue to climb. Demand remains firm across the region, and supply is low.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$440 to \$560/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$470 to \$610). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$200 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +30 (\$390 to \$510/t). Prices increase this week.

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Southeast South Australia

- Rain is due to build from Wednesday, offering a much-needed break from the dry weather. Southern and coastal areas, including Mount Gambier, are forecast to receive up to 10 mm of rain daily, with totals pushing 50 mm over the period. Further inland, farming zones are likely to top out around 25 mm of rainfall, depending on how far north the system reaches. Conditions look set to mirror those in nearby Southwest Victoria.
- Field received 17 mm of rain last week. While it had no immediate impact, local farmers are hopeful with more rain forecast for the weekend and beyond. The region has not had a true spring since 2022, and many have been hand-feeding livestock for an extended period with solid results.

- South Australian farmers bringing in interstate fodder won't have to pay the usual \$167/hour inspection fee, easing pressure during the ongoing drought. The waiver applies statewide, including the Southeast and Central regions.
- Prices took a steadier turn this week after a steep rise last week. While the straw price has halted for the first time in a month, other hay types continue to climb. Demand remains firm across the region.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +20 (\$475 to \$575/t). Prices increase this week.
- Lucerne hay: +10 (\$495 to \$545/t). Prices increase this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$225 to \$315/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +40 (\$420 to \$490/t). Prices increase this week.

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Central South Australia

- Dry, cool conditions will give way to long-awaited rain heading into the weekend. Showers are expected to move in from Friday, with Clare, Port Augusta in the north, and Kadina in the west likely to see around 5 mm. Rain picks up on Saturday, with Clare and Kadina forecast for around 10 mm, and southern areas around Adelaide could see daily falls up to 25 mm.
- Last week, concerns were rising that without solid rain soon, grazing potential and future grain supply could take a hit, putting more pressure on already limited feed availability. This incoming system could ease some of that pressure if follow-up rain holds. We will watch and wait and report on sentiment next week.
- There is hope that the forecast rain will trigger germination in the Mid North, where some crops have been sitting in the ground for almost three months without growth.
- Supplementary feeding for milking cows and lambing ewes continues as we wait for the impact of regular rain on crop growth and hay supply, which will take several months.
- South Australian farmers bringing in interstate fodder won't have to pay the usual \$167/hour inspection fee, easing pressure during ongoing drought. The waiver applies statewide, including the Southeast and Central regions.
- Farmers will be able to secure bales of premium-graded cereal hay at the 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 boost morale while offering practical support.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$500/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

- Wet conditions set in from Wednesday, with west coastal areas, including Bunbury, expected to receive up to 50 mm of rain on both Wednesday and Thursday. Further inland, daily falls will range between 5 mm and 25 mm of rainfall, before easing into the weekend.
- After a long dry spell, soil moisture will take time to recover. As a result, export-quality fodder that could be held back for local use is being watched closely, to help steady domestic supply if the season takes longer to bounce back than hoped.
- Widespread rain moved through the region from Wednesday into Thursday, reaching across the Pilbara to the south coast. Showers quickly turned to steady rain, with thunderstorms in the mix. Some areas saw heavy falls; a combination of tropical moisture and slow-moving instability helped spread rain across much of the west.
- Quarantine restrictions related to green snail have temporarily stalled hay deliveries from WA into SA. PIRSA and Livestock SA are working on a solution to reopen limited movement from select areas. For now, the delay adds pressure to already tight eastern supply.
- 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

- Showers are expected across the week starting Friday evening, with pockets of heavier rain possible if instability builds. Erriba is predicted to see 25mm of rain from Saturday, and the rest of the region will follow on Sunday.
- Despite these forecasts, rainfall totals will stay highly variable depending on how the system shapes up. We will monitor rainfall, its effect on crop growth and supply in the coming weeks, and whether it can get the region out of this dry period.
- Morning frost remains a factor in eastern areas, with marine wind warnings in place for the far northwest coast. Daytime maximum temperatures for the week will hit just 14°C, and dive to 1°C overnight.

- The BoM is also warning graziers that cold temperatures, showers and northerly winds are expected during Friday night in parts of the Northwest Coast forecast district, bringing a risk of loss to vulnerable livestock.
- One hay supplier in the region confirms there may be hay moving from Circular Head to farms in need in western Victoria shortly. While stating that Tasmania still needs every bale it can keep, producers are supportive if it helps those doing it tough.
- While the incoming rain will be welcome, it is likely too late to help much with hay growth, but it should boost dry cow feed growth.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -5 (\$325 to \$415/t) Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +15 (\$405 to \$485/t) Prices increase this week.
- Straw: -30 (\$110 to \$170/t) Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: +15 (\$305 to \$375/t) Prices increase this week.

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