

# Hay Report

03 October 2025

DELIVERING  
*for* DAIRY



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# Summary

## Driving Prices Up

- There is no significant upward pressure on prices this week. However, if buyers holding out for new-season hay cannot wait until mid-to-late October, short-term prices may rise, particularly for cereal and pasture hay. One to watch.

## Driving Prices Down

- Hay prices have continued to ease after reaching record highs in July, as the market resets following months of drought and limited early planning by producers.
- Cereal hay prices have continued to drop since July's record-highs of up to \$650/t in Victoria. Grain growers are still deciding whether to cut crops, with concerns over soil moisture, biomass and ROI. If they do, supply will likely increase in the coming weeks.
- Prices have dropped significantly in Tasmania, due to clearing out old-season hay while waiting for new-season supply. In Central SA, the market has softened as more growers begin cutting and buyers hold off, expecting further supply. New-season hay may not reach sheds until late October due to ongoing dry conditions.

## Local News

- **National weather summary and outlook**
  - September rainfall was below average across much of southern and southeastern Australia, adding to the long-running dry conditions that have persisted since early 2024. Parts of central Australia and the northern tropics recorded above-average falls.
  - Forecasts for October to December indicate a strong likelihood of above-average rainfall across much of eastern Australia and parts of Western Australia. Confidence in above-average rain for eastern regions has eased slightly since past forecasts.
  - Rainfall is likely to remain below average in parts of western Tasmania. The rest of the country has roughly equal chances of experiencing above- or below-average rainfall.
  - Daytime temperatures are likely to be above average across most of the country, except in parts of eastern New South Wales. Overnight temperatures are very likely to be above average almost nationwide.
  - Since February, rainfall in parts of southern South Australia, western and central Victoria, southwest Gippsland, and southern NSW has ranked among the lowest 5 to 10 per cent of historical records. These shortfalls continue to place pressure on soil moisture and growing conditions.
  - View and download the latest Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update via The Bureau of Meteorology [HERE](#).
- Buyers are encouraged to **feed test and view fodder** before purchase to ensure feed quality.

# Regional commentary

## Atherton Tablelands

- Daily temperatures have risen to the 30s across the region, and combined with light winds, will persist into the weekend, resulting in moderate fire danger throughout the Tablelands. These conditions may affect haymaking activity as some producers take precautions to prevent wildfires, while others bale quickly to avoid further hay drying.
- Soil moisture remains mostly average across the Pastoral Zone, supported by above-average rainfall between June and August. However, moisture levels are now gradually declining. Pasture biomass remains very high across Queensland, particularly in this region, suggesting new season hay from this area is likely to be among the highest in nutritional quality.
- One Atherton Tablelands grower reports a sharp decline in hay moisture due to hot, dry conditions, with late-night baling needed to keep product within spec (14% moisture). Strong local demand for contract baling is limiting the time for his own crop of Rhodes and barley. While supply of older Rhodes hay is clearing at around \$240 per tonne ex-farm, good-quality hay holds steady at \$320/t, and some oaten hay is reportedly asking \$400/t ex-farm in the wider region.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$400/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.

## Darling Downs

- Root zone soil moisture remains mostly average across key northern cropping areas, including the Downs. Above-average rainfall is likely from October to December (moderate to high confidence). This may support summer hay and silage growth but could also disrupt timing, with increased risk to quality if conditions delay cutting or curing.
- Warmer conditions have settled in across the Downs, with temperatures climbing into the 30s and light winds persisting. Fire danger remains moderate, prompting some hay producers to pause cutting and baling as a precaution.
- Cutting in the Darling Downs is about halfway through, with reported yields well above average. Much of this hay is being retained on-farm or traded locally, rather than entering the open market.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$530 to \$670/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$230 to \$290/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **North Coast NSW**

- Mostly warm, sunny conditions have dried out previously wet ground that had delayed cutting this season. With temperatures ranging from 25 to 33°C across the region this week, a moderate fire danger risk now exists, which may necessitate scaling back haymaking activities due to the heat and taking additional precautions.
- Some hay contractors without storage in the region are offering hay as low as \$250 per tonne ex-farm. This comes as the new season brings buyers attempting to find early bargains for growers without storage, while sellers seek some early premiums.
- One North Coast NSW grower reports very limited hay cutting underway due to recent wet conditions. While subsoil moisture remains healthy, the topsoil has dried out due to recent warm weather, and a small rain event (10mm) would be ideal. Crops are still maturing due to late planting. Old-season hay has rapidly cleared in the past month, driven by strong demand from producers attempting to restore cattle condition following prolonged wet stress. Prices are softening slightly, with no upward movement seen locally.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$250/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$250 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Central West NSW**

- Central West Slopes and Tablelands remain dry, with limited new growth and delayed crop development across most areas.
- With temperatures now ranging from the mid-20s to the mid-30s and no rain forecast, new season yields are expected to be low, except for grain crops that have been converted to hay due to falling prices. Mid-October will be telling when hay begins to fill sheds.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$370 to \$470/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -60 (\$425 to \$555/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$110 to \$170/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$310 to \$410/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Bega Valley**

- Sunny, stable weather continues again this week, and is ideal for continued cutting and activities. However, due to continued dry weather coupled with daily winds of up to 45km/h, the BOM has graded the Fire Danger risk as High in the Illawarra/Shoalhaven area and Moderate in the far south of the region. This may result in a reduction of haymaking activity.
- Local producers are optimistic that, with the right mix of rainfall and warmer weather, their growing initiatives will yield extended pasture growth, allowing for multiple cuts of hay and silage.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$460 to \$580/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -60 (\$500 to \$640/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$220 to \$270/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$420 to \$540/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Goulburn/Murray Valley**

- Mild, showery conditions midweek have slowed some paddock activity across the Goulburn and Murray Valleys. Clearer skies and warmer temperatures are forecasted from Saturday, providing hay growers with a useful window to cut or cure into early next week. The recent moisture has been supportive for spring pasture and crop growth, but timing will be key if follow-up rain develops later in the month.
- Bridgewater North hay and grain growers are experiencing a thriving season after a slow start. One producer said that crops sown amid low soil moisture and burnt stubble had responded and emerged almost immediately.
- Other winter crops, such as neo and maximus barley, wheat, and vetch for hay, as well as export hay, are progressing well, despite being three weeks behind schedule. The small bursts of rain are helping, and growers are hopeful that the season will be a success.
- Crops in Northern Victoria are being cut for hay, including those intended for grain, after reports that returns may be better.
- This comes as agronomists report that crops in the region, from Raywood to Serpentine through to Elmore, had 'caught up' in the past few weeks, with some areas closing in on their average rainfall.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -40 (\$370 to \$490/t). Prices decrease this week.

- Lucerne hay: -50 (\$410 to \$570/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$280 to \$440/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Gippsland

- Conditions remain highly variable across Gippsland. Some areas have ample feed growth, while others face severe water shortages and poor soil moisture after the driest 12 months on record.
- September rainfall shortfalls have put the season on a knife-edge. While hay growth is limited, rain is forecast into next week, especially in West and South Gippsland.
- South Gippsland (Korumburra) is seeing modest feed recovery due to isolated rainfall, though soil moisture remains low and dam levels are below 30%.
- In West Gippsland (Drouin), some dairy operators are buying water for the first time in 40 years and reducing herd numbers amid ongoing dry conditions and green drought.
- Central Gippsland (Yarram) has better water reliability from creeks for stock and irrigation, but still needs follow-up rain to establish summer pastures.
- East Gippsland (Orbost) had good autumn–winter conditions but turned dry in August. Hay and straw prices remain firm, with limited old-season stock and new-season supply yet to flow.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -40 (\$400 to \$550). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -50 (\$490 to \$600/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$115 to \$175/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$320 to \$480/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Southwest Victoria

- Southwest Victoria remains critically dry, with rainfall since February at record lows. Poor soil moisture continues to limit pasture and hay growth, and spring production outlook remains below average.
- The early September rain event failed to materialise. Spring rainfall is now crucial for increasing yield potential and producing high-quality hay.
- A clear Saturday with warm northerly winds may offer a narrow window for cutting or curing, but showers from Sunday into mid-next week will limit drying and paddock access.

- Where early cuts have been taken, attention is turning to regrowth management for livestock feed and adapting paddock plans in response to continued moisture stress.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -40 (\$390 to \$530/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -50 (\$420 to \$580). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$310 to \$420/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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### **Southeast South Australia**

- The Southeast remains in drought, with rainfall since February in the lowest 5–10% on record. August rain was patchy and largely below average, delaying crop and pasture growth.
- Poor root zone moisture and cool conditions have slowed development. Hay production is well below average, with some crops 5–10 weeks behind ideal stages.
- Weekend rainfall in areas like Mt Gambier and Naracoorte may bring limited relief ahead of a critical window for second cuts and summer feed.
- The early to mid-September rain event failed to materialise, reinforcing how crucial spring rainfall is to hay quality and yield.
- Forecasts now show a slightly better chance of above-average rainfall from October. While a recovery is still possible, spring conditions will need to improve sharply to lift production closer to average.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$475 to \$575/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: -30 (\$480 to \$620/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$150 to \$200/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: -20 (\$365 to \$445/t). Prices decrease this week.

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### **Central South Australia**

- Central SA continues to face severe drought, with rainfall since February sitting in the lowest 5–10% on record. August brought little relief, with below-average falls across most districts.



- Root zone soil moisture remains poor, and dryland crops are still 5–10 weeks behind typical hay-cutting stages. Some may cut early if warm, windy weather persists, with weekend temperatures pushing into the low 30s.
- Hay supply across the region remains limited, and the forecast September rain failed to materialise, reinforcing how important spring rainfall is for hay quality and overall yield.
- While forecasts show a slightly better chance of above-average rainfall in October, consistent follow-up rain is needed to meaningfully support second cuts or lift seasonal production closer to average.
- Some grain growers in the Mid North are already cutting crops for hay as grain returns soften. New-season cereal hay is trading at \$330–\$350/t ex-farm, around \$130/t below the July peak. The drop reflects easing demand and expectations of more supply. Export prices are still unconfirmed, and while availability may improve, much depends on how the season finishes.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -130 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$425 to \$495/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$200 to \$280/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## **Southwest Western Australia**

- Southwest WA has enjoyed a strong season, with average to above-average rainfall through August, improving soil moisture and setting crops up well through spring.
- While some lower-lying pastures experienced waterlogging, overall conditions have supported healthy pasture and hay growth. Earlier moisture deficits have eased across the zone.
- Hay producers now face mixed conditions heading into October. Forecasted showers this weekend, particularly in Collie, Busselton, and inland areas, may slow cutting schedules, but soil profiles remain favourable, supporting continued pasture development.
- Forecasts for October to December carry low confidence, with equal chances of wetter or drier conditions. If dry and cool conditions set in, frost risk could increase, particularly in the north.
- For now, the region remains on track for average to above-average hay yields, provided upcoming weather windows allow for timely cutting and curing.
- South West WA's near-perfect season is pushing harvest volumes toward record territory, with grain yields looking strong across the region. But flat grain prices and full supply chains are forcing a rethink. Rather than carry grain through slow logistics and tight margins, some growers are turning to hay, cutting cereal crops early to reduce risk and secure quicker returns. This may increase hay supply, particularly cereal hay, although quality and timing will determine what reaches the domestic and export markets.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$230 to \$310/t). Prices remain steady this week.

- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$190/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$300 to \$350/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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## Northwest Tasmania

- With below-average rainfall throughout winter and only patchy recovery in recent weeks, August and September offered little relief to the region.
- Soil moisture remains low, and the season has been further set back by recent frosts and cold conditions stalling pasture and crop growth. Yields are likely to be below average.
- Despite slow progress, growers remain hopeful that a decent October break will help push through a late first cut. The seasonal outcome hinges on what the next 4–6 weeks deliver.
- Rain is forecast during the weekend and early next week, with showers likely from Sunday through Wednesday, a potential turnaround if falls are consistent and temperatures stay mild.
- A local contractor reports cold, wet conditions with snow nearby stalling hay growth. Warmer temps are needed to kick off the season. Last season shedded lucerne is selling at \$320/t ex-farm; oaten hay at \$278/t, but slow demand may see it drop closer to \$222/t. Dairy farms have taken some as backup, but overall demand is soft. No straw left in the market, and pasture growth is slow despite paddocks being green. October break is now critical for first-cut timing.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -120 (\$200 to \$300/t) Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -150 (\$300 to \$400/t) Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$130 to \$190/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$330/t) Prices remain steady this week.

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