

Hay Report

15 August 2025

DELIVERING
for DAIRY

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Summary

Driving Prices Up

- Nothing is driving prices up.

Driving Prices Down

- Freight costs have eased in the Darling Downs region as growers and contractors work together in convoys, helping keep delivered hay more affordable.
- Reports suggest some producers have been offloading previously 'unsaleable' hay and straw baled up to six years ago. After sorting and moving it into sheds post-drought, it is now being sold between \$100 and \$200 per tonne. This older stock appears to be influencing prices, particularly across parts of Victoria and Central West New South Wales, as well as livestock condition.
- At the same time, some buyers are choosing to purchase fodder without feed testing. As ex-farm prices approached \$500 per tonne in certain areas throughout July, availability became a higher priority than quality. This urgency is linked to concerns about acidosis in grain-heavy ruminant diets.

Local News

- **National weather summary and outlook**
 - Recent rainfall has eased short-term deficiencies in parts of WA, SA, Vic and NSW, improving topsoil moisture. Long-term rainfall deficits persist across key farming regions in the south-east and west, limiting deep soil moisture reserves.
 - A wetter-than-average spring is likely across Qld, NSW, Vic and south-east SA, with higher rainfall expected in some regions. The western WA cropping belt is forecast to remain drier than average through spring.
 - Northern Australia is entering the wet season, with rising humidity and storm activity likely to affect hay quality and harvest timing.
 - Heading into the weekend, flood warnings have eased in parts of NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, and Queensland, where catchments were saturated from recent systems.
 - Sheep graziers' warnings and coastal wind alerts continue in exposed areas, especially across the ACT, Victoria's west coast, the Snowy Mountains and the south coast of NSW. The lower west and south west of WA have been added to the warnings, with expected severe weather and damaging winds late in the week.
 - Frost warnings in places for most of Victoria and SA's Riverland region.
- Wildlife Victoria is reporting a 400% spike in the number of eastern grey kangaroo deaths across Victoria due to Phalaris (canary) grass poisoning. New growth Phalaris, an introduced weed, is toxic to both kangaroos and livestock, and results in erratic behaviour and a painful death. Monitor livestock in areas of prolonged drought or grazing on public land. Watch for signs of poisoning and contact your local vet or wildlife rescue if you suspect poisoning.
- Buyers are encouraged to **feed test and view fodder** before purchase to ensure the quality of feed.

Regional commentary

Atherton Tablelands

- Saturday and Sunday will be mostly dry with some patchy cloud about. Nights will be cold across the inland, dipping as low as 6°C. The dry spell continues into next week, with foggy mornings in parts. Days will be clearer and slightly warmer, climbing closer to 22–24°C in Mareeba. Winds stay light and southerly.
- Looking ahead, there is a good chance of above median rainfall from September to November. Late winter rain further north has slowed sugarcane harvesting, which may cause similar hay and crop delays later in the season.
- A local grower in Atherton reports that while it has been drizzling for the past four days, clear sun and heat are needed to cut what is ready. The oaten hay is looking very good, reaching waist height on dry land without irrigation. However, growers are hesitant to cut too early and risk losing quality.
- A cold snap a few weeks ago caused frost damage, and many are now waiting for better conditions. One grower says he was able to bale the frost-bitten ends into decent hay, but others are holding back with too much at stake.
- Contract balers are working in the region, but the market is slow to move. Rhodes grass is sitting still, and there is no known change to current prices. Oats are beginning to throw seed, which is adding pressure, but most growers are still playing a waiting game.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Pasture (Rhodes Grass) hay: +/-0 (\$450 to \$650/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 fodder before purchase to ensure feed quality.

Darling Downs

- The weekend looks stable and cool, with chilly mornings likely, and possible frost. Saturday and Sunday both look sunny, though Sunday brings a wintry southwesterly breeze. Daytime temperatures will also ease slightly, reaching 18°C to 20°C across the region.
- Root zone soil moisture is mostly sitting at average levels, with some localised areas slightly above average. This is helping maintain steady crop growth. The BOM's outlook indicates a high chance (60–80%) of above median rainfall from September to November. This could support crop development and help build soil moisture ahead of the summer season.
- In contrast, a local hay contact says the region needs conditions to dry out. Continued rain and a wet forecast are causing concern, making this another slow hay year, similar to 2022. Although crops look strong, waterlogged soil is putting potential premium cuts at risk.
 - Freight costs have eased locally as growers and contractors work together in convoys, helping keep delivered hay more affordable.

- Prices for key fodder types have dipped again this week, significantly, after untenable increases in late June and mid-July. The peak of pricing pressure now seems to be behind us.
- Significant change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -130 (\$360 to \$540/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$530 to \$670/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: -20 (\$260 to \$340/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$330/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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North Coast NSW

- Saturday is forecast to be mostly sunny and calm. Sunday may see a light coastal, but most places stay dry, especially inland; ideal for beginning the large task of drying out waterlogged soil from continued rain. Cool nights (down to 6–10°C) will be common across the region.
- Continued heavy rainfalls (50–250 mm of rain) across the region have led to flooding in nearby areas and pushed soil moisture to very high levels. The Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) now classifies the region as having unfavourable and degrading agricultural conditions, according to its Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update.
- Waterlogged paddocks are holding back machinery access and delaying early haymaking, especially in low-lying ground. If the rain continues into spring, expect ongoing delays for growth and fieldwork.
- Prices for key fodder types have dipped again this week, in line with state trends. It is an early sign that peak pricing pressure may now be behind us.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$330 to \$430/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$400 to \$480/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: +/-0 (\$170 to \$270/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

- A major flood warning has been downgraded to moderate around the Namoi River at Bugilbone and Goangra from Thursday.

- According to the BOM's latest Weekly Climate and Water Update, July rainfall brought some short-term relief, but soil moisture across the region remains well below average. Many crops and pastures are still 5 to 10 weeks behind typical growth.
- The Bureau's spring outlook shows a moderate chance of above median rainfall from September to November. Follow-up rain will be important to support grain fill and give pastures a chance to catch up.
- While deeper soils have held some moisture, dry topsoils are limiting sowing, spraying and early fertiliser decisions. Many growers are delaying hay cutting in the hope of improved bulk through spring.
- Prices for all fodder types have dipped again this week. It appears peak pricing pressure is now behind us.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -10 (\$540 to \$620/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -30 (\$530 to \$670/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: -30 (\$190 to \$270/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -20 (\$500 to \$600/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Bega Valley

- A mostly dry and settled Friday, with mild temperatures of 18°C in Bega and Merimbula, and up to 17°C in Batemans Bay. Patchy fog may linger early, and a few showers could creep in near the Victorian border by evening, but most of the region will stay dry.
- Over the weekend, Saturday brings a medium chance of light showers, mainly in the morning and afternoon. Sunday sees a cold start with frost about the ranges, followed by another chance of scattered showers later in the day and possibly with some small hail near the border.
- According to the BOM's latest Weekly Climate and Water Update, paddocks are still holding excess moisture after heavy rain and waterlogging in May, with conditions remaining challenging for hay growth and ground access. The region is now classified as having unfavourable and degrading agricultural conditions.
- Forecasts suggest a possible wetter-than-average spring, so planning ahead for wet ground management is advised.
- Prices for lucerne and straw have dipped again this week. It appears that peak pricing pressure is now behind us.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$620 to \$740/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: -20 (\$610 to \$750/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: -20 (\$310 to \$360/t). Prices decrease this week.

- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$610 to \$730/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- A cold front moves through on Friday, bringing a higher chance of showers in the afternoon and evening. Winds will pick up ahead of the change, easing later in the day. Saturday and Sunday stay cool, with scattered showers and a decent chance of small hail on Sunday. Most places will peak at around 13°C through the weekend. Into early next week, expect cold mornings and patchy frost, with lighter winds and a return to drier conditions by Tuesday.
- Based on official BOM data, July rainfall brought some relief, but long-term deficits remain. Soils are holding average moisture for now, but crops are tracking behind.
- There is a moderate to high chance of above median rainfall from September to November. A decent spring is needed to bring crops and pastures to average yield potential, according to the Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update.
- Producers in the north of the region are reported to be taking a cautious approach to the spring season, in contrast to the widely communicated positive outlook for September. The forecast, however, suggests no significant rainfall is on the cards for August to replenish the soil moisture needed for satisfactory growth. The next two weeks are critical for setting up spring.
- Prices for all fodder types have dipped again this week; a sign that peak pricing pressure may now be behind us.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -20 (\$560 to \$680/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$580 to \$740/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: -40 (\$140 to \$240/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -20 (\$510 to \$690/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Gippsland

- Showers arrive Friday and stick around into Sunday, bringing colder conditions and better chances for top-up rainfall, especially in the south and west. Small hail and snow is expected on higher ground, dropping to 700 metres by Saturday in the west and possibly lower in the east by early Sunday.
- Late-week frost warnings are also in place for graziers across the region, with overnight temperatures down as low as -4°C in Mount Baw Baw and 1°C in Latrobe Valley this weekend.
- According to the BOM's Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update, recent heavy rainfall has kept soil moisture levels very high across much of Gippsland. Conditions are classified as unfavourable and degrading for agriculture in most areas.

- South and West Gippsland have experienced continued rainfall and localised flooding, especially in low-lying areas. Paddock access is limited, and early-season fodder work is on hold until ground conditions improve. In East Gippsland, soil conditions are softer and more workable, but rain has still slowed access, particularly in heavier soils. Some early hay planning has started, but confidence depends on a drier weather window in the weeks ahead.
- Primary producers in the region's south have received 40mm of rain in early July, yet only 5mm of rain since. Much more is needed to ensure spring success, with the next two weeks critical. Many of these farmers are handfeeding and have gone through their 'buffers' of two years' worth of hay and silage. Plans to destock as fodder becomes scarce is now a reality.
- Prices for key fodder types have dipped again this week. Straw across Victoria continues to decrease significantly, indicating that peak pricing pressure may now be behind us.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -20 (\$590 to \$740). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$660 to \$770/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: -40 (\$180 to \$290/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -20 (\$560 to \$720/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Southwest Victoria

- A strong cold front moves through Friday, kicking off a run of cooler, wetter days. Widespread showers are expected through the weekend, with the best totals likely Friday afternoon and Saturday. There is a good chance of small hail and even snow on peaks above 700 metres.
- Based on the BOM Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update, rainfall in July was mostly average or above average, helping kickstart crop and pasture growth after a dry autumn. Soils are responding, but there is still a way to go.
- The forecast points to a better chance of above median rainfall through spring. This will be important to support crops that are still 5–10 weeks behind in growth.
- Farmers along the coast to the east are also facing dry conditions, up to 20 per cent below the average rainfall for this time of year. In Winchelsea, grain growers remain hopeful that, despite this shortfall, their innovation and resilience, and some good recent growth, can help them through this challenging period.
- Primary producers in the region are finding a rise in pests, thriving on stressed paddocks as a result of the southwest's two-year drought. Red-legged earth mites, cockchafer and slugs are normal pasture pests, but farmers have noted a rise in numbers. It is reported that the Wimmera are facing a greater issue in comparison to previous winters, raising concerns for new growth pastures and hay plantings.
- Prices for key fodder types have dipped again this week. Straw across Victoria continues to decrease significantly, suggesting that peak pricing pressure may now be behind us.
- Some change to pricing this week.

- Cereal hay: -20 (\$570 to \$730/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: -10 (\$590 to \$750). Prices decrease this week.
- Straw: -40 (\$170 to \$260/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -20 (\$550 to \$660/t). Prices decrease this week.

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South-east South Australia

- A cold front on Friday brings gusty winds and widespread showers, with hail more likely in the lower parts of the region. Showers continue into the weekend across the region, heavier and longer-lasting near the coast. The north may see shorter bursts and earlier clearing. Daytime temps will sit between 13 and 15°C.
- The BOM has lifted strong wind warnings from mid-week across the South Central Coast, Upper South East Coast and Lower South East Coast and possibly into the weekend.
- July rainfall was a welcome improvement after one of the driest starts in recent memory. Soil moisture has lifted in many areas but remains patchy in depth, according to the Bureau's Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update.
- The update also suggests the outlook for spring is encouraging, with a higher chance of above median rainfall. A soft, wet finish will be needed to close the gap left by the slow start.
- Where key fodder types decreased in most hay growing regions again this week, prices have steadied in the south-east of the state. Straw continues to decline across the country after hyperinflated prices from May through to late July, and some old stock coming into the market. Hopefully, this means that peak pricing pressure is now behind us.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$595 to \$745/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$610 to \$760/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -15 (\$200 to \$270/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$605 to \$715/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Central South Australia

- A weak system brings a chance of light showers Friday night into early Saturday, mostly in southern and eastern parts of the region, such as Clare Valley, Mid North, and the edges of the Mt Lofty Ranges, with 1–5mm rainfall possible. Most of the northern and western inland will remain dry.

- Sunday through to mid next week, conditions remain settled but dry. Mornings will be cold, with widespread frost risk inland, particularly north of Jamestown and around Peterborough. Days stay cool, highs around 15–18°C, and no meaningful rain expected through Tuesday.
- According to the Bureau's Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update, July conditions across the mid north and surrounds have improved, but rainfall post-February is the lowest on record across many districts. Crops and pastures are still behind schedule.
- The update suggests there is a good chance of spring rainfall lifting above the median. It will need to keep coming to support grain fill and pasture bulk before the season's end.
- One hay grower in Minlaton has run out of hay and straw. They have taken a pause and are now waiting to see what happens in the next two weeks with rainfall. They say this timeframe will determine whether they will have enough hay in spring to replenish stocks and sell.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$415 to \$545/t). Prices remain steady 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

- After a cold front with heavy winds and showers easing into Friday, a high-pressure ridge will settle in and bring more stable weather over the weekend, with light winds and clearer skies expected.
- Saturday is looking mostly dry with patchy fog and frost inland. Light showers may return near the coast on Sunday afternoon. Daytime temperatures will sit around the mid-teens, rising slightly into early next week.
- The BOM has issued sheep graziers and strong wind warnings mid-week across the South West and Lower West, with cold, wet and windy conditions likely to have impacted exposed stock.
- The BOM's Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water Update determines that rootzone soil moisture remains average to below average in central parts of WA's wheatbelt, inland from coastal regions. Continued rain in the coming months is needed to sustain crop yield potential.
- Early emerged crops are showing good yield potential, while yields of crops either planted later or slower to emerge will be highly dependent on favourable (wet) spring conditions.
- Growers remain cautious, holding hay for now as they watch how the season unfolds. Demand feels uncertain but stable, and based on local contractor insights, pricing is expected to remain steady in the short term.
- This is echoed by a hay grower in Williams, who says conditions are better than average, with recent rainfall, including 10 to 15 mm of rain on Wednesday, supporting strong paddock growth.

- With oat prices holding up, many in the region are leaning towards harvesting for grain instead of cutting for hay.
- 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

- Conditions will shift quickly over the next few days. Showers, cooler temps, and occasional hail are expected Friday through Sunday, with snow possible on higher ground. Winds will strengthen on Friday and remain gusty into the weekend.
- Temperatures will drop further from Saturday, with frost likely in the east and snow falling as low as 500 metres. The region will stay cool and unsettled into early next week.
- Based on official BOM Weekly Agriculture, Climate and Water reports, soil moisture levels are still lower than average for this time of year for the region. The spring outlook shows no strong signal for above median rainfall in Tasmania. With a dry lead-up and low soil moisture, growers here are hoping for a change in conditions to maintain pasture and crop potential.
- According to a local contractor, current warm temperatures are providing ideal conditions for grass growth, but a chance of snow this weekend is a mild concern. Demand has eased, but supply is also down, so there is no pressure building yet. Silage prices have dropped by \$20–40 per bale as cows return to the dairy sheds. Chaff sales have also slowed. There is no cereal straw available in the region.
- Per the other hay growing regions, growers are watching and waiting to see what the next fortnight brings in terms of rain, ready for spring. Until then, no additional hay is coming in to drive pricing.
- No change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$325 to \$415/t) Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$460 to \$540/t) Prices remain steady 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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