

Hay Report

12 September 2025

DELIVERING
for DAIRY

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Summary

Driving Prices Up

- Nothing is pushing prices up significantly this week. However, lucerne hay has remained steady across regions again this week, supported by consistent demand and tighter carryover stocks.
- 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.

Driving Prices Down

- Hay prices are easing after July's record-highs, as the market resets following months of drought and limited early producer planning.
- Growers in southwest NSW, the Wimmera and Murray Mallee may cut for hay due to poor grain outlooks, which could lift local supply. One to watch.
- Many buyers expect fresh hay earlier than likely. Delays from dry conditions mean new season hay may not hit sheds until late October.
- Most online listings still show carryover hay. Prices do not always reflect shed-floor value, particularly for higher-grade loads.

Local News

– National weather summary and outlook

- Cold fronts and troughs delivered up to 100mm rainfall across Tasmania and coastal southwest WA last week, and 5–25mm in inland southwest WA, Victoria, and southern NSW.
 - August rainfall was above average in parts of the west and east, while central and southeastern Australia remained below average. Year-to-date rainfall deficiencies have eased in WA, while southeastern Australia continues to face shortfalls.
 - Root-zone soil moisture has improved across much of southern Australia but remains low in the southeast. Water storage in parts of the southern and eastern states is down by up to 50% from last year.
 - The Bureau forecasts above-average rainfall (60–80% chance) across most of eastern and central Australia, especially in October. Higher spring temperatures are likely across northern, southeastern, and far western parts of Australia.
 - The Spring 2025 Bushfire Outlook flags increased fire risk for southern and western Victoria, adjacent SA, and parts of WA due to recent fuel growth and warmer weather.
 - Early spring indicators remain mixed for hay production. While rainfall outlooks are promising in the east, soil moisture deficits and water storage pressures in the southeast continue to present challenges. 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

- Showers and possible storms are forecast over the weekend and into early next week, with up to 8–9 mm of rain possible across Saturday and Sunday. Easterly winds and high humidity are expected to continue. With rainfall building, conditions will need close monitoring for any delays to spring activity.
- Ongoing wet, yet hot (reaching 31°C in some areas) conditions may limit opportunities for haymaking, particularly in pasture paddocks, heading into mid-September.
- 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

- Dry, partly cloudy conditions are expected through the weekend and into mid-week, with cool mornings and max temps reaching the low to mid-20s. Only a slight chance of a light shower in the far east.
- This clear stretch of weather has improved paddock access, particularly for pasture and lucerne growers. Early spring cuts may begin sooner than feared if soil moisture continues to improve and the ground remains dry.
- Demand remains stable across most hay types in the region. New season yields may be given a greater chance if growers take advantage of this run of dry days.
- Straw is now at early April levels, a pricing sentiment shared across most hay-growing regions. Despite this, supply is still at a minimum as producers continue to feed crops and wait for October cuts, and rainfall needed to support a plentiful Spring yield.
- Reports from local feedlots suggest cereal hay is pricing itself out of the ration for many operators. After supply disruptions in the south due to drought and flooding, some northern buyers have shifted to more affordable roughage options, such as Rhodes grass, reportedly coming in around \$100 cheaper per tonne.
- This change in feeding strategy highlights ongoing pressure on cereal hay demand locally, as feeders weigh up cost-effective alternatives.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$540/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$530 to \$670/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -15 (\$230 to \$290/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$270 to \$330/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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North Coast NSW

- Wet ground continues to delay hay cutting, with growers still waiting for a reliable dry spell ahead of October starts.
- Some clearer weather next week may offer short-term relief, but soft paddocks and strong growth mean timing will be crucial.
- Old-season hay is still available, but demand is expected to rise quickly once cutting begins. If supply stays tight, short-term price lifts are likely as buyers re-enter the market.
- Straw pricing has returned to early-2025 levels, though local supply remains low while producers focus on crop feeding and prepare for spring cuts.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -30 (\$300 to \$400/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$380 to \$500/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -20 (\$150 to \$250/t). Prices decrease 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.
- Cutting is still 5–10 weeks away for many growers, with low yields expected unless spring rain arrives soon. In the Forbes area, falling grain prices are prompting growers to reassess their harvest plans. If dry conditions persist, more crops may be redirected to cereal hay, potentially adding to supply in coming weeks.
- Hay supply is tight, and prices remain firm, but are likely to lift if demand increases during the delay.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$440 to \$520/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$500 to \$640/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -30 (\$110 to \$170/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$360 to \$460/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Bega Valley

- Plenty of winter and early spring rain has kept paddocks green, with strong pasture and crop growth across the region.
- Sunny, stable weather this week is ideal for curing, and cutting has already begun in some areas. Early-season supply looks healthy.
- If the rain holds off, quality should stay high and prices steadier than in drier inland regions.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: +/-0 (\$520 to \$640/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$580 to \$720/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -30 (\$220 to \$270/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: +/-0 (\$470 to \$590/t). Prices remain steady this week.

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Goulburn/Murray Valley

- Crops are improving after a slow start, but patchy growth and cool mornings are still holding back progress in some areas.
- Scattered showers and cloudy weather this week will not help drying, delaying early cuts.
- Supply remains low, and while demand is also quiet, that may shift once buyers realise cutting is still weeks away.
- Cereal and pasture hay prices have returned to late May–early June levels, with straw now at its lowest since early 2024. One grower reports cereal hay moving at \$320–\$350/t on-farm, but notes the importance of feed testing to confirm nutritional quality.
- Prices could lift if local demand picks up ahead of actual availability. This will be one to watch.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -40 (\$400 to \$520/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$490 to \$650/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -30 (\$90 to \$110/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -40 (\$330 to \$490/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Gippsland

- Southwest Gippsland is facing one of its driest years on record, with rainfall still well below average since February. Ongoing dry conditions are slowing crop development and limiting soil moisture recovery.
- While short-term showers continue this week, longer-term forecasts suggest above-average spring rainfall, which may create challenges for both hay cutting and curing later in the season.
- Early cuts remain delayed or patchy across the region, with east Gippsland showing some promise, but the west/south districts need consistent rain to reset growth trajectories. One hay producer in Yarram says the season is “on a knife’s edge” with rain needed within the next ten days to rescue the season and the small amount of hay that is growing on dry ground.
- Cereal and pasture hay are now back at early June pricing, while straw continues to drop in price; now at its lowest since November 2024. While positive, it is essential to note that supplies remain extremely limited. This is an attempt to sell any remaining old-season stock while the market waits for new-season hay to enter the market, even though it is still several weeks away.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -40 (\$430 to \$580). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$570 to \$680/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -30 (\$115 to \$175/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -40 (\$370 to \$530/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Southwest Victoria

- A dry start and record-low rainfall early in the year have left crops and pastures well behind, but recent rain has lifted short-term soil moisture and brought a touch of confidence back.
- Growth is still delayed by 5–10 weeks in most paddocks; rain in the coming weeks will be crucial in helping to push crops into a viable window for cutting.
- The forecast is looking more optimistic, with multiple rain days ahead and above-average spring rainfall likely. While it is too soon to call it a turnaround, there is cautious hope that yields could lift off the back of a wet September and October.
- Cereal, straw, and pasture hay prices continue to decrease; however, lucerne remains steady again this week. Straw is at its lowest price in twelve months, while cereal and pasture hay are back to late May levels.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -40 (\$420 to \$560/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$500 to \$660). Prices remain steady this week.

- Straw: -30 (\$100 to \$150/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -40 (\$360 to \$470/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Southeast South Australia

- Crops are still 5–10 weeks behind across the region, after a dry start and cool conditions slowed growth heading into spring. Some paddocks have improved slightly with recent showers, but the season is still running late.
- A drier weekend ahead is expected to lift temps into the low 20s, which should support modest growth, but scattered showers return mid-next week. Cutting remains a week-by-week call, depending on how that forecast holds.
- Outlook for October is positive, with increased chances of above-average rainfall. If it arrives as forecast, this could help crops make up lost ground and support at least average yields, but it is still a narrow window.
- Cereal and pasture hay continue a downward trend after steadying last week, with prices reverting to May–June levels. Like other regions, straw has reached its lowest price in several months, in February, in this instance. While these are positive signs, these are prices for old-season hay off very limited stocks. Once new season bales enter the market toward the end of October, we expect pricing to change significantly, and perhaps, sooner, if buyers currently holding out require fodder urgently.
- Some change to pricing this week.
- Cereal hay: -60 (\$475 to \$575/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Lucerne hay: +/-0 (\$525 to \$675/t). Prices remain steady this week.
- Straw: -30 (\$150 to \$200/t). Prices decrease this week.
- Pasture hay: -60 (\$420 to \$530/t). Prices decrease this week.

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Central South Australia

- Dry and mostly clear conditions are set to continue through the weekend, with warmer days and northerly winds ahead of a potential rain system early next week.
- This region continues to sit in one of its driest years on record, with rainfall since February significantly below average. The ground is still recovering, and any moisture is overdue.
- Forecasted showers early next week could bring some relief, especially for growers thinking ahead to pasture or cereal hay. More follow-up rain will be needed to shift conditions meaningfully. Cutting is approximately three to four weeks away.

- Local experts suggest that growers may opt to produce cereal hay instead of low-yielding grain, thereby increasing the availability of hay across the region.
- 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

- Showers and gusty conditions are forecast from Saturday into early next week, with rainfall totals building and windy weather expected to impact paddocks, especially around Bunbury and Manjimup.
- Most areas remain too wet for machinery access, following weeks of higher-than-average winter rainfall. Soil moisture remains high, and waterlogging is still an issue in parts of the wheatbelt.
- Hay cutting remains on hold across much of the region, with growers needing a longer dry spell before operations can resume. Early crop growth remains positive, but delayed access is a growing concern.
- Buyer activity has slowed after a frantic May through July, which has brought a sense of relief to contractors in the region who have very little hay stocks.
- Pricing remains steady once again this week, as hay producers continue to wait for the soil to dry somewhat to enable a proper assessment of when hay can be cut, and its quality.
- 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

- Showers and gusty winds are expected over the coming week, especially on Monday and Tuesday, with cooler daytime temps persisting across the region.
- While rainfall has been variable, forecast moisture early next week may help turn around pasture conditions, but low temperatures remain the bigger barrier heading into spring.

- Hay traders in the region are concerned by the chilly weather that has returned, with some parts threatening to snow over the past week and a half. These conditions may affect growth, and suppliers are nervous about yield, which will not be known until the end of September.
- Our contact on the ground in the northwest also states that until new supply comes in, prices will remain steady.
- 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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