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Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

2016-17 WINTER CROP PERFORMANCE

SEPTEMBER 2016

PREMIUM
FOOD AND WINE FROM OUR
CLEAN
ENVIRONMENT



Government
of South Australia

Primary Industries
and Regions SA

Crop and Pasture Report - South Australia

This is a bimonthly report prepared by Rural Solutions SA, for the Agriculture, Food and Wine Division of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA).

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ALL ENQUIRIES

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State Summary

WEATHER

- July rainfall was average to very much above average in most of the agricultural districts, with an area in the Adelaide Hills receiving its highest rainfall on record. The northern part of the Upper North (Quorn and Carrieton) received below average rainfall.
- August rainfall varied from below average to average across most of the cereal zone with small areas of very much below average on Kangaroo Island, Lower Eyre Peninsula and the north west of the Upper South East and a small area of very much above average in the Southern Murray Mallee.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for July and above average for August across the agricultural districts.
- Mean minimum temperatures for July ranged from average to very much above average. Minimum temperatures in August ranged from very much below average in the northern part of the Upper North to above average in the Mid and Lower South East.
- Strong and damaging winds in excess of 80 km/h recorded on the 9 and 18 August ahead of cold fronts that brought heavy rain across southern areas of the State.

CROPS

- Rainfall and growing conditions have been ideal in most districts across the State with above average yields predicted in all districts. In most districts, crops have high levels of biomass and require good spring rainfall to achieve their yield potential.
- Growers responded to a low grain price outlook by capping production costs through reduced application of some inputs, particularly in the low rainfall districts. Less inputs may cost growers some potential grain production and possibly exacerbate quality issues such as lower grain protein.
- Some crops on Lower Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, Lower North, Kangaroo Island and the South East have been damaged by waterlogging. Crops unaffected by waterlogging in these areas have well above average yield potential.
- There has been some minor moisture stress in several lower-rainfall districts but in most cases this has had only minimal impact on yield.
- High rates of nitrogen fertiliser have been applied to cereal and canola crops in most districts to maximise the chance of crops achieving their potential.
- Trace element deficiencies have become more apparent with the cold wet conditions, requiring foliar applications of trace elements in a number of districts.
- Some early-sown cereal crops are at grain fill with, later-sown crops at tillering and the majority are at flag to early head emergence.
- Pulse crops range from early flowering to mid-podding with average to above average yield potential.
- Canola crops are at full to late flowering with high yield potential in most districts.
- The level of blackleg is generally higher than normal, particularly in higher rainfall areas where canola is grown more intensively.
- Early preventative fungicide applications, both in-furrow and applied at early stem elongation, have been effective in reducing diseases in cereal crops, despite the wet conditions.
- There are low levels of leaf rust in cereals in a number of districts with most farmers applying at least one fungicide spray to protect new growth against further infection.
- In a number of districts farmers are delaying applications of a second fungicide spray due to uncertainty about finishing rains and grain prices.

- The levels of the disease Ascochyta blight have increased in chickpea crops. Farmers are closely monitoring their crops as per SARDI advice and applying fungicide as required, but the impact of the disease on the chickpea crop is uncertain.
- Ascochyta disease is present on the foliage of lentil crops, with severity depending on the lentil variety. Grey mould is also present at low levels in some very thick sown crops. The high number and frequency of lentil crops grown on Yorke Peninsula has contributed to the higher disease incidence.
- Showery weather during September will place lentils on Yorke Peninsula at high risk of losing yield due to the foliar diseases grey mould and sclerotinia, and grain quality could be affected by ascochyta.
- Cow pea aphid numbers have increased in vetch and bean crops with most being sprayed once and sometimes twice to reduce damage.
- Russian wheat aphid is present at low levels across the eastern part of the State. In some districts damage is being restricted to isolated patches in crops, however in other districts numbers are beginning to build up and whole crops have required spraying.
- Early-sown crops appear to have higher levels of Russian wheat aphid, with aphids often difficult to find in later-sown crops (those sown from late May onwards). Aphid numbers appear to be higher around grassy areas in crops and along fence lines.

PASTURES

- Pasture growth was slow in many districts due to the cold wet conditions in July and early August but the warmer weather and longer days in late August has stimulated rapid growth.
- There are now adequate to high levels of pasture feed in all districts of the State.
- High levels of biomass in pasture paddocks, particularly on Eyre Peninsula and the Mallee have provided farmers the opportunity to cut surplus feed for hay.
- In most districts, crops and pastures sown for hay have high levels of biomass with above average yield potential.
- Livestock are in good to excellent condition in all districts.

KEY LINKS TO OTHER INFORMATION

Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources - Soil and Land Condition monitoring:
www.environment.sa.gov.au/Knowledge_Bank/Science_research/Monitoring_evaluation_analysis/Monitoring/Soil_and_land_condition

Bureau of Meteorology - Weather and rainfall observations:
www.bom.gov.au

NOTES ON CALCULATION OF CROP ESTIMATES

Crop estimates for the current year assume average rainfall and temperature conditions for the remainder of the growing season.

Grain estimates are for total grain production and include grain delivered for immediate sale and warehousing plus grain retained on farm for seed, feed and future sale.

Hay estimates are for total hay production and include all pasture, cereal and other crops cut for hay, both dryland and irrigated.

The estimates are based on information provided by Rural Solutions SA District Reporters from a variety of sources and are updated throughout the season as conditions change and further information becomes available. They are intended to provide an indication of crop potential at the time the report is prepared.

The estimates are updated using ABS census data as available.

Crop Estimates

TABLE 1 CROP ESTIMATES BY DISTRICT

		Western Eyre Peninsula	Lower Eyre Peninsula	Eastern Eyre Peninsula	Yorke Peninsula	Upper North	Mid North	Lower North	Kangaroo Island
Wheat	<i>ha</i>	477 000	145 000	392 000	165 000	237 000	236 000	56 500	5 700
	<i>t</i>	811 000	450 000	823 000	627 000	557 000	780 000	209 000	15 500
Durum	<i>ha</i>	0	0	0	20 000	9 500	8 500	6 500	0
	<i>t</i>	0	0	0	63 500	23 000	26 000	22 000	0
Barley	<i>ha</i>	60 000	59 000	71 000	151 000	93 000	93 000	27 000	1 800
	<i>t</i>	103 000	196 000	149 000	545 000	220 000	315 000	100 000	5 000
Oats	<i>ha</i>	16 500	3 200	6 000	4 000	4 800	5 500	1 500	3 300
	<i>t</i>	24 000	7 700	9 500	12 000	9 600	14 300	4 500	9 000
Rye	<i>ha</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<i>t</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	400	500	500	1 000	1 200	1 700	400	0
	<i>t</i>	650	1 500	1 050	3 500	3 000	5 100	1 400	0
Peas	<i>ha</i>	4 800	4 500	5 500	13 000	28 000	24 000	6 700	400
	<i>t</i>	5 300	6 300	6 600	23 500	39 000	36 000	13 500	650
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	1 500	26 000	5 400	1 000	3 600	1 800	500	1 000
	<i>t</i>	1 300	40 000	5 400	1 500	5 000	2 700	700	1 700
Beans	<i>ha</i>	100	6 500	400	10 200	8 300	12 200	6 200	3 500
	<i>t</i>	110	11 700	400	20 500	12 500	22 000	11 800	7 000
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	0	400	200	6 500	3 200	5 000	1 000	0
	<i>t</i>	0	600	200	10 500	4 000	6 000	1 300	0
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	100	2 000	300	113 000	5 500	14 500	7 500	0
	<i>t</i>	100	3 000	300	170 000	7 800	23 000	11 000	0
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	2 400	1 800	2 000	2 000	5 500	5 200	300	0
	<i>t</i>	1 000	1 300	1 200	2 400	3 300	3 600	300	0
Canola	<i>ha</i>	8 000	75 000	11 000	18 200	20 000	26 000	3 200	2 200
	<i>t</i>	10 500	135 000	14 500	29 000	31 000	42 000	6 400	4 200
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	5 000	3 700	5 200	24 000	24 000	45 000	6 000	7 000
	<i>t</i>	18 000	16 800	18 000	167 000	110 000	274 000	36 000	34 000
Total	<i>ha</i>	570 800	323 900	494 300	504 900	419 600	433 400	117 300	17 900
	<i>t</i>	956 960	853 100	1 011 150	1 508 400	915 200	1 275 700	381 900	43 050

TABLE 1 CROP ESTIMATES BY DISTRICT (CONT)

		Central Hills & Fleurieu	Lower Murray	Nth Murray Mallee	Sth Murray Mallee	Upper South East	Lower South East	State Total
Wheat	<i>ha</i>	4 500	66 000	245 000	124 000	65 000	22 000	2 240 700
	<i>t</i>	10 600	131 000	380 000	248 000	182 000	79 000	5 303 100
Durum	<i>ha</i>	300	600	300	0	9 500	0	55 200
	<i>t</i>	650	1 050	390	0	25 000	0	161 590
Barley	<i>ha</i>	10 500	60 000	56 000	84 000	33 000	5 500	804 800
	<i>t</i>	26 800	132 000	89 000	185 000	88 000	19 500	2 173 300
Oats	<i>ha</i>	1 800	3 000	2 200	4 100	19 500	5 200	80 600
	<i>t</i>	4 300	6 000	3 000	7 400	51 000	14 500	176 800
Rye	<i>ha</i>	0	1 500	2 800	5 000	1 200	0	10 500
	<i>t</i>	0	2 200	2 800	7 000	1 200	0	13 200
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	500	4 900	2 500	6 400	1 000	500	21 500
	<i>t</i>	1 250	9 800	3 300	11 500	2 600	1 600	46 250
Peas	<i>ha</i>	1 500	3 200	2 500	2 700	3 000	400	100 200
	<i>t</i>	2 700	4 800	1 500	3 200	4 500	800	148 350
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	2 000	3 400	2 800	8 000	16 800	3 000	76 800
	<i>t</i>	3 500	5 100	1 700	9 500	23 500	4 800	106 400
Beans	<i>ha</i>	400	200	0	1 000	12 000	12 500	73 500
	<i>t</i>	750	250	0	1 000	24 000	28 500	140 510
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	200	200	1 400	1 000	200	200	19 500
	<i>t</i>	250	200	1 100	1 000	260	300	25 710
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	300	1 200	800	5 000	3 600	200	154 000
	<i>t</i>	400	1 200	480	5 000	5 400	280	227 960
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	0	1 500	4 300	6 000	800	0	31 800
	<i>t</i>	0	1 200	3 450	3 600	650	0	22 000
Canola	<i>ha</i>	4 100	3 000	14 000	5 000	15 000	9 000	213 700
	<i>t</i>	6 500	3 300	10 000	5 500	26 800	18 000	342 700
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	29 000	5 400	3 600	16 000	67 000	27 500	268 400
	<i>t</i>	145 000	24 000	9 000	64 000	338 000	138 000	1 391 800
Total	<i>ha</i>	26 100	148 700	334 600	252 200	180 600	58 500	3 882 800
	<i>t</i>	57 700	298 100	496 720	487 700	434 910	167 280	8 887 870

TABLE 2 CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

		2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	5 year ave	2016/17
Wheat	<i>ha</i>	2 226 100	2 176 300	2 295 900	2 236 000	2 200 000	2 226 900	2 240 700
	<i>t</i>	4 444 800	3 556 500	4 976 000	4 672 000	4 315 500	4 393 000	5 303 100
Durum	<i>ha</i>	74 600	77 200	68 300	51 300	49 500	64 200	55 200
	<i>t</i>	223 950	181 240	194 930	118 250	86 750	161 000	161 590
Barley	<i>ha</i>	987 700	907 100	854 900	804 000	839 300	878 600	804 800
	<i>t</i>	2 031 800	1 912 900	2 093 500	1 922 000	1 978 000	1 987 600	2 173 300
Oats	<i>ha</i>	75 800	85 800	85 000	73 300	70 300	78 000	80 600
	<i>t</i>	117 400	128 740	159 700	120 700	103 000	125 900	176 800
Rye	<i>ha</i>	9 500	9 500	7 100	9 000	7 500	8 500	10 500
	<i>t</i>	7 900	7 500	6 350	9 300	6 200	7 500	13 200
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	80 200	69 200	49 300	27 100	21 800	49 500	21 500
	<i>t</i>	117 500	95 920	86 500	44 300	32 700	75 400	46 250
Peas	<i>ha</i>	109 900	103 700	106 100	98 000	102 600	104 100	100 200
	<i>t</i>	144 400	116 100	143 250	114 600	103 600	124 400	148 350
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	64 900	63 200	69 300	64 700	76 700	67 800	76 800
	<i>t</i>	78 900	75 110	105 500	72 250	63 850	79 100	106 400
Beans	<i>ha</i>	72 200	69 400	69 000	65 600	68 600	69 000	73 500
	<i>t</i>	121 220	105 510	139 400	93 900	77 300	107 500	140 510
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	12 200	19 700	20 700	19 700	20 500	18 600	19 500
	<i>t</i>	19 550	21 810	29 280	20 250	19 240	22 000	25 710
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	106 100	88 800	94 800	106 200	123 700	103 900	154 000
	<i>t</i>	181 600	97 720	163 350	152 350	120 080	143 000	227 960
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	13 100	13 100	17 000	23 200	29 600	19 200	31 800
	<i>t</i>	11 120	6 800	14 320	13 150	11 900	11 500	22 000
Canola	<i>ha</i>	269 500	302 700	301 000	321 200	210 500	281 000	213 700
	<i>t</i>	435 700	398 700	434 400	313 800	293 300	375 200	342 700
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	201 500	204 500	227 300	211 500	282 700	225 500	268 400
	<i>t</i>	774 400	769 000	1 018 100	763 000	1 094 800	883 900	1 391 800
Total	<i>ha</i>	4 101 800	3 985 700	4 038 400	3 899 300	3 820 600	3 969 200	3 882 800
	<i>t</i>	7 935 840	6 704 550	8 546 480	7 666 900	7 211 400	7 613 000	8 887 900

District Reports

Western Eyre Peninsula

WEATHER

- Rainfall for July was above average along the coast from Calca to Smoky Bay and average in the remainder of the district. August rainfall was below average across most of the district with some pockets of average rainfall.
- A number of isolated hailstorms were reported during this period.
- Light frosts were also reported in inland districts around Minnipa and Wudinna in late August.

CROPS

- Cool conditions in July delayed crop development but warm and windy days in late August resulted in rapid crop growth and drying out of soil profiles.
- Most cereal crops are at stem elongation with many out in head.
- Canola crops are at late flowering to mid pod fill and pulses are flowering.
- Yield loss from the light frosts is expected to be minimal.
- Good spring rainfall will be required to ensure that crops achieve their current high potential yields.
- Low levels of leaf rust are common in both wheat and barley crops.
- The early application of fungicide either in-furrow or at early stem elongation has given crops good protection from fungal diseases.
- The uncertainty of rains needed to finish crops and low grain prices are significant factors for growers deciding whether or not to spend money on multiple fungicide applications.
- Low levels of aphids have been observed in many crops and pastures, but damage and yield loss is expected to be minimal.
- There has been some late baiting to control snails in pulse crops.

PASTURES

- Herbicide applications to control grass weeds in pastures were generally successful. Growers will monitor paddocks to see if spray-topping is required to reduce grass weed seed set.
- Despite some early infection of powdery mildew in medic pastures, most pastures have recovered with warmer weather resulting in rapid growth and high levels of feed.
- High levels of biomass in pasture paddocks have given farmers the opportunity to cut surplus feed for hay.
- Livestock are in excellent condition.

Lower Eyre Peninsula

WEATHER

- July rainfall was average across Lower Eyre Peninsula.
- August rainfall was below average with Ungarra and Cockaleeche districts receiving very much below average rainfall for this period.
- Hail and light frosts near Yeelanna and Cockaleeche were reported during this period.

CROPS

- Early sowing resulted in good crop development before growth was slowed by cold conditions in July.
- Crops have responded to warmer conditions in late August with rapid growth.
- Cereal crops are at late tillering to stem elongation.
- Canola crops and pulse crops are at mid flowering to early pod set.
- There are higher levels of blackleg than normal in many canola crops, which may impact on grain yield and quality.
- Trafficability has been an issue due to wet conditions on some paddocks south of Yeelanna with many farmers employing aeroplanes to apply fertilisers and pesticides.
- The hail and light frosts are not likely to cause any significant yield losses.
- There are low levels of leaf rust in cereals with most farmers applying at least one fungicide spray to protect new growth.
- Uncertainty as to how the season might finish and low grain prices have led some farmers to hold off applying a second fungicide spray.
- Low levels of other fungal diseases including sclerotinia on canola, grey mould and chocolate spot on pulses and net blotch on barley have been reported. Fungicides have been applied to manage these diseases.
- As conditions have warmed up and soil profiles are drying out, most crops have recovered from early waterlogging and nitrogen deficiency.
- Low levels of aphids are present in most crops but crop damage has largely been restricted to the lower canopy with minimal yield loss expected.
- There have been isolated reports of cutworm and army worm damaging small areas within crops.

PASTURES

- Cool conditions and wet soils slowed growth of pastures south of Cummins.
- Some producers on shallow soils on hills near Tumby Bay and Koppio are supplementary feeding stock until pasture growth improves in spring.
- Oat and vetch crops sown for hay contain high amounts of biomass.
- Livestock are generally in good condition with most producers having adequate feed stored on farm.

Eastern Eyre Peninsula

WEATHER

- Rainfall for July was above average in the south eastern part of the district and average in the remainder. August rainfall was below average for most of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were near average for July and above average for August.
- A number of light frosts were reported near Darke Peak and Rudall.

CROPS

- Most cereal crops are at late stem elongation growth stage with many early sown crops out in head.
- Canola is at late flowering to mid-pod fill and pulses are flowering.
- Crops have high levels of biomass and require good spring rainfall to achieve their yield potential.
- No significant frost damage has been reported.
- Warm, dry conditions in late August have resulted in moisture-stressed crops on heavier soil types around Kimba and Cowell.
- Most wheat crops have sufficient nitrogen to achieve good grain quality providing they receive average to above average spring rainfall.
- Farmers are concerned about a potential lack of demand for lupin grain with many investigating options for on-farm storage.
- Low levels of leaf rust have been observed in many wheat and barley crops.
- Early preventative fungicide applications, both in-furrow or applied at early stem elongation, have reduced disease levels in cereal crops.
- Where low levels of fungal disease have been identified in vetch, bean and lentil crops, fungicides have been sprayed when necessary.
- Despite uncertainty about potential seasonal conditions at grain fill and low grain prices, many farmers are applying fungicide to maintain the high crop grain potential.
- Low levels of aphids and diamond back moth have been reported in crops but were below control thresholds.
- Russian wheat aphids were found in crops around Franklin Harbour but not observed in crops further inland.
- There has been a large increase in the area sown to oaten hay this year.

PASTURES

- Pasture paddocks contain high amounts of quality feed giving farmers the opportunity to cut surplus biomass for hay.
- Livestock are in excellent condition.

Upper North

WEATHER

- Rainfall for July was below average in the north and average in the rest of the district. August rainfall ranged from above average in the north and south west to below average in the south east.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for July and above average in August.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average for July and below average for August.
- Numerous frosts were recorded during July and August.

CROPS

- Along the coast, crops have grown rapidly with most cereals at head emergence and early-sown crops at grain fill.
- Inland crop growth has been much slower with early-sown crops at early booting, the majority at stem elongation and late-sown crops still tillering.
- Crops in the northern part of the district began to show signs of moisture stress in mid-August but recovered after good rains and have average to above average yield potential.
- Yield potential of all crops is generally above average across the district.
- Canola crops are at full flower and most pea crops are flowering with early-sown crops setting pods.
- Bean crops have grown well and are flowering, although pod set has been slow due to cold conditions.
- Most bean crops have low levels of disease with farmers applying preventative fungicides.
- High rates of nitrogen fertiliser have been applied to cereal and canola crops in the better rainfall areas while in the more marginal cropping areas, some farmers have applied additional nitrogen to crops.
- Most weed control has now been completed across the district.
- Preventative fungicides have been applied to many pea and some vetch crops to maintain their high yield potential.
- Spot form of net blotch levels have increased in some barley crops so fungicides have been applied to reduce damage.
- There have been no reports of stripe rust infection in wheat crops to date.
- Cow pea aphid numbers have increased in vetch and bean crops with most being sprayed to reduce damage.
- Russian wheat aphids are present across the district but currently only causing damage to isolated patches in crops so most farmers are only spraying small areas. Numbers appear to be higher around grassy areas in crops and along fence lines. Farmers and agronomists will continue to monitor crops closely as temperatures begin to rise.
- Other cereal aphids have been found with Russian wheat aphid, hiding in the rolled leaves.

PASTURES

- In the southern part of the district there has been good pasture growth all winter but late opening rains and cold conditions in the northern part of the district resulted in slow growth during July.
- Pastures began growing rapidly across the whole district following good rains in mid-August.
- Livestock are in excellent condition and most farmers are keeping lambs longer than normal to maximise returns.
- A number of lucerne paddocks have been sown for seed.

Mid North

WEATHER

- Rainfall was average to above average for July, and above average in the west to below average in the north east during August.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for July and above average for August.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average for July and average to below average for August with numerous light frosts recorded.

CROPS

- Crops across the district have well above average yield potential.
- Wheat and barley crops are at booting to early head emergence growth stages.
- Canola crops are in full flower with yield potential of 10 to 15% above average.
- Bean crops have grown well and are flowering with good early pod set. Disease levels are low as a result of proactive fungicide application by most farmers.
- Most lentil crops reached canopy closure in mid-August and have good yield potential. Fungicides have been regularly applied. However, there is some disease present, particularly in susceptible varieties.
- Pea crops have grown well with early-sown crops having high yield potential. Most crops are flowering and starting to set pods with low levels of disease, due to proactive fungicide application.
- Lupin crops are also flowering and setting pods with good yield potential.
- The disease, Ascochyta blight levels have increased in chickpea crops, and farmers are closely monitoring their crops as per SARDI advice and applying fungicide as required. There is considerable uncertainty about the impact of disease on the chickpea crop.
- The growth of vetch was slow during July and early August but increased during the last two weeks of August.
- Russian wheat aphid is present in most cereal crops with isolated "hot spots" beginning to expand rapidly in some crops. Early-sown crops appear to have higher levels than later-sown ones.
- Russian wheat aphid 'hot spots' have been sprayed where possible however some farmers had to spray whole paddocks as the hot spots expanded. The opportunity to apply fungicide with the insecticide is being taken where possible to reduce treatment costs.
- Cow pea aphid numbers have been higher than normal in bean and vetch crops with most farmers spraying at least once and sometimes twice, to achieve adequate control.
- There have been early flights of native budworm and farmers and agronomists have begun monitoring crops for pea weevil and native budworm larvae.

PASTURES

- Pastures have grown well and there is adequate feed in all districts.
- Paddocks sown for feed have grown well and are providing excellent high-quality feed for livestock, reducing the grazing pressure on regenerating pastures.
- Livestock are in excellent condition.

Lower North

WEATHER

- Rainfall was above to very much above average for July and average for August.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average in July and above average in August.
- Minimum temperatures were above average in July and average for August.

CROPS

- Wet conditions in July, particularly in the northern part of the district, caused waterlogging of some crops, delaying spraying and nitrogen fertiliser application. Some nitrogen was applied by plane, which enabled crops to recover relatively quickly.
- Most cereal crops are at flag to early head emergence growth stages.
- The cold wet conditions exacerbated manganese deficiency on grey calcareous soils. Late sown barley crops suffered from rhizoctonia root rot on these soils.
- Yield potential of all crops is well above average across the district.
- Field pea crops are at early flowering stage with some presence of blackspot. The severity of the disease is dependent on time of sowing and frequency of peas in the rotation.
- Bean crops are flowering and starting to set pods with low levels of disease present.
- Lentil crops reached canopy closure towards the end of August and have low levels of disease, due to a combination of proactive fungicide application and low frequency of lentils in the rotation.
- Chickpea crops have grown slowly with the cold weather and most chickpeas still have low levels of disease, due to the low intensity of chickpea plantings and proactive fungicide application.
- Fungicides have been widely applied to all pulse crops, keeping disease levels low.
- There have been no reports of stripe rust to date with only minor amounts of leaf rust and low levels of septoria blotch identified in wheat. Disease levels have not been high enough to warrant control measures.
- Commander barley has developed reasonably high levels of net form of net blotch, requiring control, however other varieties such as Compass and Fathom have low levels of disease.
- Pre-emergent and post-emergent herbicides have been effective in controlling weeds and most crops have low weed populations.
- Oat crops have developed crown rust and many crops have been sprayed to reduce damage.
- Early-sown canola crops established well and have high yield potential, however canola that was later-sown (fourth week of May and after) had poor emergence and some were re-sown.
- Russian wheat aphids are widespread across the district and most cereal crops sown before 25 May have low numbers of the pest. Most barley crops were sown in late May and early June and have not been infested with aphids at this stage. Some early-sown (April/early May) barley has moderate levels.
- Several farmers with large crop areas have opted to proactively apply insecticide to control Russian wheat aphids, however most farmers with smaller crop areas are waiting until numbers reach threshold levels and considering application of a fungicide with the insecticide to reduce treatment costs.

PASTURES

- Medic seed crops have grown well and all have high yield potential which will increase seed supplies.
- Pastures have grown rapidly with high quantities of quality feed available.
- High amounts of oaten, wheat and oat/vetch hay have been sown and have high yield potential.

Yorke Peninsula

WEATHER

- July rainfall was average to above average and August ranged from above average in the north to below average in the south.
- The northern part of the region has received above average to very much above average growing season rainfall to date.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average in July and above average during August and only a few frost events occurred during July and August across Yorke Peninsula.

CROPS

- The majority of crops are in excellent condition at present and with excellent soil moisture levels, there is potential for above average yields.
- Above average rainfall in some areas has resulted in waterlogging, causing some plant deaths.
- Cereal crop growth is well advanced due to early sowing and above average temperatures throughout winter. Early-sown wheat is flowering, with the majority of wheat at flag leaf to early head emergence.
- The area sown to canola is well down on average, continuing the decline of the last five years. Canola crops are in full flower throughout the Peninsula and starting to pod.
- Green peach aphids have transmitted Turnip Yellow Virus into canola crops with a small number of early infected areas suffering severe yield losses. The majority of infected crops have only minor yield loss.
- Most barley crops are growing well. Some showed signs of nitrogen deficiency in mid to late August.
- Higher amounts of nitrogen, sulphur and trace elements have been applied to crops, due to their high yield potential. Additional nitrogen fertiliser may still be applied if ideal growing conditions continue to maximise yield and improve protein levels.
- Leaf rust and septoria blotch were found in early August and stripe rust in late August in wheat crops, prompting farmers to apply preventative fungicides. Powdery mildew in wheat has also recently appeared in susceptible wheat varieties, and could result in yield losses if not treated.
- Barley leaf rust is present, although most farmers are applying preventative fungicides to control the disease. Net blotch disease levels in barley increased in August with the favourable conditions so untreated crops are at risk of losing yield.
- Early-sown lentil paddocks reached canopy closure in the last two weeks of August. Early-maturing varieties are starting to pod but most other varieties have just started flowering. There are areas in paddocks of lentils that have died or lost yield potential due to waterlogging.
- Ascochyta blight is present in lentil foliage but infection levels varies with variety, Grey mould is also present at low levels in some very thickly- sown lentil crops. Showery weather during September will significantly increase the risk of lentil yield loss due to grey mould and sclerotinia.
- Prolonged wet weather might lead to a shortage of fungicide and reduce ability to control diseases.
- Most vetch crops have excellent growth but levels of ascochyta blight are high in untreated paddocks.
- Cereal aphids are present in high numbers in paddocks. Russian wheat aphid is also now being commonly observed and crops with levels above the threshold are being sprayed.

PASTURES

- Pastures generally are growing well. A number of medic pastures are starting to flower and will potentially be cut for hay in early September provided fine weather prevails.
- Blood tests have identified nutritional deficiencies in livestock which have been corrected with feed additives and licks.

Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula & Kangaroo Island

WEATHER

- Rainfall was above to very much above average for July, and average to very much below average for August.
- Some parts of the Adelaide Hills received highest July rainfalls on record.
- Mean maximum temperatures have been average for July and above average during August.

CROPS

Central Hills/Fleurieu

- Winter crop growth was slow.
- Crops are rapidly tillering due to the warmer temperatures and longer day length. Later-sown crops have suffered some waterlogging damage and good spring rain will be required for these crops to reach maximum yield potential.
- Crops unaffected by waterlogging have above average yield potential.
- Farmers and agronomists are intensively monitoring crops for Russian wheat aphid.

Kangaroo Island

- Above-average rainfall has resulted in waterlogging of some crops with mild to severe crop damage. Areas unaffected by waterlogging have well above average yield potential.
- Broad beans have well above average yield potential and have not been affected to the same extent by the wet conditions.
- Cereal and canola crops are suffering from the combined impacts of waterlogging and nutritional stress (particularly nitrogen, sulphur, manganese and copper) due to the cold, wet conditions.
- There have been reports of leaf rust in barley and preventive fungicides are being applied to cereals.
- Broad beans are being treated with fungicide to control the leaf disease, Cercospora spot.

PASTURES

Central Hills/Fleurieu

- Pasture growth has been very slow during winter due to the late break to the season, colder conditions and lack of nitrogen. Warmer weather during mid to late August improved growth rates.
- There has been some waterlogging damage to pastures.
- Many pastures are very weedy after several seasons of poor pasture seed set.
- Average to above average spring rainfall will be required for good pasture growth.

Kangaroo Island

- Pasture growth rates increased in mid to late August with longer daylight.
- Red legged earth mites have damaged some pastures and control has been necessary to limit further damage.

Lower Murray

WEATHER

- Rainfall was average to very much above average for July, and average to below average during August.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for July and above average for August. Minimum temperatures for July were above average in the south and average in the north.

CROPS

- Cereal crops are at head emergence stage and canola and pulse crops are flowering.
- The average to slightly above average temperatures during winter stimulated good crop growth and crop growth stage is around normal for this time of year.
- Excellent rainfall conditions have increased soil moisture levels heading into spring.
- Yield potential is above average.
- Farmers have been actively applying herbicides, fungicides and insecticides to control weeds, disease and pests.
- More fungicide than normal has been applied due to wet conditions throughout the growing season.
- Russian wheat aphid has been above threshold levels in some paddocks and insecticide has been applied to reduce crop damage.
- Additional nitrogen fertiliser has been applied to many crops.

PASTURES

- Pasture growth has been good and livestock are in excellent condition with plenty of feed on offer.
- Livestock carrying capacity has been high in paddocks.

Northern Murray Mallee

WEATHER

- July rainfall was average across most of the district. August rainfall varied from above average in the west to average in the east during August.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average across the district during July, and above average during August.
- There have been one or two light frosts recorded.

CROPS

- Crops across the district generally appear healthy with good levels of nutrition.
- There has been no severe moisture stress during winter and crops have above average yield potential.
- This year's crops will be more reliant on a favourable spring to reach their potential because of the later start to the growing season.
- Soil moisture probes indicate that there are generally good levels of subsoil moisture, with root zones holding 50-75% of their plant available water capacity.
- Most cereal crops are at stem elongation to booting growth stages.
- Canola crops are in full flower and pulse crops are flowering well and beginning to set pods.
- Some dry and semi dry-sown crops have higher than expected annual ryegrass populations and brome grass is starting to become obvious in some crops.
- The amount of barley grass is also increasing in some intensively-cropped paddocks.
- Russian Wheat Aphid is affecting crops across the district and building up in patches as spring weather approaches. Targeted crop spraying is taking place to prevent population build up and crop damage.
- Spot form of net blotch is evident in barley at levels similar to those in other average to above average seasons.
- The few frosts that have occurred through July and August have not caused significant crop damage.

PASTURES

- Pasture availability has increased with rapid growth in the last half of August as temperatures and day length increased.
- Annual grassy weeds are coming to head and farmers will commence spray topping pastures to reduce grass seed set.
- Current high meat and wool prices and poor cereal grain prices are expected to result in greater emphasis on livestock enterprises in mixed farming systems in the future.

Southern Murray Mallee

WEATHER

- Rainfall was average to above average during July, and average to very much above average in August.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for July and above average for August.
- Light frost events were experienced in late August.
- Strong winds were experienced in July prior to storm fronts passing through the district.

CROPS

- Crop growth has been excellent in the last two months.
- Most cereals are at head emergence stage with some early-sown cereals at flowering stage.
- Pulse and canola crops are flowering.
- Light frosts received in late August are unlikely to have caused significant crop damage.
- Crop canopies are dense, increasing humidity, and additional preventative fungicide applications have been necessary to reduce disease levels.
- Russian wheat aphid has been commonly found throughout the district and spraying has taken place in crops showing symptoms of damage.
- Top dressing of nitrogen fertiliser has taken place on a large scale.
- Yield potential across the district is excellent.
- Crops are thick and bulky and whilst soil moisture is good in many areas, average to above average spring rainfall will be needed for crops to reach their high yield potential.
- Hay cutting will commence mid-September.

PASTURES

- Pastures have grown well providing plenty of feed for livestock.
- Livestock farmers are benefitting from good growing conditions for pastures and excellent returns for sheep and cattle.
- Farmers are currently selling new season spring lambs at good prices.

Upper South East

WEATHER

- Rainfall was above to very much above average for July and average for August.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for July, and above average for August.
- Mean minimum temperatures were above average in July, and average to above average in August.

CROPS

- There is now a full profile of sub-soil moisture across the district, giving farmers' confidence in a good harvest and help them recover from two years of drought.
- Most crops survived the wet conditions in July. Isolated pockets of waterlogging occurred in some paddocks but generally only in areas known to get wet.
- Yield potential of most crops is currently well above average, assuming an average finish to the season. This should help off-set current low grain prices.
- Despite the wet conditions, the majority of paddocks are still trafficable, allowing spraying and nitrogen fertiliser applications.
- Aphids have been identified in some areas (including Russian Wheat Aphid) but not in high numbers to date. Farmers and agronomists will continue to monitor crops as the weather warms up and control aphids as required.
- Armyworm has also been detected in some crops and control has been undertaken to avoid damage.
- Beneficial insects such as ladybird larvae and parasitic wasps are increasing in numbers.
- The leaf diseases powdery mildew, rust and botrytis are becoming evident in faba bean crops, and has been sprayed with fungicides.
- Earlier-sown crops have performed well and have high yield potential.

PASTURES

- Pasture growth is exceptional across most of the area, although there are some isolated areas (predominantly south of Padthaway) that have become too wet and pastures are waterlogged.
- Pasture growth is thought to be the best since 2010, especially on ungrazed paddocks.
- Livestock prices remain stable going into spring, with wool prices slowly rising, giving the industry confidence.
- There has been early, vigorous lucerne growth due to a combination of suitable moisture and warmer conditions.

Lower South East

WEATHER

- Rainfall was above to very much above average for July, while August rainfall varied from above average in the north to below average in the south of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for July and above average for August.
- Mean minimum temperatures were above to very much above average for July and above average in August.

CROPS

- Most farmers are relatively positive throughout the Lower South East with conditions wetter than they have been for over six years.
- Most crops have reasonable yield potential, although crops in the Millicent area have been severely waterlogged with yields reduced by 20% or more. The worst affected crops may be re-sown with short-season barley or other crops if soils dry out sufficiently.
- Areas unaffected by waterlogging have above average yield potential.
- Many cropping paddocks were not trafficable following heavy rain, requiring herbicides and fertilisers to be applied by plane.
- The water table has risen in some low-lying areas and crops have reduced growth and yield potential compared to drier seasons in these areas.
- There has been a significant reduction in the area sown to canola. The disease, Blackleg is worse than normal with the disease moving up the stems of plants.
- The leaf disease, Septoria blotch has been identified in some wheat crops and fungicide has been applied to reduce crop damage.
- Russian wheat aphids have been identified but numbers are relatively low at this stage, due to the cold wet conditions. Crops will be closely monitored as the weather begins to warm up and aphid numbers increase, and will be sprayed once threshold numbers are detected.

PASTURES

- Pasture growth is good in most areas of the Lower South East, with water receding as temperatures rise.
- Warmer weather has enabled soils to dry out and pastures recover.