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Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

2014-15 SPRING CROP PERFORMANCE

NOVEMBER 2014

PREMIUM
FOOD AND WINE FROM OUR
CLEAN
ENVIRONMENT



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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Table of Contents

State Summary	4
Crop Estimates	6
District Reports	9
Western Eyre Peninsula	9
Lower Eyre Peninsula	10
Eastern Eyre Peninsula	11
Upper North	12
Mid North	13
Lower North	14
Yorke Peninsula	15
Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula & Kangaroo Island	16
Lower Murray	17
Northern Murray Mallee	18
Southern Murray Mallee	19
Upper South East	20
Lower South East	21

State Summary

WEATHER

- Rainfall for September was below to very much below average across most of the State. Only parts of the Upper North and Northern Mallee received average rainfall.
- October rainfall was very much below average across the whole agricultural area with some areas on Lower Eyre Peninsula, Upper North and Northern Murray Mallee receiving their lowest October rainfall totals on record.
- Mean maximum temperatures for September were above average in the Upper and Mid North and Northern Murray Mallee. In the rest of the agricultural areas, temperatures were very much above average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were very much above average (2 to 5°C) during October. Areas of Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island and Southern Yorke Peninsula observed their highest maximum mean October temperatures on record.
- Frost was recorded in the eastern part of the Upper and Mid North and in a few locations in the Mallee on the 8th, 14th, 15th and 16th October.
- Hot north winds were recorded on several days during October.

CROPS

- Despite having one of the warmest and driest springs on record, across the State total crop production is still estimated to be above the long term average, mainly due to the stored soil moisture from above average rainfall earlier in the season.
- Production is estimated at 7.48 million tonnes from a crop area of 4.05 million hectares.
- Harvest commenced in the Far West Coast and Upper North at the end of September.
- Most districts have started or are likely to start two to three weeks earlier than normal.
- Farmers on Western Eyre Peninsula had reaped more than 50% of its crop by the end of October while later districts will not commence until late November.
- Canola yields and quality have been highly variable across the State with above average yields on Upper Eyre Peninsula but well below average on Lower Eyre Peninsula, Upper North, Yorke Peninsula, Mallee districts and the South East.
- Lower canola yields are due to a combination of Beet Western Yellow virus, waterlogging, frost damage and dry spring conditions.
- Barley yields and quality have been above expectations in all districts where harvest has commenced, with average to above average yields reported.
- On Eyre Peninsula a high percentage of malting varieties have been classified as Malt 1 while in other districts most has been classified as Feed 1.
- Frost significantly reduced the yields of peas in some districts but unaffected crops have returned average to above average yields.
- Frost in early to mid-October caused severe damage to crops in low-lying areas in the eastern part of the Upper and Mid North. Wheat, canola and peas were the worst affected and some farmers have cut a large proportion of their wheat for hay.
- Wheat yields are likely to be variable across the State with above average yields on Upper Eyre Peninsula and the northern part of the Upper North but average to below average in other districts.

- Early-sown wheat crops in early districts have produced medium to high protein levels with low proportions of small or pinched grain but there is concern that quality may be poorer in later districts or crops due to the extremely dry finish to the season.
- Bean crops have been severely affected by waterlogging, frost and hot, dry windy conditions with yields likely to be well below average in all districts.
- Leaf diseases have generally been at low levels in most of the State due to proactive fungicide application and the dry spring.
- Diamond Back Moth larvae built up early in the season and caused damage to canola crops. Many crops were sprayed to reduce crop damage.
- Green peach aphids did not build up in spring as earlier feared but many other pests were present in higher numbers than usual.
- Hay yields varied from above average in the Lower and Mid North and Yorke Peninsula to well below average in most other districts. Quality has also been highly variable.

PASTURES

- Pastures dried off quickly during September and October with the warm dry conditions.
- Most of the State has adequate supplies of dry pasture feed but the Central Hills and Kangaroo Island only have marginal levels and the South East has poor pasture growth.
- The area of pasture cut for hay has been well down in most districts, particularly the Central Hills and South East.
- There has been an increased area of cereals cut for hay due to frost and the dry finish to the season.
- Producers in the South East are looking at selling off excess stock to reduce numbers.

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 dry-land 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>	503,000	142,000	405,000	170,000	258,000	239,500	53,500	4,600
	<i>t</i>	855,000	380,000	690,000	512,000	468,000	600,000	148,000	12,000
Durum	<i>ha</i>	0	0	0	24,000	12,000	12,000	5,300	0
	<i>t</i>	0	0	0	65,000	20,000	27,500	13,000	0
Barley	<i>ha</i>	75,000	70,000	76,000	146,000	87,000	83,000	27,000	2,700
	<i>t</i>	130,000	203,000	144,000	482,000	164,000	232,000	84,000	7,000
Oats	<i>ha</i>	13,500	3,200	5,000	5,000	10,000	8,000	2,000	3,300
	<i>t</i>	16,000	6,500	6,000	11,000	13,000	17,000	4,500	8,200
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>	1,500	500	4,000	2,000	2,500	2,500	500	300
	<i>t</i>	2,000	1,250	6,000	5,500	4,200	6,500	1,300	900
Peas	<i>ha</i>	5,000	5,500	5,500	20,000	25,000	24,000	7,300	400
	<i>t</i>	4,500	6,500	3,300	30,000	25,000	31,000	11,500	550
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	1,200	23,000	5,000	1,500	3,000	3,000	900	1,500
	<i>t</i>	1,000	32,000	5,000	2,000	3,300	3,000	1,400	2,500
Beans	<i>ha</i>	0	6,000	200	12,500	6,500	14,200	6,000	600
	<i>t</i>	0	7,000	200	20,000	6,500	21,000	9,000	1,200
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	0	200	200	9,500	3,200	5,000	1,000	0
	<i>t</i>	0	250	100	10,500	3,200	5,000	1,200	0
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	0	2,000	0	78,000	4,000	12,000	6,000	0
	<i>t</i>	0	3,000	0	117,000	4,400	15,500	8,500	0
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	800	1,800	800	2,000	5,500	5,000	300	0
	<i>t</i>	400	1,500	500	1,500	1,600	2,500	350	0
Canola	<i>ha</i>	5,400	63,000	9,000	32,000	28,000	54,000	10,500	4,100
	<i>t</i>	6,000	63,000	9,000	45,000	25,000	67,000	14,500	8,200
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	6,200	4,500	3,500	19,000	25,000	34,000	7,000	4,300
	<i>t</i>	15,500	18,000	9,500	95,000	88,000	145,000	35,000	17,000
Total	<i>ha</i>	605,400	317,200	510,700	502,500	444,700	462,200	120,300	17,500
	<i>t</i>	1,014,900	704,000	864,100	1,301,500	738,200	1,028,000	297,250	40,550

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>	5,500	69,000	245,000	136,000	59,000	20,000	2,310,100
	<i>t</i>	12,000	117,000	294,000	183,000	100,000	56,000	4,427,000
Durum	<i>ha</i>	300	800	0	0	11,800	0	66,200
	<i>t</i>	500	1,200	0	0	19,000	0	146,200
Barley	<i>ha</i>	9,000	54,000	49,000	81,000	73,000	14,500	847,200
	<i>t</i>	21,000	95,000	73,000	105,000	117,000	36,000	1,893,000
Oats	<i>ha</i>	1,800	3,000	3,000	3,000	15,500	4,000	80,300
	<i>t</i>	3,600	3,600	3,600	3,600	22,000	9,000	127,600
Rye	<i>ha</i>	0	1,500	4,000	2,500	1,000	0	9,000
	<i>t</i>	0	1,800	3,600	3,000	600	0	9,000
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	1,500	4,000	6,000	8,000	5,000	1,000	39,300
	<i>t</i>	3,600	6,000	7,200	12,000	6,300	2,500	65,250
Peas	<i>ha</i>	1,500	4,500	2,000	3,000	3,000	400	107,100
	<i>t</i>	2,400	4,000	600	3,600	3,600	650	127,200
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	1,300	2,000	2,400	10,000	14,000	3,000	71,800
	<i>t</i>	2,200	1,800	1,200	8,000	15,000	4,200	82,600
Beans	<i>ha</i>	400	200	0	1,200	12,000	9,000	68,800
	<i>t</i>	700	200	0	1,200	14,500	13,500	95,000
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	0	0	600	600	200	200	20,700
	<i>t</i>	0	0	500	600	150	250	21,750
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	0	0	400	600	3,000	200	106,200
	<i>t</i>	0	0	200	500	2,700	250	152,050
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	0	600	1,800	4,200	400	0	23,200
	<i>t</i>	0	300	900	3,000	300	0	12,850
Canola	<i>ha</i>	1,400	8,000	22,000	11,000	36,000	18,000	302,400
	<i>t</i>	2,500	4,800	7,700	900	32,000	32,000	317,600
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	17,000	7,200	2,500	12,500	54,000	25,000	221,700
	<i>t</i>	50,000	25,000	5,000	31,000	163,000	100,000	797,000
Total	<i>ha</i>	22,700	147,600	336,200	261,100	233,900	70,300	4,052,300
	<i>t</i>	48,500	235,700	392,500	324,400	333,150	154,350	7,477,100

TABLE 2 CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

		2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	5 year ave	2014/15
Wheat	<i>ha</i>	2,111,100	2,237,100	2,226,100	2,176,300	2,295,900	2,209,300	2,310,100
	<i>t</i>	4,032,500	5,818,500	4,444,800	3,556,500	4,976,000	4,565,700	4,427,000
Durum	<i>ha</i>	60,000	69,800	74,600	77,200	68,300	70,000	66,200
	<i>t</i>	157,200	240,600	223,950	181,240	194,930	199,600	146,200
Barley	<i>ha</i>	1,152,300	965,200	987,700	907,100	854,900	973,400	847,200
	<i>t</i>	2,544,100	2,839,100	2,031,800	1,912,900	2,093,500	2,284,300	1,893,000
Oats	<i>ha</i>	79,700	75,300	75,800	85,800	85,000	80,300	80,300
	<i>t</i>	136,600	152,300	117,400	128,740	159,700	138,900	127,600
Rye	<i>ha</i>	9,400	9,500	9,500	9,500	7,100	9,000	9,000
	<i>t</i>	8,200	11,600	7,900	7,500	6,350	8,300	9,000
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	85,900	85,700	80,200	69,200	49,300	74,100	39,300
	<i>t</i>	117,700	167,100	117,500	95,920	86,500	116,900	65,250
Peas	<i>ha</i>	127,700	126,300	109,900	103,700	106,100	114,700	107,100
	<i>t</i>	181,150	238,500	144,400	116,100	143,250	164,700	127,200
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	66,500	64,900	64,900	63,200	69,300	65,800	71,800
	<i>t</i>	97,200	120,100	78,900	75,110	105,500	95,400	82,600
Beans	<i>ha</i>	71,200	71,500	72,200	69,400	69,000	70,700	68,800
	<i>t</i>	144,350	168,600	121,220	105,510	139,400	135,800	95,000
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	13,200	10,700	12,200	19,700	20,700	15,300	20,700
	<i>t</i>	17,150	16,000	19,550	21,810	29,280	20,800	21,750
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	52,100	97,700	106,100	88,800	94,800	87,900	106,200
	<i>t</i>	89,450	174,350	181,600	97,720	163,350	141,300	152,050
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	12,900	12,800	13,100	13,100	17,000	13,800	23,200
	<i>t</i>	10,650	12,900	11,120	6,800	14,320	11,200	12,850
Canola	<i>ha</i>	182,700	196,500	269,500	302,700	301,000	250,500	302,400
	<i>t</i>	297,100	381,700	435,700	398,700	434,400	389,500	317,600
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	274,100	244,200	201,500	204,500	227,300	230,300	221,700
	<i>t</i>	1,004,000	1,066,000	774,400	769,000	1,018,100	926,300	797,000
Total	<i>ha</i>	4,024,700	4,023,000	4,101,800	3,985,700	4,038,400	4,034,700	4,052,300
	<i>t</i>	7,833,350	10,341,350	7,935,840	6,704,550	8,546,480	8,272,300	7,477,100

District Reports

Western Eyre Peninsula

WEATHER

- Rainfall was below average in September and very much below average in October.
- A number of hot windy days in late September rapidly brought crops to maturity.
- Mean maximum temperatures were very much above average in September and highest on record in October.

CROPS

- Harvest is well advanced across the region with Far West farmers having reaped more than 75% of their crop. Producers around Streaky Bay and Central Eyre districts are about halfway through harvest, having reaped most of their barley and earlier-sown wheat paddocks.
- Despite the dry finish to the season, crop yields have been generally above average. Reports of yields 50% above the long term average are common.
- Canola has yielded well with reports of 1.3 to 1.5t/ha and up to 2 t/ha on the best paddocks at Mount Cooper. Oil content has been very high.
- Barley yields have been good with reports of 2.5 to 3 t/ha common and some paddocks yielding up to 4 t/ha.
- Many producers have achieved malt grade quality with their malting barley varieties.
- Wheat yields have been well above average (50 to 100%) in the Western and Far West districts and 30 to 50% above average in Central Eyre.
- Much of the wheat has received ASW or APW grades at delivery with little achieving AH classification. However the proportion of small or pinched grain is much lower than expected given the harsh conditions at the end of the season.
- Although frosted areas of paddocks are yielding less than the remainder of the paddock, they are reportedly still yielding 1.0 to 1.5 t/ha, slightly below the long term average.
- The presence of rusts and pests such as Diamond Back Moth and Native Budworm in crops during spring did not have a significant effect on yields. This is likely to be due to a combination of appropriate management practices and the dry conditions at the end of the season.
- Reports of snail and mice numbers to date have been low, with minimal effect on harvest or grain delivery.
- A very small amount of hay was cut across the district this season.

PASTURES

- Medic pastures and vetch paddocks suffered insect and mildew damage early in the season and did not produce the same level of growth as last season.
- Many farmers have adequate hay supplies carried over from 2013.
- The amount of feed in annual pasture paddocks was diminished by the dry conditions. Producers have moved livestock onto stubbles which contain a high amount of good quality feed.
- Livestock are in excellent condition.

Lower Eyre Peninsula

WEATHER

- September rainfall was below average in most of the district and very much below average around Lock to Elliston. The area around Cummins to Kapinnie reported its lowest total October rainfalls on record while the rest of the district received very much below average rainfalls.
- The only rainfall received was in isolated events associated with weak cold fronts in early September and thunderstorm activity in mid-October and were less than 10 mm in total.
- Mean maximum temperatures were very much above average in September and highest on record in October in the district.

CROPS

- Dry conditions and hot north winds in the last week of September resulted in the rapid maturing of crops and pastures.
- Areas of crop that were waterlogged during winter dried out quickly during September and October.
- Windrowing of canola began in late September. By the end of October, 75 % of pulses and canola had been harvested.
- On the lighter textured soils near Mount Hill and Karkoo, canola yielded 1.3 to 1.5 t/ha. On the better-drained loamy soils around Butler, Ungarra and Mt Hope, yields reached 1.7 to 2.0 t/ha.
- Canola yields reported on the ironstone soils south of Edillilie were 0.6 t/ha on waterlogged areas and 1.1 to 1.3 t/ha on the areas less waterlogged but affected by nitrate leaching.
- Grain legumes suffered from waterlogging early in the season and hot dry conditions at flowering. Lupin crops were less affected by the dry conditions than beans and peas, and podded well. Early reports of lupin yields at Ungarra are 1.3 t/ha to 1.5 t/ha.
- Many bean crops have podded very poorly and will not be reaped until the end of harvest given the better grain yield, quality and prices for other crops.
- Producers began harvesting cereals at the end of October. Early reports of barley yields and quality have been good, such as 3.5 t/ha of malting barley at Port Neill with low proportions of small grain. However, these reports are from paddocks which did not suffer from waterlogging and it is expected that yields and quality will vary greatly this season.
- Pests and disease had little impact on canola and cereal crops late in the season. Most growers applied preventative treatments for rust. This, combined with a dry finish, resulted in little infection in crops.
- Diamond Back Moth and Army Worm were controlled early to minimise impacts on yields.

PASTURES

- Annual pasture paddocks contain a high amount of feed and livestock are in excellent condition.
- Some hay was cut in the Greenpatch and Coomunga districts as waterlogged paddocks began to dry out but the total area cut was much less than last season as most producers have sufficient hay supplies.
- Whilst feed supplies in pasture paddocks have diminished with the dry spring conditions, there is a large amount of biomass in stubbles which producers will turn stock onto as harvest progresses.
- Livestock are in excellent condition.

Eastern Eyre Peninsula

WEATHER

- September rainfall was below average and very much below average over the district in October. Weak cold fronts in early September brought isolated scattered showers. Less than 10 mm of rain was received in these events.
- Strong drying winds in the last week of September rapidly senesced crops and pastures.
- Above average to very much above average maximum mean temperature were observed across the district during September. In October, maximum mean temperatures were very much above average in the eastern part and highest on record in the western part of the district.

CROPS

- Producers in the northern part of the district have harvested canola, legumes and barley. Only a small area of wheat had been harvested to the end of October.
- Crop yields have been 20 to 30% above the long term average.
- Canola yields have been generally above average with yields of 1.0 to 1.2 t/ha reported west of Cleve, 1.5 t/ha at Rudall and up to 1.7 t/ha on crops near Kimba and Cleve. Oil content has been exceptional.
- Yields on pulse crops have been variable from 0.5 t/ha to 1.2 t/ha having been affected by a range of problems throughout the season including frost, fungal disease and Native Budworm at the grain- fill stage.
- Early wheat yields are promising, with reports of 2.0 to 3.0 t/ha and a high proportion of this receiving AH classification at delivery. However, these reports have been from early-sown crops on better soil types; the majority of the wheat crop is yet to be harvested.
- Barley yields are above average. Early sown crops on more productive soils are yielding 3.0 to 4.0 t/ha with yields around 1.2 to 1.5 t/ha on the poorest soils. A large proportion of malting varieties have achieved malt grade at delivery.
- Quality on feed barley varieties have been variable with most of the grain delivered as F1 with good grain weight and low screenings. Dry conditions resulted in pinched grain on the heavier soil types around Kimba and the Eastern Cleve Hills to Franklin Harbour area with some F3 being delivered as a result.
- In frost-affected areas such as Mangalo and Buckleboo, around 10 to 50% of individual paddocks suffered significant yield loss. Lupin, pea and canola crops were the worst affected. Areas of cereal crops damaged by stem frost still yielded 0.8 to 1.2 t/ha.
- Despite reports of rust in some districts in September widespread damage was avoided with preventative fungicide applications and the dry seasonal conditions. There has not been the level of lodging from Net Blotch in barley crops this year compared to 2013.
- Diamond Back Moth numbers did not reach critical levels in canola crops during spring and little damage was observed.
- There have been hotspots of increased mice activity however producers have baited to manage populations in affected districts.

PASTURES

- Minimal hay was cut this year as most producers consider that stubbles will provide an adequate supply of feed over summer and many still have hay from last season.
- Dry conditions have reduced the amount of feed in pasture paddocks. Producers are turning stock on to stubbles which contain a high amount of quality feed, as they become available.

Upper North

WEATHER

- Rainfall for September was average in the northern part of the district and below average in the south. October rainfall was very much below average across the district with some areas receiving their lowest October rainfall on record.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average (4 to 5°C) for October.
- Several frosts were recorded in the eastern part of the district during early to mid-October.

CROPS

- Harvest is 80% completed in the western part of the district, 20% in the northern part and only just started in the southern part of the district.
- The warm dry spring ripened crops quickly and harvest commenced two to three weeks earlier than normal.
- Crops began showing moisture stress in the northern part of the district in mid-September. Between 15 and 20 mm of rain fell in the northern part of the district in the last week of September, ensuring above average yields.
- Frosts in early to mid-October caused serious damage to wheat, pea and canola crops in low-lying areas around Jamestown, Hallett and Spalding. Some severely damaged wheat crops were cut for hay.
- The warm dry conditions in mid to late October combined with frost damage has reduced yield potential in the southern part of the district by 20 to 30%.
- Harvest of peas and barley commenced in the western part of the district in late September and the northern part of the district in mid-October.
- Barley yields in the early districts have generally been above expectations, being 20 to 30% above average with good grain quality.
- Field pea yields have been above average where crops were not affected by frost. Frosted areas have been disappointing with low yields and poor grain quality.
- Canola yields are generally well below average as a result of frost damage and the dry finish.
- At the end of October wheat had only been harvested in the western part of the district with early-sown crops yielding well above average with most classified as APW and H2.
- Some frost-damaged wheat crops have been downgraded to GP quality.
- High levels of native budworm were present in pulse and canola crops and most crops were sprayed to reduce damage.
- Diamond Back Moth larvae were present in higher numbers than normal so some canola crops were sprayed to control numbers.
- The wet winter and dry spring favoured the development of crown rot (a disease which is becoming more prevalent in intensive cereal rotations).
- An increased area of cereal and vetch has been cut for hay for both domestic and export markets.

PASTURES

- The warm dry conditions in September and October resulted in the rapid drying off of pastures.
- The rapid early growth has resulted in high levels of good quality dry feed. Despite the dry spring, most producers will have adequate stock feed.

Mid North

WEATHER

- Rainfall was below average to very much below average during September and very much below average across the district during October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average in September and very much above average in October.
- Several frosts were recorded in early to mid-October.

CROPS

- Harvest of peas, canola and barley commenced in the last week of October.
- Barley yields have been above expectations with good quality and a higher percentage than normal is being classified as malting. Most crops are yielding close to the long term average.
- Frost in early to mid-October caused significant damage to crops in low lying areas in the eastern part of the district.
- Some growers have cut large areas of crop for hay with mainly wheat being cut (approximately 3% of total district wheat area) but also some barley and canola. Hay yields have been high with good quality and high prices.
- Wheat yields are likely to be close to the long term average with early sown crops tending to be above average and later sown crops below average.
- Canola yields are below the long term average with variable quality, due to Beet Western Yellow virus, insect damage and the hot dry finish to the season.
- Diamond Back Moth larvae were at very high levels in many canola crops but not all of these crops were sprayed due to a shortage of insecticide.
- Bean crops recovered well from the earlier frost damage but yields are still likely to be below the long term average.
- Field pea yields are variable with average yields in most areas but well below average in areas affected by frost.
- Lentil yields are likely to be close to the long term average with some high yielding crops.
- Lupin crops did not recover from early frost damage and yields will be well below average.
- Oaten hay yields were above average with excellent quality.
- Native budworm levels were variable with all pulse crops and some canola crops sprayed to reduce damage.
- Green peach aphid numbers did not build-up in spring as earlier feared.

PASTURES

- Pastures dried-off rapidly with the warm dry conditions during September and October.
- There is adequate dry pasture feed for livestock as a result of good early pasture growth.

Lower North

WEATHER

- Rainfall was below average to very much below average during September and very much below average across the district during October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were very much above average in September and October.
- Several frosts were recorded in mid-October.

CROPS

- Harvest commenced in the last week of October with barley and canola crops the first to be reaped.
- Canola yields are below average, due to the Beet Western Yellows virus and the dry finish to the season. Oil quality appears to be average.
- Barley yields have been better than expected with most being close to the five-year average. Crops in the earlier districts have been able to fill but those in later districts may have lower yield and quality as a result of the dry finish. Most barley is being classified as Feed 1.
- Wheat yields have fallen by 20 to 25% from earlier expectations but are still likely to be close to the long term average. There is potential for higher levels of screenings because of the dry finish to the season.
- Bean yields are likely to be well below average, with the dry conditions and hot winds causing crops to bend and lose pods. Pea crops have coped reasonably well with the dry conditions and yields are likely to be close to the long term average, although grains are smaller than normal.
- The frost in mid-October caused minor damage to pea and bean crops in low-lying areas, although most crops were well into the grain-fill stage so less susceptible to damage.
- Generally hay yields have been close to average and are excellent quality.
- Diamond Back Moth larvae were in much higher numbers than usual and most canola crops were sprayed to reduce damage.
- Native budworm levels were generally low although most pulse crops were sprayed to maintain yield and grain quality.
- Leaf diseases have been at low levels due to a combination of proactive fungicide application and the dry spring conditions.

PASTURES

- Medic seed crops have grown well but the dry spring has shortened their flowering period so yields are likely to be 25 to 30% below average. There should still be adequate seed available for sowing pastures.
- There is still adequate dry pasture feed for livestock in the district.

Yorke Peninsula

WEATHER

- September rainfall totals were below average for most of Yorke Peninsula and very much below average from Edithburgh across to Marion Bay. Rainfall was very much below average in October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average to very much above average during September and very much above average in October. Southern Yorke Peninsula observed the highest mean maximum October temperatures on record.
- Severe wind events occurred during October.
- A storm front at the end of October resulted in narrow bands of large hail south of Kadina.

CROPS

- Moisture probe data indicated that plants had used up available soil water by the start of October.
- Harvest started earlier than normal with around 25% of Northern Yorke Peninsula and 10 to 15% of Central Yorke Peninsula reaped by the end of October. Harvesting on Southern Yorke Peninsula will commence early in November.
- Cereals appear to have filled grains well despite the dry conditions. There have been a small number of reports of poor yields and poor test weights in frost-affected wheat.
- Early-sown crops have greater yield potential than later-sown crops. The soil type's ability to store moisture has also had a large impact on yield.
- Canola crops appear to have shorter pods than in the past. Early-harvested canola paddocks have been below average with reports of low oil content.
- Early-harvested barley yields are above average but of variable grain quality, from F3 through to Malt 1. The varieties Hindmarsh and La Trobe are performing well.
- Early-harvested field pea crops are around average yields. Pea samples contained less snails than in recent years as a result of baiting in spring.
- Lentil crops are being harvested with a number of producers concerned about how easily fires start while reaping lentils.
- Lentil yields have been extremely variable. Many later-maturing crops have required cleaning before delivery due to small grains.
- Oaten hay yields are good and colour is very good however nutritional quality is down, reducing prices paid for export.
- Disease levels in all crops have been extremely low due to the dry spring. Fungal staining will not be a problem in pulses unless rain falls before harvest.
- Ryegrass numbers have generally been higher in crops this year.
- A hail storm in late October caused damage to canola and lentil crops south of Kadina.

PASTURES

- A number of medic pastures have been cut for hay with well above average production.
- In stocked paddocks the dry spring reduced pasture growth. Paddocks are starting to bare off and supplementary feeding of stock is now commonplace.
- Stock condition is still excellent but has started to decline as the amount of pasture feed drops.

Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula & Kangaroo Island

WEATHER

- Rainfall across the region was well below average in September and very much below average in October.
- Maximum temperatures were very much above average for September and October with most of Kangaroo Island observing highest maximum temperatures on record in October.

CROPS

Central Hills/Fleurieu

- Crops sown in late April and May on sandy loams are likely to achieve average yields. Later-sown crops or crops on heavy soils, sands or shallow soils are suffering from moisture stress and will be below average in yield.
- There are areas of minor frost damage and some isolated pockets severely affected. Yield impacts will not be known until harvest.
- Harvest will be two to three weeks early, beginning in late November.
- Canola windrowing has commenced.
- There has been minimal insect damage and crop disease due to the dry weather conditions.
- The wet winter followed by the dry spring has affected hay production to the extent that it could be 60-70% down on average.

Kangaroo Island

- Early-sown cereal crops (late April to early May) will achieve average yields with some early-sown canola returning above average yields.
- Pulse crop yields will be below average.
- Harvest will be two to three weeks early and canola windrowing will commence in early November.
- Severe infestations of Army Worm have occurred in oats and barley (the highest levels recorded for many years). There has also been Diamond Back Moth in canola and Native Bud Worm in pulses, but these pests are at normal incidence levels. Crops have been sprayed for these pests.
- Barley Leaf Rust developed along the south coast due to ocean humidity and cloudy conditions.
- Hay production is down by 50% and the quality of early-cut hay will be average.

PASTURES

Central Hills/Fleurieu

- Pasture quality and availability is declining rapidly.
- Most livestock are in good condition but large numbers are being sold as producers reduce stock numbers. Market prices have flattened because of the increase in supply.

Kangaroo Island

- There has been minimal pasture growth.
- Sheep are in good condition while cattle are at average to below average condition.

Lower Murray

WEATHER

- Total monthly rainfall for the area was below average in September and very much below average in October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average to very much above average during September and very much above average during October.
- There were few frosts across the district but numerous days of very strong winds.

CROPS

- Harvest has commenced across the district with approximately 20% of the harvest completed.
- Yields of barley have been slightly better than expected and generally above average.
- Barley protein has been low and has reduced the amount being classified as malting quality.
- Despite the poor finish to the season, cereal crops are expected to yield above average, particularly on soils where stored early- season rainfall can be used.
- Stripe rust did not have a big impact on cereal crops in this district this year due to unfavourable conditions for the disease and some use of fungicides.
- Hay yields were above average this season and generally of very good quality.
- Canola crops have been windrowed or desiccated and yields are expected to be below average due to virus and frost. Many paddocks were sprayed for Diamond Back Moth late in the season.
- While frost has been severe in specific areas with pea crops the worst affected, the overall yield reduction across the district is likely to be less than 10%.

PASTURES

- While livestock are in good condition, the lack of spring rain and poor pasture growth means farmers will move stock onto stubbles as soon as they become available.

Northern Murray Mallee

WEATHER

- Rainfall totals for the area were below average in September and very much below average in October.
- Areas of the Northern Mallee received some useful rains in September but almost nothing in October.
- Growing season rainfall (April-Oct) was 10-20% lower than average across the district.
- There were some frosts and days of strong winds recorded.
- Above average and very much above average maximum temperatures were observed in September and October respectively.

CROPS

- Harvest of grain legumes, canola and barley has commenced and is approximately 20% complete.
- Cereal crops on deeper soils have generally maintained their yield potential, despite the lower than average growing season rainfall. (a result of the high levels of stored soil moisture from early-season rainfall).
- Shallow soils and deep sands generally ran out of moisture in late September, which lowered yield potential.
- Barley has been yielding around average, with many paddocks achieving malt quality.
- Most barley avoided severe frost damage.
- Wheat, while severely frost affected in many areas, is still expected to produce average yields.
- Legume yields have been generally well below average due to early frost damage and poor spring rainfall.
- Canola yields have been generally poor, due to Western Beet Yellows virus impacts, frost and the late infestations of Diamond Back Moth. Many crops were not sprayed to control weeds and used for livestock grazing.
- Hay production is of average yields and excellent quality.
- The dry finish resulted in low levels of leaf diseases. Only limited spraying of fungicide was required across the district.

PASTURES

- Livestock are generally in good condition.
- Pasture feed is dwindling so farmers will move stock onto stubbles as soon as they become available for grazing.

Southern Murray Mallee

WEATHER

- Rainfall has been well below average this spring, with most centres recording less than half their September average and very little rainfall in October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were very much above average for September and October.
- There were some frosts and days of strong winds.

CROPS

- Yields are expected to be slightly below average on the western shallow stony soils to average and above average yields on the deeper soils of the eastern side. Sands dried out early and yielded poorly.
- Cereal harvest has only just begun in some areas.
- Barley from around Pinnaroo is reportedly yielding above average with many loads of malt quality.
- Hay quality has been particularly good across the districts with yields slightly below average.
- Frost damage appears less severe than in previous years.
- There were few issues with leaf rusts this year due to a combination of unfavourable disease conditions and some application of protectant fungicide.
- Many canola crops were sprayed for Diamond Back Moth which caused some crop damage.
- Post nitrogen fertiliser application appears to have been average across the district this season.
- Canola yields have been poor this year due to the Beet Western Yellows virus and the poor finish to the season.
- Lupins grew well but have yielded poorly due to frost damage.
- One lentil crop at Pinnaroo yielded very well with high quality which may encourage more growers to sow lentils in the future.

PASTURES

- Stock feed levels are diminishing rapidly in the Geranium to Peake areas and farmers will move livestock onto stubbles as soon as practical. There is the fear that feed and cover will diminish quickly over summer if there is no rain.

Upper South East

WEATHER

- Rainfall was very much below average for September and October.
- The daily maximum temperature was very much above average for September and October.
- Growing Season Rainfall (April –Oct) is well below average.

CROPS

- Harvest commenced in the last few days of October with yields likely to be well below average.
- Early sown crops having the best yield potential.
- Most canola crops have been windrowed and the first crops were harvested at the end of October.
- Beans have been desiccated and harvest will start in early November.
- Delved and ripped ground has double the yield potential in ground of similar type that has not been delved or ripped (e.g cereals 4t/ha vs 2-2.5t/ha).
- Crops are maturing quickly but holding up exceptionally well considering the season. This is due to use of mid-season maturing varieties, no till systems and overall better management.
- At the end of tillering crops had above average yield potential but yields are now likely to be 40% below average in cereals, 40-50% in canola and 30% plus in legumes.
- Cereal crops are only filling primary tillers. Secondary tillers have died due to the lack of moisture.
- Grain quality is unknown but hopefully due to the second tillers being dropped, the grain in the primary tiller will fill.
- Disease pressure has been minimal due to the dry conditions and lack of humidity, even in irrigated crops. Only one fungicide application has been made to most crops instead of the usual two.
- Overall insect levels have been low.
- Diamond Back Moth larvae have been in high numbers in canola crops with two chemical applications required in many crops.

PASTURES

- Cattle producers have cut crops for hay to ensure sufficient feed to get their cattle through the summer/autumn period. Some grassy crops were cut for hay.
- Dry-land pasture hay yields have been down by 50% with many pasture paddocks that were planned to be cut for hay being grazed due to poor pasture growth. Much of the pasture hay has been cut from irrigated areas.
- Fortunately many producers have carry-over hay from last year.
- Many producers are selling stock including weaner calves which would normally be kept and finished.
- Producers who do not have carry-over hay reserves and have not cut crops for hay have started buying hay.
- Sheep and cattle are in good condition at this stage.

Lower South East

WEATHER

- Rainfall for September and October was below average to very much below average.
- Mean maximum daily temperatures were very much above average during September and October.
- Growing season rainfall (April-October) was well below average.

CROPS

- Crops and pastures on shallow soils are suffering moisture stress.
- Soil moisture levels have been depleted in most soils.
- Growers have cut some crops on shallow soils for hay as they are likely to have high levels of screenings and hay will be needed to feed their livestock.
- Crops and pastures on deeper soils still have average yield potential if reasonable rainfall is received by mid-November.
- Most canola crops have good yield potential although Diamond Back Moth larva have built up and damaged some crops, particularly those under moisture stress.
- Some bean crops will suffer up to a 50% yield penalty with average yields down 35% due to lack of moisture and insect damage.
- The leaf disease *Septoria tritici* has developed in some wheat varieties, reducing yield potential.
- Levels of net form of net blotch have been high in some barley crops.
- Stripe rust has built up rapidly in some wheat varieties but overall the disease levels in cereals has lower than normal.
- Native budworm has been in high numbers in bean crops and caused some crop damage.
- Cereals are still flowering and harvest will most likely commence towards the end of November starting with canola and barley.
- Snails are still in higher numbers than normal this year.

PASTURES

- Hay and silage yields have been below average but quality has been good with most of the hay and silage cut being from crops and not pastures, due to poor pasture growth.
- Most crops that were cut for hay were cereal crops with 20-25% of these crops cut for hay instead of being taken through to grain.
- Livestock condition is still very good at this stage but many producers are selling off stock quickly.
- Weaned lambs and calves are being sold without being finished to target weights or being grown out as they would be in a normal year.
- There is a lack of stored fodder on most properties.
- Pasture growth is very slow on heavy soils.