



# Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

2020–21 Crop Performance Summary and Final Crop Estimates

March 2021



**Government of South Australia**

Department of Primary Industries  
and Regions

# Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

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

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# State Summary

## Weather

### Rainfall

- January rainfall varied from very much above average on the Far West Coast to below average in pockets of the Upper and Lower North.
- Rainfall for February varied from above average on Lower Eyre Peninsula, Central and Southern Yorke Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu and parts of the Southern Mallee and South East to very much below average in parts of the Upper North.
- An area from Ceduna, Woomera, Maree and Yunta had above average January rainfall and the remainder of the Pastoral Zone had average January rainfall.
- The northwest corner of the Pastoral Zone had above average rainfall for February. Most of the remainder of the Pastoral Zone received average falls except for the southern part of the North East Pastoral Zone which had below average rainfall.

### Temperature

- Mean maximum temperatures for January were average across most of the agricultural areas. A large portion of the North West Pastoral Zone had below average maximum temperatures, with the remainder of the Pastoral Zone being average.
- February mean maximum temperatures were below average for most of the Pastoral Zone, Western Eyre Peninsula, Lower North, Fleurieu, Mallee, Upper South East and parts of Eastern Eyre Peninsula and the Mid North, but temperatures were average in other areas.

## Crops

- Total crop production is estimated to be 9.15 million tonnes from a crop area of 4.0 million hectares, which is well above the long-term average.
- Farmers on Kangaroo Island, Central Hills and eastern parts of the Mid and Upper North did not complete harvest until early to mid-January with cool, humid conditions slowing harvest. Farmers in the Lower South East only completed harvest in mid to late February, due to heavy rain in late January and early February.
- Crop yields on Western and Eastern Eyre Peninsula, Northern Yorke Peninsula, western parts of the Mid North and the northern part of the Lower Murray were below average.
- Yields in all other areas were average to above average with well above average yields in some districts.
- Farmers sprayed summer weeds during January in areas that had received above average December rainfall or in last year's hay or pulse crops and spray-topped pastures where soil moisture remained.
- Above average rainfall in late January and early February in numerous districts resulted in a further germination of summer weeds, with most farmers spraying cropping areas to conserve moisture.
- Most soils across the agricultural areas have low to moderate levels of stored soil moisture.
- There has been an increase in soil modification activities across numerous districts on sandy soils, including delving, clay spreading and ripping.
- There has been an increased amount of lime being spread in many districts, following an increased uptake of pH mapping.
- Mice numbers are currently relatively low in most agricultural areas except parts of Yorke Peninsula which observed increased numbers during February.
- Mice populations are being closely monitored to ensure they do not increase to damaging levels before seeding. Some paddocks may need to be baited prior to seeding to avoid crop damage.
- In several districts, strong winds prior to harvest caused large grain losses and this could provide a food source for mice numbers to increase, risking damage to emerging crops.

- Some lower quality oaten hay that had initially been rejected by processors has now been bought for export as markets become available.
- Farmers in the mallee are increasingly using silo bags to better manage grain handling during harvest. These are now being emptied and delivered to bulk storage facilities or other markets.
- There has only been a small area of GM canola planned for the coming season in the higher rainfall areas, to provide another option to control herbicide resistant weeds.
- The area sown to barley is likely to be reduced in numerous districts with an increase in pulse crops.

## Pastures

- In most districts there has been good quantities of moderate to high quality livestock feed in crop stubbles. However, most of the quality feed has now been grazed and farmers are beginning to supplementary feed stock.
- Upper Eyre Peninsula has low levels of pasture and stubble feed and most farmers are supplementary feeding in-paddock or have moved stock into containment areas.
- There are adequate to high amounts of hay stored on-farm in all districts.
- There is likely to be an increase in the area sown to pasture in numerous districts.
- Livestock are in reasonable to good condition throughout the agricultural area.

## Key links to other information

[Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources - Soil and Land Condition monitoring](#)

[Bureau of Meteorology - Weather and rainfall observations](#)

## Notes on the 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<br>Eyre<br>Peninsula | Lower<br>Eyre<br>Peninsula | Eastern<br>Eyre<br>Peninsula | Yorke<br>Peninsula | Upper<br>North | Mid<br>North | Lower<br>North | Kangaroo<br>Island |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Wheat                 | <i>ha</i> | 437 000                      | 142 000                    | 366 000                      | 163 000            | 240 000        | 248 000      | 70 000         | 4 600              |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 502 000                      | 470 000                    | 494 000                      | 569 000            | 638 000        | 682 000      | 254 000        | 16 000             |
| Durum                 | <i>ha</i> | 0                            | 0                          | 0                            | 13 500             | 6 000          | 5 000        | 4 200          | 0                  |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 0                            | 0                          | 0                            | 43 500             | 20 500         | 14 000       | 15 000         | 0                  |
| Barley                | <i>ha</i> | 96 000                       | 71 000                     | 81 000                       | 167 000            | 91 500         | 99 000       | 24 000         | 3 000              |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 130 000                      | 256 000                    | 118 000                      | 585 000            | 238 000        | 286 000      | 97 000         | 13 500             |
| Oats                  | <i>ha</i> | 14 000                       | 3 500                      | 4 600                        | 4 200              | 5 500          | 5 000        | 3 100          | 1 600              |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 14 000                       | 8 200                      | 5 500                        | 11 300             | 10 500         | 12 800       | 10 200         | 5 500              |
| 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            | 100                |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 450                          | 1 500                      | 650                          | 3 000              | 3 200          | 4 800        | 1 400          | 450                |
| Peas                  | <i>ha</i> | 2 500                        | 2 400                      | 4 200                        | 11 000             | 14 000         | 15 000       | 6 100          | 400                |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 2 000                        | 4 100                      | 2 500                        | 20 000             | 23 500         | 24 000       | 15 200         | 800                |
| Lupins                | <i>ha</i> | 1 500                        | 11 000                     | 5 000                        | 1 000              | 3 000          | 1 800        | 500            | 1 000              |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 1 350                        | 20 000                     | 4 000                        | 1 400              | 4 600          | 2 700        | 1 000          | 2 000              |
| Beans                 | <i>ha</i> | 400                          | 10 000                     | 400                          | 12 000             | 12 200         | 13 000       | 3 100          | 3 400              |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 500                          | 24 500                     | 300                          | 24 000             | 22 000         | 26 000       | 11 500         | 8 500              |
| Chickpeas             | <i>ha</i> | 0                            | 400                        | 200                          | 6 600              | 4 600          | 2 500        | 400            | 0                  |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 0                            | 650                        | 200                          | 8 300              | 8 300          | 4 500        | 800            | 0                  |
| Lentils               | <i>ha</i> | 2 000                        | 9 500                      | 2 000                        | 129 000            | 10 000         | 14 500       | 6 200          | 0                  |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 1 600                        | 16 500                     | 1 400                        | 260 000            | 15 800         | 17 500       | 12 500         | 0                  |
| Vetch                 | <i>ha</i> | 2 400                        | 3 600                      | 2 000                        | 2 600              | 5 600          | 4 000        | 300            | 0                  |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 700                          | 2 500                      | 900                          | 1 500              | 2 200          | 3 100        | 450            | 0                  |
| Canola                | <i>ha</i> | 5 500                        | 66 000                     | 7 500                        | 12 000             | 24 500         | 23 000       | 5 500          | 5 200              |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 6 000                        | 171 000                    | 5 500                        | 21 200             | 51 500         | 46 000       | 12 000         | 12 500             |
| Hay<br>(not in total) | <i>ha</i> | 5 500                        | 5 100                      | 7 800                        | 23 000             | 17 000         | 35 000       | 10 000         | 7 500              |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 12 000                       | 24 000                     | 18 500                       | 105 000            | 52 000         | 150 000      | 53 000         | 35 500             |
| Total                 | <i>ha</i> | 559 700                      | 319 900                    | 473 400                      | 522 900            | 418 100        | 432 500      | 123 800        | 19 300             |
|                       | <i>t</i>  | 658 600                      | 974 950                    | 632 950                      | 1 548 200          | 1 038 100      | 1 123 400    | 431 050        | 59 250             |

**TABLE 1 CROP ESTIMATES BY DISTRICT (CONT)**

|                       |    | Central Hills<br>& Fleurieu | Lower<br>Murray | Nth Murray<br>Mallee | Sth Murray<br>Mallee | Upper<br>South East | Lower<br>South East | State<br>Total |
|-----------------------|----|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Wheat                 | ha | 6 000                       | 63 000          | 250 000              | 110 000              | 79 000              | 23 000              | 2 201 600      |
|                       | t  | 17 000                      | 137 000         | 450 000              | 329 000              | 238 000             | 127 000             | 4 923 000      |
| Durum                 | ha | 300                         | 1 000           | 300                  | 0                    | 7 500               | 0                   | 37 800         |
|                       | t  | 650                         | 1 800           | 420                  | 0                    | 19 000              | 0                   | 114 870        |
| Barley                | ha | 11 500                      | 78 000          | 64 000               | 120 500              | 40 000              | 7 000               | 953 500        |
|                       | t  | 35 500                      | 194 000         | 115 500              | 338 000              | 118 500             | 35 000              | 2 560 000      |
| Oats                  | ha | 2 100                       | 2 200           | 2 200                | 4 000                | 21 000              | 4 700               | 77 700         |
|                       | t  | 5 200                       | 4 000           | 3 500                | 9 200                | 55 000              | 18 800              | 173 700        |
| Rye                   | ha | 0                           | 1 000           | 5 000                | 1 000                | 1 600               | 0                   | 8 600          |
|                       | t  | 0                           | 1 600           | 6 000                | 1 500                | 2 000               | 0                   | 11 100         |
| Triticale             | ha | 500                         | 4 000           | 2 000                | 15 000               | 1 000               | 500                 | 28 800         |
|                       | t  | 1 400                       | 8 800           | 3 000                | 37 500               | 2 400               | 2 200               | 70 750         |
| Peas                  | ha | 1 000                       | 3 000           | 4 000                | 3 100                | 2 900               | 400                 | 70 000         |
|                       | t  | 1 800                       | 4 500           | 4 000                | 5 500                | 4 600               | 1 200               | 113 700        |
| Lupins                | ha | 1 600                       | 1 000           | 5 400                | 4 100                | 11 000              | 2 700               | 50 600         |
|                       | t  | 2 700                       | 1 400           | 5 400                | 7 400                | 16 300              | 5 400               | 75 650         |
| Beans                 | ha | 300                         | 500             | 0                    | 2 000                | 29 500              | 13 800              | 100 600        |
|                       | t  | 600                         | 600             | 0                    | 3 200                | 52 500              | 38 500              | 212 700        |
| Chickpeas             | ha | 200                         | 3 000           | 6 800                | 4 000                | 600                 | 200                 | 29 500         |
|                       | t  | 300                         | 4 200           | 8 100                | 7 200                | 1 050               | 450                 | 44 050         |
| Lentils               | ha | 300                         | 3 000           | 2 000                | 5 000                | 3 000               | 200                 | 186 700        |
|                       | t  | 450                         | 4 200           | 2 000                | 9 000                | 4 600               | 400                 | 345 950        |
| Vetch                 | ha | 0                           | 3 100           | 6 500                | 5 100                | 1 200               | 0                   | 36 400         |
|                       | t  | 0                           | 4 300           | 4 000                | 6 500                | 1 600               | 0                   | 27 750         |
| Canola                | ha | 3 500                       | 5 100           | 18 000               | 6 000                | 22 500              | 16 500              | 220 800        |
|                       | t  | 5 000                       | 7 600           | 21 500               | 9 000                | 49 000              | 44 000              | 461 800        |
| Hay<br>(not in total) | ha | 30 000                      | 11 000          | 5 600                | 31 000               | 48 000              | 27 000              | 258 000        |
|                       | t  | 140 000                     | 39 000          | 14 000               | 138 000              | 264 000             | 150 000             | 1 195 000      |
| Total                 | ha | 27 300                      | 167 900         | 366 200              | 279 800              | 220 800             | 69 000              | 4 002 600      |
|                       | t  | 70 600                      | 374 000         | 623 420              | 763 000              | 564 550             | 272 950             | 9 135 020      |

**TABLE 2 CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE**

|                |           | 2015/16   | 2016/17    | 2017/18   | 2018/19   | 2019/20   | 5 year ave | 2020/21          |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------------|
| Wheat          | <i>ha</i> | 2 200 000 | 2 237 700  | 2 024 100 | 2 000 400 | 2 112 100 | 2 114 900  | 2 201 600        |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 4 315 500 | 6 460 500  | 4 122 500 | 3 156 000 | 3 251 500 | 4 261 200  | 4 923 000        |
| Durum          | <i>ha</i> | 49 500    | 55 200     | 55 700    | 42 000    | 42 900    | 49 100     | 37 800           |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 86 750    | 209 700    | 139 400   | 75 220    | 82 560    | 118 700    | 114 870          |
| Barley         | <i>ha</i> | 839 300   | 799 300    | 714 600   | 818 600   | 990 000   | 832 400    | 953 500          |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 1 978 000 | 2 774 800  | 1 640 700 | 1 725 800 | 2 091 000 | 2 042 100  | 2 560 000        |
| Oats           | <i>ha</i> | 70 300    | 94 600     | 77 000    | 75 700    | 72 800    | 78 100     | 77 700           |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 103 000   | 258 700    | 149 300   | 121 500   | 120 450   | 150 600    | 173 700          |
| Rye            | <i>ha</i> | 7 500     | 10 500     | 6 500     | 5 300     | 5 700     | 7 100      | 8 600            |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 6 200     | 15 700     | 5 100     | 3 150     | 4 250     | 6 900      | 11 100           |
| Triticale      | <i>ha</i> | 21 800    | 21 500     | 19 900    | 29 400    | 32 300    | 25 000     | 28 800           |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 32 700    | 58 130     | 35 050    | 33 500    | 42 250    | 40 300     | 70 750           |
| Peas           | <i>ha</i> | 102 600   | 97 300     | 90 200    | 65 700    | 65 300    | 84 200     | 70 000           |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 103 600   | 176 100    | 113 750   | 53 600    | 70 100    | 103 400    | 113 700          |
| Lupins         | <i>ha</i> | 76 700    | 76 800     | 62 800    | 61 000    | 51 100    | 65 700     | 50 600           |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 63 850    | 134 800    | 53 400    | 59 950    | 53 800    | 73 200     | 75 650           |
| Beans          | <i>ha</i> | 68 600    | 75 500     | 67 400    | 63 100    | 98 400    | 74 600     | 100 600          |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 77 300    | 166 530    | 101 660   | 79 680    | 156 650   | 116 400    | 212 700          |
| Chickpeas      | <i>ha</i> | 20 500    | 20 500     | 29 700    | 33 600    | 22 200    | 25 300     | 29 500           |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 19 240    | 34 360     | 33 580    | 23 870    | 17 000    | 25 600     | 44 050           |
| Lentils        | <i>ha</i> | 123 700   | 169 600    | 184 700   | 149 800   | 164 300   | 158 400    | 184 700          |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 120 080   | 447 680    | 260 200   | 177 870   | 220 400   | 245 200    | 345 950          |
| Vetch          | <i>ha</i> | 29 600    | 32 200     | 32 400    | 28 400    | 34 000    | 31 300     | 36 400           |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 11 900    | 34 800     | 15 350    | 5 760     | 9 420     | 15 400     | 27 750           |
| Canola         | <i>ha</i> | 210 500   | 203 000    | 200 200   | 200 100   | 206 600   | 204 100    | 220 800          |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 293 300   | 372 900    | 261 400   | 278 900   | 347 400   | 310 800    | 461 800          |
| Hay            | <i>ha</i> | 282 700   | 258 800    | 202 900   | 370 000   | 320 600   | 287 000    | 258 000          |
| (not in total) | <i>t</i>  | 1 094 800 | 1 454 300  | 948 600   | 1 104 000 | 1 258 900 | 1 172 100  | 1 195 000        |
| Total          | <i>ha</i> | 3 820 600 | 3 893 700  | 3 565 200 | 3 572 100 | 3 897 700 | 3 749 900  | <b>4 000 600</b> |
|                | <i>t</i>  | 7 211 400 | 11 144 700 | 6 931 400 | 5 794 900 | 6 466 800 | 7 509 800  | <b>9 135 000</b> |



# District Reports

## Western Eyre Peninsula

### Weather

- Subtropical conditions in the last week of January produced very much above average January rainfall in coastal districts, particularly around Streaky Bay and west of Ceduna, and above average in the remainder of the district.
- February rainfall was mostly average, except for Streaky Bay which received above average rainfall for the month.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average to below average for January and below average for February with only a few days over 35°C.

### Crops

- Crop yields were generally below earlier expectations with spring rainfall not providing significant yield benefit. Hot winds in early September also significantly reduced grain yields of many crops.
- Grain quality was generally good with high protein, good test weights and low screenings.
- January and February rain resulted in rapid germination of summer weeds and volunteer crops, and most farmers have conducted at least one herbicide application and many farmers have sprayed multiple times to control successive germination following rains.
- Surface cover in most paddocks is generally low to moderate and most farmers are supplementary feeding stock in containment areas to protect vulnerable soils from erosion.
- Most soils contain some moisture at depth with lighter textured soil profiles in districts which received good early rains having good levels of stored moisture.
- Early indications are that crop areas will not vary significantly from recent years.
- The exceptions are that there may be a small increase in the area sown to barley to provide a weed control option. The area of lentils may also increase, replacing peas which have been impacted by frosts in recent years.
- Snail activity has increased following summer rainfall however, numbers are still lower than average due to recent dry summers. Baiting at seeding is likely to be at the usual level.
- Mice numbers have increased over summer, but these are generally below control thresholds with farmers only intending to bait vulnerable crops in early sown paddocks.
- Good stored soil moisture has resulted in large scale soil modification works, including delving and deep ripping, to overcome soil constraints in sandy soil types.

### Pastures

- Pasture and stubble feed is generally low with most farmers either supplementary feeding stock in paddock or removing them to containment feeding areas to protect vulnerable soils from wind erosion.
- Livestock are generally in good condition.
- With a normal autumn break to the season, most producers will have adequate supplies of grain and hay stored on-farm to continue supplementary feeding until pastures establish.

## Lower Eyre Peninsula

### Weather

- January rainfall was above average in the western half of lower Eyre Peninsula and average in the remainder of the district.
- Storms in the first week of February brought above average rainfall to the whole district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for both January and February.

### Crops

- Despite delays due to cooler, humid weather, most farmers had finished harvest by Christmas.
- Time of sowing had less influence than in recent years, with extreme weather events including frosts and the hot north winds in the first week of September heavily impacting yield.
- Yields of canola and pulse crops were well above average.
- Cereal yields were at or slightly below the long-term average and were generally lower than expected, given above average spring rainfall.
- Grain quality was very good with high protein and low screenings.
- Stubbles and summer weeds are providing moderate surface cover with soils in most districts adequately protected from erosion.
- Farmers began spraying summer weeds immediately after harvest with most paddocks requiring multiple herbicide applications due to summer rainfall producing successive weed germinations.
- Most soil profiles contain some moisture following summer rains.
- Early indications are that the area of crop sown in 2021 is not likely to be significantly different from normal.
- Large amounts of lime and gypsum have been spread on paddocks to ameliorate soils.
- Mice, snails and insect pest numbers have been generally low. Farmers will bait vulnerable paddocks at seeding to control snail numbers and will treat at least a portion of their seed to protect early sown crops against Russian wheat aphid.

### Pastures

- Stubbles have provided high amounts of quality feed.
- Livestock are in excellent condition.
- Farmers have adequate supplies of hay and grain stored on farm, given an average break to the season.

# Eastern Eyre Peninsula

## Weather

- The first half of January was generally dry but storm activity in the last week of January and early February resulted in average rainfall for January and February.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and average to below average for February despite numerous days above 35°C in mid-February.

## Crops

- Crop yields varied considerably depending on soil type, rainfall distribution, and extreme weather events.
- Crops on heavier soil types near Kimba suffered significant moisture stress late in the season and yielded very poorly.
- Yields were also affected by hot north winds in the first week of September and crops near Tooligie suffered significant frost damage.
- Close to average yields were reported on the sandier soils near Darke Peak, Rudall, Wharminda and the Cleve Hills, where extended mild conditions late in the season improved grain fill.
- Grain quality was generally high with high protein (up to 14%) and low screenings. Pulse grain quality was high and canola had very high oil content.
- Summer weeds germinated rapidly following January and February rainfall with many farmers requiring multiple herbicide applications to control successive weed germinations.
- Stubbles and summer weeds are providing moderate surface cover with soils in most districts adequately protected from erosion.
- In isolated sandy rises in a small proportion of paddocks near Lock, Rudall, Arno Bay, and Cowell, poor surface cover exists as a result of poor crop establishment in 2020 and/or where soil modification practices have been undertaken to overcome soil constraints.
- Pest numbers have generally been low. However, most farmers will treat at least a portion of their seed to protect early sown crops from insect damage, particularly Russian wheat aphid.
- Early indications are that the crop area for 2021 will be similar to normal depending on opening rainfall. There might be a small increase in the area sown for livestock feed (vetch or barley) given low surface cover levels on pasture paddocks.
- Large amounts of lime and gypsum have been spread on paddocks in the Cleve Hills, as required.

## Pastures

- Despite low to moderate surface cover in some districts, most paddocks are adequately protected from wind erosion with landholders supplementary feeding stock away from vulnerable areas.
- Livestock are generally in good condition and assuming an average break to the season, most producers have adequate grain and hay supplies stored on farm to continue feeding stock until pastures establish.
- Dams in the Cleve Hills have low water levels with most producers carting water to supply livestock.

## Upper North

### Weather

- Rainfall for January was average to below average. Thunderstorm activity caused heavy falls in isolated areas in the east of the district in late January. February rainfall was average in the southern part of the district and below average in the remainder of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for both January and February.

### Crops

- Crop yields across the district ranged from average in the northwest part of the district to well above average in the south.
- Frost in late September significantly damaged crops in low lying areas in the southeast of the district and strong winds caused grain loss to ripe barley, oat and some wheat crops, reducing yields from well above average to above average.
- Pulse and canola crops benefited from the above average spring rainfall and most crops yielded well above average.
- There is some stored soil moisture, but it is relatively deep in the profile and the topsoil is very dry. Good opening rains will be required to wet soil profiles, particularly on the heavier soil types.
- There was a large germination of summer weeds following rain in December and most farmers sprayed paddocks in late December and January to conserve moisture.
- There has been an increased adoption of pH mapping, with a large amount of lime being purchased. This will be spread just prior to seeding.
- Some lower quality oaten hay that had initially been rejected by processors has now been purchased for export, as markets become available.
- There has only been a small uptake of GM canola in the higher rainfall areas, to provide farmers another option to control herbicide resistant weeds.
- There is likely to be a small reduction in barley sown and some farmers are changing wheat varieties after suffering large grain losses due to shattering prior to harvest.
- Mice are currently only at low levels, however there is concern that numbers could increase, particularly in paddocks where high grain losses occurred before harvest.
- A good rainfall event will be required to germinate the spilled grain before numbers increase to damaging levels.

### Pastures

- Pasture paddocks have been grazed with minimal quality feed remaining but still have adequate ground cover.
- Crop stubbles still have adequate feed, due to the high grain losses and dry summer which has maintained feed quality.
- There will be an increased area sown to vetch or vetch and cereal in the northern part of the district to replace regenerating medic pastures.
- Most producers have been able to maintain most of their breeding stock and will be able to increase numbers relatively quickly.
- Livestock are in good condition with some producers beginning to supplementary feed ewes in mid to late pregnancy to maintain condition.

## Mid North

### Weather

- Rainfall was average for January. February rainfall was below average in the northeast and average in the remainder of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and average to below average for February.

### Crops

- Crop yields were well below average in the western part of the district and average in most of the remainder of the district. Frost damage in the eastern part of the district and some grain loss from wind damage reduced yields from above average to close to average.
- Grain prices were volatile with bean, wheat and barley prices falling as harvest progressed. Most farmers sold barley and canola early at reasonable prices.
- Wheat prices have risen since early February and some farmers have taken the opportunity to forward sell some of the 2021/22 crop.
- There is minimal stored soil moisture in sub soils across the district.
- Germination of summer weeds has been patchy, depending on soil type and the crop grown last season. Paddocks with hay and pulses last season have had the highest weed germination.
- Many cereal crops were crop topped before harvest, which has given some early summer weed control, reducing the need to spray.
- There has been an increased adoption of pH mapping, which has led to a more lime being spread. Liming has improved crop growth and also enabled better weed control, particularly of annual ryegrass.
- Some of the lower quality oaten hay that had been initially rejected by processors has now been sold and moved off-farm. There is still large amounts of frosted cereal hay still unsold on-farm.
- Most farmers have been cautious about growing GM canola and it is only likely to make up less than 5% of the canola area this season.
- There is likely to be a reduced area sown to barley and oaten hay, due to lower price outlook and replaced with increased areas of wheat and pulses.
- The durum wheat area is likely to remain stable, after falling dramatically in the last few years, with good forward contract prices available.
- Mice numbers are currently low, however there is concern that numbers could increase, especially in paddocks where high grain losses occurred before harvest.

### Pastures

- There is still adequate pasture feed available in stubbles, which are still of reasonable quality due to minimal summer rainfall.
- Some producers have commenced supplementary feeding ewes, particularly those in mid to late pregnancy.
- Most livestock are in reasonable condition throughout the district.
- The growth of dryland lucerne stands have slowed with the dry conditions in February and many have been grazed, rather than being harvested for seed.

## Lower North

### Weather

- Rainfall was below average to average for January and average for February.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and average to below average for February.

### Crops

- Many farmers east of Roseworthy and Tarlee have reported that they had their 'best ever' harvest. The central area from Roseworthy to Mallala was very good with good yields and good prices.
- However, the area from Two Wells to Port Wakefield was below average. The main difference between the areas was the timing of rainfall with rain coming too late to significantly benefit crops in the early maturing coastal areas.
- Most farmers were able to sell their grain at reasonable to good prices.
- There has been very little rain throughout the district since the start of November, resulting in very few summer weeds.
- There are low amounts of stored soil moisture in most areas of the district.
- An increasing number of farmers are spreading lime, following soil pH mapping which has indicated areas of high soil acidity. Penrice has sold out of lime again this year.
- There will not be much change in crop type or area sown with most farmers maintaining current rotations and crop mixes.

### Pastures

- There are still high amounts of stubble feed available and the quality has been maintained, due to a lack of rainfall.
- Only a limited amount of supplementary feeding has been required.
- High levels of hay remain on-farm, so feed levels are good.
- Livestock are in good condition with lambs currently being finished on stubbles. With livestock prices high, producers are keen to provide high quality feed to maximise returns.
- Sheep numbers will be reduced as stock brought into graze stubbles are sold off to the market.
- Medic seed harvest has been completed with reasonable to good supplies of seed, depending on varieties.

# Yorke Peninsula

## Weather

- Rainfall for January was average. February rainfall was above average for Central and Southern Yorke Peninsula and average for Northern Yorke Peninsula.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and February.

## Crops

- Most of Central and Southern Yorke Peninsula had above average yields, however the Copper Coast and coastal areas of Central Yorke Peninsula were below average to well below average. Most crops on Northern Yorke Peninsula yielded close to average.
- Rainfall during January and early February germinated summer weeds.
- There was insufficient rainfall in a large majority of the district to germinate all of the spilt grain from the 2020 season and there are still significant amounts on the ground in some paddocks.
- Summer weed control is well underway, with most farmers between half and fully completed.
- Many of the lighter sandier soils in the north of the district have 20 to 30% stored soil moisture, however a lot of the heavier soil types contain very little moisture.
- The area sown to lentils is likely to increase by up to 5%, due to an increase in the lentil price following harvest.
- The field pea area is also likely to increase by 10 to 20% due to better options to control herbicide resistant weeds. Chickpea crops performed poorly in 2020 and the area could be reduced by up to 30%.
- The area of wheat and canola are likely to remain unchanged. The slight improvement in the pricing of barley during February has given farmers confidence to continue growing barley, however the intended area will still be below the long-term average.
- Seed cleaning is currently well under way in preparation for the new season.
- A large amount of spading, clay-spreading and deep ripping has occurred in the dune swale country in Northern Yorke Peninsula. Farmers have also spread chicken litter, gypsum and lime.
- The excellent rainfall during October 2020 followed up with rain in the new year has alleviated most concerns of plant-back requirements from residual herbicides. This will provide a greater choice of varieties for the coming season, particularly with wheat.
- Mice numbers are increasing with noticeable activity during February. There is a high risk of mice damage, during seeding and farmers are starting to order bait in preparation for seeding.
- February rainfall has allowed farmers to spread snail bait while snails are active, which has enabled numbers to be reduced before seeding.

## Pastures

- In Central and Southern Yorke Peninsula, livestock are currently grazing crop stubbles, which have high amounts of quality feed. There are high amounts of grain in some paddocks, due to grain losses from strong winds prior to harvest.
- On Northern Yorke Peninsula crop stubbles had reduced biomass, limiting the amount of grazing available over summer. Most producers have been careful to ensure sufficient cover remains to avoid wind erosion.
- Many farmers in the northern part of the district are feeding hay and grain to livestock to ensure they are kept in average condition.



# Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island

## Weather

- Rainfall was average for January and above average for February.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January. February temperatures were below average for the Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu and average for Kangaroo Island.

## Crops

### *Central Hills/Fleurieu Peninsula*

- Crop yields were generally above average due to the wet spring. However, canola yields were lower than expected.
- Grain prices were above average for most crops and this has provided confidence for the coming season.
- The amount of stored soil moisture was above average, but soils are now drying out rapidly with no follow-up rains since early February.
- Many farmers have controlled summer weeds in cropping areas. Warm, dry weather in late February has slowed growth of summer weeds.
- Some farmers have applied lime and gypsum to ameliorate soils.

### *Kangaroo Island*

- Harvest was extended, due to cool temperatures and rainfall events.
- Strong winds prior to harvest caused crop damage with significant grain loss in some crops.
- Grain prices for most crops were average to above average, except for barley which was below average.
- The amount of stored soil moisture is low (10-15%) with summer weeds reducing stored moisture.
- There has been a large germination of summer weeds and volunteer crops and some farmers with minimal stock numbers have sprayed cropping paddocks to conserve soil moisture.
- There has been an increase in lime applications as applications were well below average due to the fires.
- A local contractor has purchased a delver and many farmers are clay delving/ripping.

## Pastures

### *Central Hills/Fleurieu Peninsula*

- The quality of feed in pasture and crop stubbles has declined and most stubbles have been heavily grazed.
- Supplementary feeding is only occurring where livestock numbers are high.
- Livestock are in good condition with high prices being paid for breeding stock due to their limited availability.

### *Kangaroo Island*

- Paddock cover is good but consists mainly of poor-quality annual grasses and weeds.
- There has been a significant germination of pastures, although most is unlikely to survive without good falls of rain by mid-March.
- Some perennial growth, including kikuyu and cocksfoot/Phalaris, has provided some high-quality feed.
- Supplementary feeding is occurring on most properties.
- Livestock are generally in good condition with more attention given to underperforming stock and some risk of worms on green paddocks.
- Producers are retaining more ewes to rebuild sheep flocks.



## Lower Murray

### Weather

- Rainfall was average for both January and February with a significant rainfall event in late January.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and below average for February.
- Strong to moderate winds have been prevalent for the last two months.

### Crops

- Harvest was completed in December with farmers now making preparations for seeding.
- There have been some localised reports of mice but not enough to have farmers concerned at this stage.
- On the few hot days some farmers have been opportunely cabling or rolling to reduce snail numbers.
- Some hay being stored on-farm has been sold to local export hay processors and livestock owners.
- January rains resulted in a germination of summer weeds and volunteer crops and farmers have been actively spraying to conserve stored soil moisture.
- Growth has now been controlled in most paddocks however strong winds have slowed spraying with some weeds becoming stressed before they were able to be controlled.
- Summer crops planted on the river flats have grown well with high yield potential.

### Pastures

- Annual pasture paddocks have generally been heavily grazed, and livestock are now grazing stubble paddocks.
- Most stubbles were of high quality with some spilled grain. However, quality has deteriorated since the rain in January.
- Perennial pastures grew rapidly following the rain in January, but growth has slowed with dry conditions in February.
- Pastures on the river flats are performing well, and the low water price is resulting in adequate irrigation being applied with high growth of quality feed.
- Livestock are in very good condition across the region and dryland farmers are now starting to supplementary feed ewes as lambing approaches.

## Northern Murray Mallee

### Weather

- Rainfall was average for January and average to below average for February.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and below average for February.

### Crops

- The 2020 season was generally average to slightly above average year for most farming businesses, following a number of very poor seasons.
- There has been a significant increase in on-farm grain storage, particularly with the use of silo bags this season.
- After a season of improved crop growth there is far better stubble cover over summer, with a significantly lower risk of soil erosion compared to the previous few years.
- At present there is very little stored soil moisture available going into the 2021 season.
- Most farmers are currently spraying the few summer weeds present, with many now using sensor sprayers to reduce spray costs and improve summer spray safety and outcomes.
- The recently established network of weather stations across the Mallee has aided safer summer spraying through the identification of inversion events.

### Pastures

- There is currently adequate paddock feed available for livestock.
- Livestock are reported to be in good condition with little supplementary feeding required at this stage.

## Southern Murray Mallee

### Weather

- January rainfall was average to above average. February rainfall was above average in the west and average in the east of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and below average for February.
- Strong to moderate winds were recorded on numerous occasions through the period.

### Crops

- Crop production across the region was generally average to above average.
- Frost and strong winds caused some damage with significant grain loss in some barley and oat crops, however most of these still produced close to average yields.
- There has been a large germination of summer weeds and volunteer crops, particularly in the western part of the district. Most farmers have sprayed most of their cropping paddocks to control growth and conserve soil moisture.
- Strong winds have delayed spraying operations and some weeds have become moisture stressed before they could be sprayed.
- The recently established network of weather stations across the Mallee has aided safer summer spraying through the identification of inversion events.
- In some stubble paddocks with high snail numbers farmers have cabled or rolled during hot weather to control numbers.
- Most farmers are organising seed, cleaning seed, and transporting fertiliser on farm in preparation for seeding.
- Farmers are increasingly using silo bags to better manage grain handling during harvest. These are now being emptied and delivered to silos and other markets before seeding.
- Hay stored on-farm has been sold and transported to hay processors and livestock producers over the past two months.
- Paddock preparation activities have included reefinancing (smashing limestone reefs), deep ripping, clay spreading and delving across the district.

### Pastures

- Annual pastures have deteriorated since the January rain.
- Perennial pastures put on a small amount of growth following the late January and early February rains but have since dried off.
- Livestock are in very good condition and farmers have begun supplementary feeding ewes, particularly those in late pregnancy, to maintain condition.

## Upper South East

### Weather

- January rainfall was mostly average with small areas of above average rainfall.
- Rainfall for February was average in the east and above average in the remainder of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures for January were average. February temperatures were average in the south and below average north of Willalooka.

### Crops

- Crops throughout the district generally yielded well-above average and grain quality was good, although barley and oat grain suffered some discolouration.
- There are low to moderate amounts of stored soil moisture, depending on soil type and previous crop type.
- There is limited seed availability of some canola varieties, particularly the later maturing varieties.
- Farmers have been able to source sufficient fertiliser and chemicals, however prices of some products have increased significantly.
- There has been minimal germination of summer weeds and control has only been required in isolated areas for specific weeds.
- Farmers have begun spreading gypsum and lime.
- Mice numbers are relatively low but are being monitored.
- There is a risk that slugs could cause damage to emerging crops and numbers are being monitored.
- There is likely to be a reduction in the area sown to barley with forecast below-average prices and an increase in wheat and beans sown this season.

### Pastures

- Dryland lucerne pastures put on some growth following rain in late January and early February but growth has now slowed.
- Most pastures are providing some livestock feed but producers have begun to supplementary feed ewes in mid to late pregnancy to maintain condition.
- Crop stubbles initially provided high amounts of quality livestock feed but this has deteriorated following rain in late January and early February.
- There are high stocks of hay on-farm throughout the district.
- The area sown to lucerne is likely to increase across the district to enable producers to increase stock numbers.
- Seed yields of dryland lucerne crops were below average with poor seed set due to cool, dry conditions over summer.
- Irrigated lucerne crops have yielded average to above average.

## Lower South East

### Weather

- Rainfall for January and February was average to above average across the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for January and February.

### Crops

- The dry winter and long moist spring conditions made 2020-21 an ideal season for crop production, with minimal waterlogging and sufficient rainfall to finish high yielding crops.
- Crop yields in the district have increased significantly in recent years, due to a combination of improved varieties, crop management and reduced waterlogging.
- Harvest was only completed towards the end of February.
- Cool, humid conditions slowed harvest, due to heavy falls of rain in late January and early February. The rain caused staining of beans and some minor black tipping in wheat.
- Price of broad beans has fallen significantly due to increased area sown and the higher production of faba beans.
- There are limited seed supplies of some canola varieties.
- Close to average summer rain has provided some stored soil moisture. Soils still have the capacity to absorb good autumn rainfall before getting too wet to disrupt seeding.
- There has been a germination of summer weeds in cropping paddocks and most will be controlled to avoid a green bridge for disease and insect build up.
- There are low to moderate numbers of field crickets and wingless grasshoppers but current numbers are unlikely to have an impact on pasture or crop establishment.

### Pastures

- There are still good amounts of pasture feed available with new growth of perennial pastures providing high quality feed.
- Livestock are in good condition.



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of South Australia**

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