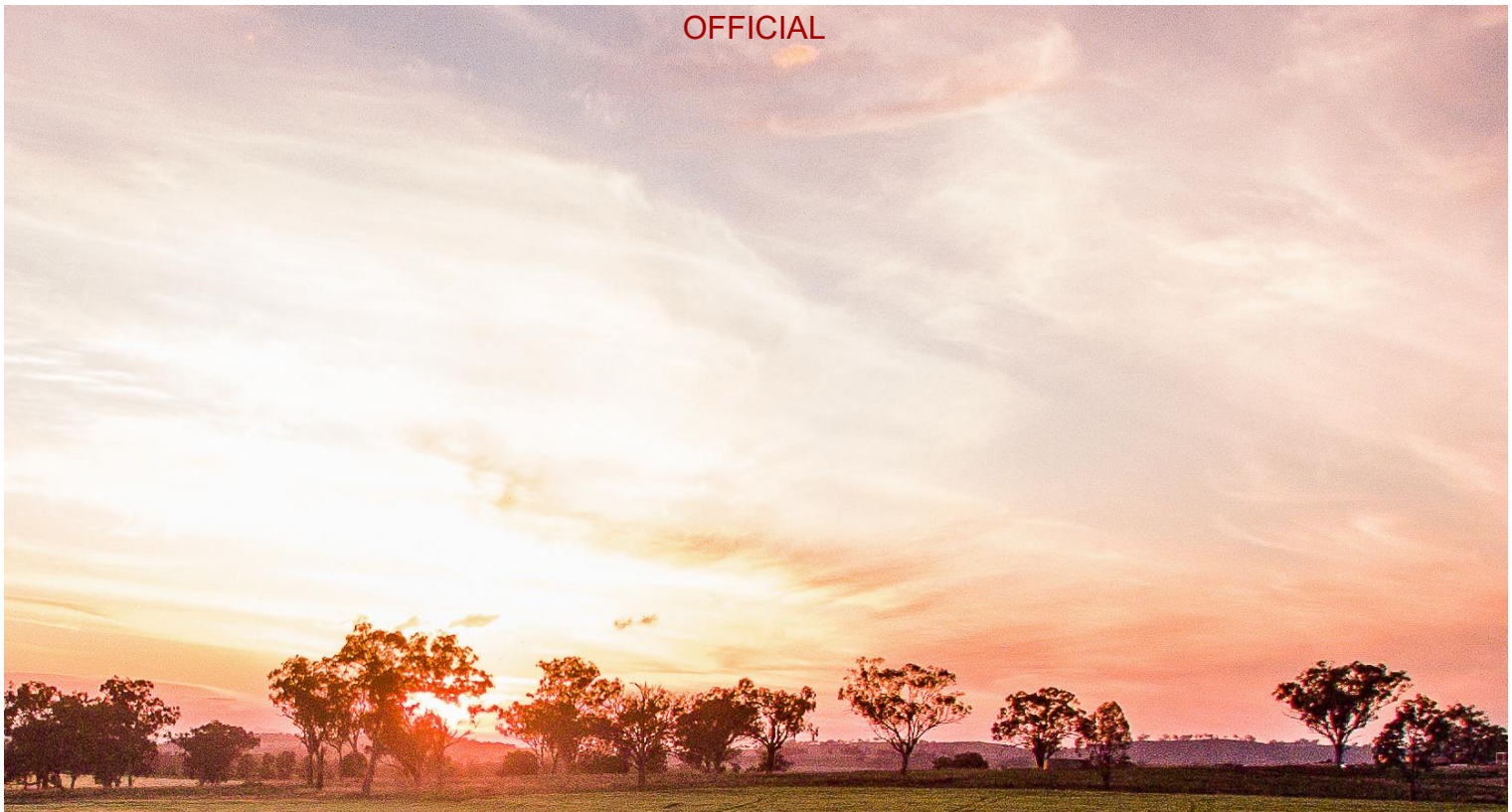


South Australian Crop and Pasture Report

2026-27 Winter Crop Performance

September 2026

Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

Information current as of 14 September 2026

This is a report prepared by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA).

Disclaimer

All Enquiries

Pema Wangchuk, Senior Analyst
Department of Primary Industries and Regions
GPO Box 1671
Adelaide SA 5001
E pema.wangchuk@sa.gov.au

Key link to weather information

Bureau of Meteorology - Weather and rainfall observations

Notes on the calculation of crop estimates

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 to PIRSA and 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.

State Crops and Pastures – 2026/27 Winter Performance

Summary

Average to above average rainfall fell through winter for all regions of South Australia (figure 1), with August being the fourth wettest on record. Root zone soil moisture is above to well above average for most of South Australia's agricultural regions, an exception being isolated pockets of average to below average soil moisture in some south-eastern and coastal districts (figure 2).

The seasonal outlook shows a strengthening El Niño and warmer than average sea surface temperatures contributing to an increased likelihood of below average rainfall (figure 3) and above average temperatures (figure 4) across southern Australia through spring and early summer.

Disease pressure has increased under the wet seasonal conditions, with rusts, powdery mildew, net blotch, blackleg and sclerotinia reported across several regions. However, proactive monitoring and preventative fungicide programs have generally kept disease levels manageable, and significant impacts on yield potential are expected to be limited.

While seasonal conditions remain highly favourable, wet paddocks, limited spraying opportunities, fungicide shortages and lodging in oat hay and some barley crops have created localised management challenges. Growers also remain alert to frost and heat risks as crops move through critical spring growth stages.

Crop development is generally more advanced compared to an average season, supported by an early break, excellent soil moisture reserves and favourable growing conditions. Cereals are progressing through flag leaf emergence and into heading, pulse crops are flowering strongly, and canola crops are at or nearing the end of flowering, with yield potential considered the best seen in several years across many regions. The estimated grain production for 2026/27 is 11.6 million tonnes, which is 32% above the five-year average.

Pasture and livestock conditions are exceptionally strong across most regions, with abundant feed availability, secure water supplies and widespread spring feed surpluses. Livestock condition is reported to be very good, supporting optimism for livestock production, with many producers focused on conserving excess feed and making hay ahead of summer.

Sown crop area and production for previous five seasons

Seasons	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	*2026-27* *Estimated*
Area sown (ha)	3,942,000	3,942,000	4,011,000	3,860,000	4,069,000	*4,234,000*
Production (t)	8,445,000	12,788,000	8,703,000	5,170,000	8,860,000	*11,591,000*
Farm gate value	$3.3 billion	$4.8 billion	$3.3 billion	$2.1 billion	$3.1 billion	

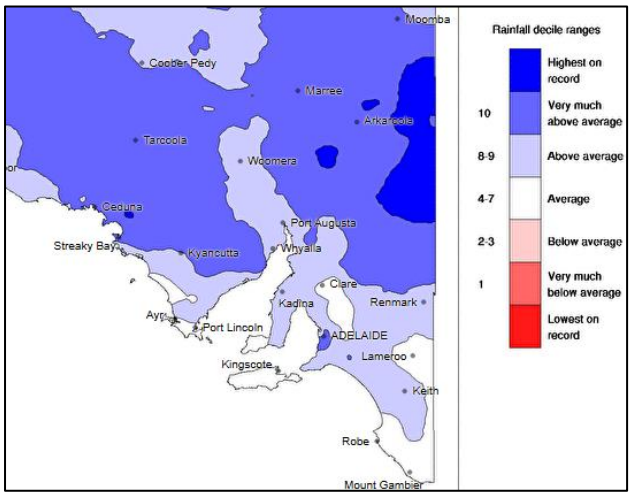


Figure 1: Rainfall deciles for the winter period of 1st June to 31st August 2026.

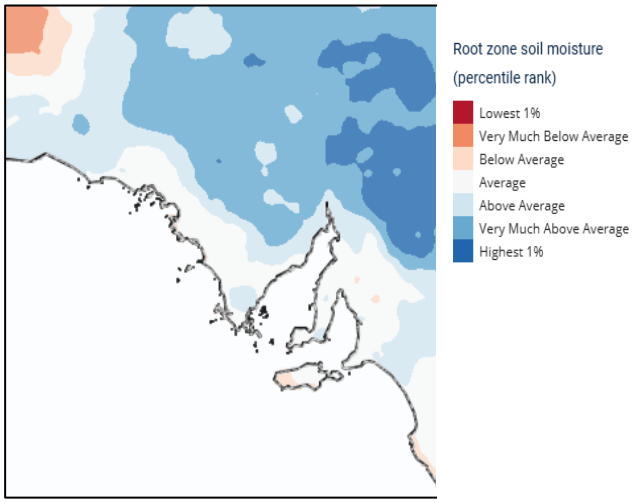


Figure 2: Root zone soil moisture (issued 9 September 2026).

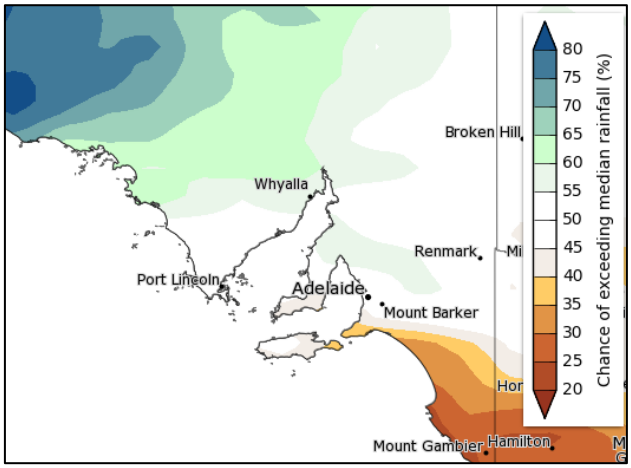


Figure 3: Chance of exceeding median rainfall (%), October – December 2026 (issued 10th September 2026).

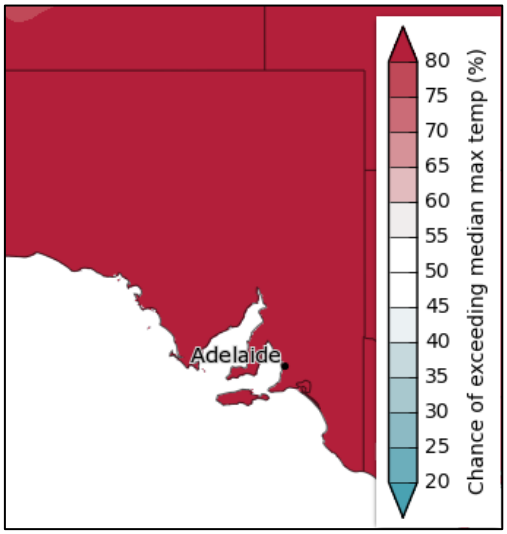


Figure 4: Chance of exceeding median maximum temperature October to December 2026 (issued 10th September 2026).

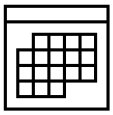
Season 2026/27

Weather

Weather conditions across South Australia were generally very favourable. Many regions received around 70 to 80 mm, and up to 100mm on Fleurieu Peninsula and in the Adelaide Hills in August. An exception was Kangaroo Island, with below average rainfall in July and average in August.

Entering spring with solid soil moisture profiles, there is excellent crop yield potential. Mild temperatures, relatively warm nights and an absence of significant frost events have supported ongoing crop growth. While some areas remain very wet and there is caution around potential spring heat and frost risks, the overall outlook remains highly positive.

Season outlook



The seasonal outlook indicates an increased likelihood of below average rainfall across parts of southern Australia through spring, with above average maximum temperatures also expected. Climate models show El Niño is well established and continuing to strengthen, being likely to peak during late spring or summer. El Niño is a key driver contributing to the warmer and generally drier outlook during the October to December period.

Warmer than average sea surface temperatures also point to an elevated risk of warmer and drier conditions across southern Australia as the season progresses towards summer.

Subsoil moisture

Lower layer subsoil moisture reserves are at a minimum average to well above average or even higher across most cropping regions. Many areas entered spring on a full soil moisture profile following above-average August rainfall.

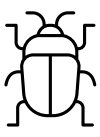
These reserves are providing a strong buffer against any short-term dry conditions and are underpinning excellent yield potential across the state. While seasonal conditions remain favourable, growers are mindful that frost, heat events, and diseases during September and October (although well controlled at this stage) may still influence final yield outcomes.

Cropping progress

Crop development is more advanced when compared to an average season in a number of districts, driven by the early break, excellent soil moisture reserves and continued favourable growing conditions. Crop development is rapidly advancing across South Australia, with cereals generally at flag leaf to heading stages, pulse crops flowering strongly with pods developing, and canola crops at peak to nearing the end of flowering. High biomass production underpins the best hay and pasture yield potential seen in several years.

Challenges and opportunities

Pests and diseases



Disease pressure in cereal crops has increased with the wet seasonal conditions, with stripe rust, powdery mildew, leaf rust and net blotch reported across several regions. Barley leaf rust has been particularly prevalent in the Murraylands districts and will impact yields of some crops. Despite this, barley yields are likely to remain above average. Disease risks are high in most cropping districts and will require ongoing monitoring and fungicide treatments through spring.

Blackleg and sclerotinia remain the key canola diseases this season, with high disease pressure reported in some regions.

Pulse diseases remain at generally manageable levels despite the favourable conditions for disease development. Low to moderate levels of botrytis grey mould, ascochyta, chocolate spot and sclerotinia have been reported across lentils and beans with fungicide programs helping to limit impacts on crop yield potential.

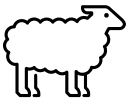
Despite some fungicide products being difficult to source, and some applications delayed due to weather, preventative fungicide programs have generally kept disease levels well managed. If current disease control levels are maintained, significant impacts on yield potential are not expected.

Insect pest activity remains generally low across cropping regions, with aphids, diamondback moth, budworm and armyworm reported at low and largely manageable levels. Localised concerns include locust activity in parts of the Mallee and pastoral regions, while mice numbers remain low but are being monitored as a potential risk for next season.

Regional issues and adverse events

Despite generally favourable seasonal conditions, several challenges have emerged across cropping regions. Frequent rainfall and wet paddocks have reduced trafficability in some districts, limiting spraying opportunities and increasing reliance on aerial application. Fungicide shortages have also been reported in several regions, creating challenges for disease management as growers seek to maintain disease control.

High biomass production has resulted in lodging of oaten hay and some barley crops, raising concerns about hay quality and harvestability. Parts of the South East continue to experience localised waterlogging, while growers statewide remain cautious as crops enter the key frost and heat risk period during spring. Localised concerns regarding mice and locust activity have been raised, although widespread impacts are not yet evident.



Pastures and livestock condition

Seasonal conditions and pasture cover

Seasonal conditions have remained highly favourable for livestock producers, with an early season break followed by consistent rainfall supporting strong pasture growth across all regions. Figure 5 shows that total standing dry matter sits above the 10-year average for August in all geographies. Exceptional feed availability is occurring in the Northern Pastoral, Western and Eastern Eyre Peninsula, Upper and Mid North and Northern and Southern Murray Mallee.

Feed availability is above average, and water supplies are secure, with producers reporting full dams and excellent soil moisture reserves. With pasture bulk significantly higher than normal, widespread spring feed surpluses provide a strong foundation for livestock production heading into summer.

Supplementary feeding and containment

The abundance of pasture growth has reduced the need for supplementary feeding across livestock regions, with many producers expecting to rely primarily on grazing through spring.

Many producers are responding to the abundance of feed by conserving surplus pasture through hay and silage making. As a result, hay reserves are expected to be significantly higher than recent years, providing an additional buffer against summer feed shortages.

While some producers may still need to manage feed quality or utilise containment systems if seasonal conditions deteriorate later in spring, current feed supplies are generally ample, and management efforts are focused on harvesting or conserving surplus feed rather than maintaining livestock through feed shortages.

Livestock condition and management responses

Livestock condition is reported to be very good across South Australia, supported by abundant feed supplies and favourable seasonal conditions. Producers are optimistic about flock and herd performance, with improved breeder condition.

Good livestock condition scores are expected to deliver benefits beyond the current season, with producers anticipating improved joining performance, which could flow onto improved lambing percentages and calving rates in 2027. Large feed reserves and favourable breeder condition are expected to support reproductive performance even if seasonal conditions become less favourable later in spring.

Strong prices for lamb, mutton, beef and wool are supporting confidence within the livestock sector. However, high livestock values are also increasing the cost of replacement breeders, which may limit the scale of restocking undertaken by some producers and in some regions.

Management activities are increasingly focused on making hay, conserving excess feed and positioning livestock enterprises to capitalise on the strong seasonal outlook.

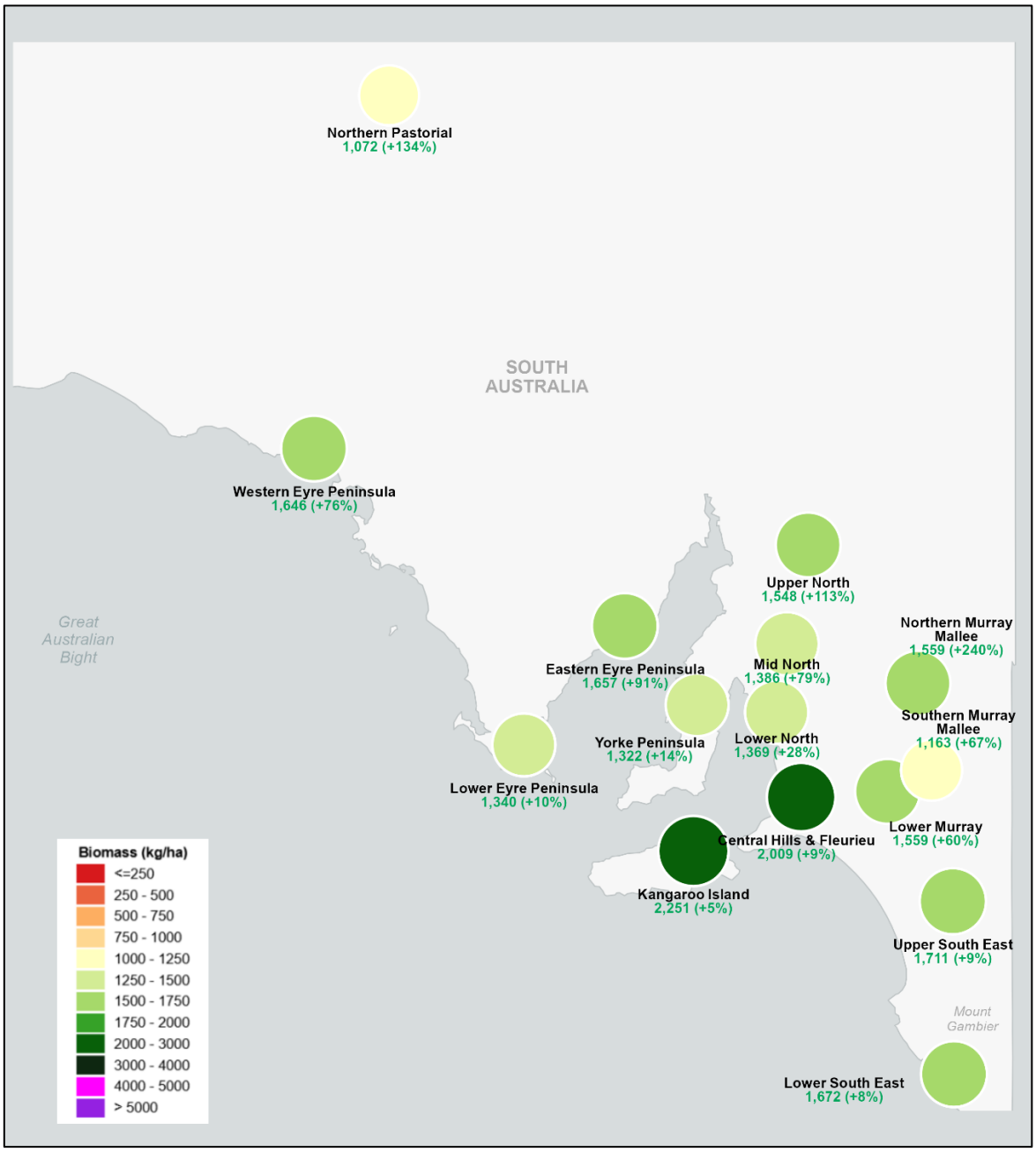


Figure 5: August 2026 pasture coverage (Total Standing Dry Matter). Bubble size and colour represent Total Standing Dry Matter (kg/ha). The percentage shown is the change relative to the 10-year average for the same month, highlighting regional patterns and seasonal differences

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	*ha*	460,000	145,000	370,000	170,000	240,000	240,000	60,500	3,800
	t	1,058,000	580,000	999,000	748,000	672,000	840,000	254,100	12,540
Durum	*ha*	0	0	0	12,500	5,000	6,000	3,800	0
	t	0	0	0	52,500	14,000	21,000	13,300	0
Barley	*ha*	75,000	50,000	70,000	136,000	102,000	95,000	20,640	3,200
	t	180,000	200,000	182,000	598,400	285,600	332,500	80,496	12,160
Oats	*ha*	15,000	0	1,500	4,200	8,000	4,000	2,000	2,000
	t	28,500	0	3,000	14,700	20,000	13,200	5,600	6,000
Rye	*ha*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	t	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Triticale	*ha*	0	0	0	1,000	0	1,000	400	100
	t	0	0	0	3,800	0	3,500	1,200	300
Peas	*ha*	2,500	0	2,000	8,500	9,000	9,000	3,600	400
	t	3,000	0	3,000	18,700	18,000	18,000	6,480	600
Lupins	*ha*	1,500	7,500	5,000	1,000	2,500	1,800	500	1,000
	t	1,500	16,500	9,000	2,200	3,750	3,240	900	1,700
Beans	*ha*	500	8,000	1,000	9,000	11,000	12,500	3,200	3,200
	t	750	20,000	1,600	24,300	22,000	31,250	8,320	7,040
Chickpeas	*ha*	0	0	0	2,500	2,000	2,000	400	0
	t	0	0	0	5,500	3,600	3,600	600	0
Lentils	*ha*	95,000	55,000	95,000	165,500	40,000	33,000	17,500	0
	t	180,500	143,000	180,500	380,650	72,000	66,000	38,500	0
Vetch	*ha*	2,000	2,000	0	1,800	5,000	3,500	300	0
	t	2,400	4,000	0	3,240	5,000	3,500	300	0
Canola	*ha*	6,000	80,000	9,000	12,500	17,000	26,500	4,500	3,400
	t	8,400	224,000	14,400	31,250	28,900	53,000	11,250	9,180
Hay (not in total)	*ha*	10,000	10,400	21,000	12,000	20,000	44,000	14,500	7,600
	t	30,000	44,614	51,610	66,000	100,000	220,000	79,750	28,880
Total	*ha*	657,500	347,500	553,500	524,500	441,500	434,300	117,340	17,100
	t	1,463,050	1,187,500	1,392,500	1,883,240	1,144,850	1,388,790	421,046	49,520

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	*ha*	5,800	54,300	200,000	120,000	77,600	26,200	2,173,200
	t	20,300	124,890	400,000	288,000	249,872	133,620	6,380,322
Durum	*ha*	0	400	0	0	6,500	800	35,000
	t	0	800	0	0	19,435	3,680	124,715
Barley	*ha*	7,200	60,000	120,000	100,000	39,000	7,000	885,040
	t	24,480	132,000	180,000	250,000	134,550	37,100	2,629,286
Oats	*ha*	500	2,800	3,200	3,300	22,500	6,000	75,000
	t	1,350	4,480	4,800	5,940	69,750	25,200	202,520
Rye	*ha*	0	1,200	3,000	3,500	1,600	0	9,300
	t	0	1,680	3,600	4,900	2,240	0	12,420
Triticale	*ha*	500	2,200	1,500	7,000	1,000	500	15,200
	t	1,350	3,520	1,800	14,000	2,300	2,500	34,270
Peas	*ha*	500	2,800	2,500	1,800	2,900	400	45,900
	t	1,100	4,480	2,500	2,160	5,365	900	84,285
Lupins	*ha*	1,200	1,700	7,000	12,000	11,000	2,700	56,400
	t	2,160	2,380	7,000	16,800	20,350	5,400	92,880
Beans	*ha*	1,200	700	0	1,500	33,700	16,000	101,500
	t	3,120	1,120	0	2,250	96,045	48,000	265,795
Chickpeas	*ha*	200	2,400	7,000	0	600	1,000	18,100
	t	200	2,880	7,000	0	1,170	1,500	26,050
Lentils	*ha*	500	5,500	10,000	23,000	2,900	200	543,100
	t	700	6,600	10,000	36,800	5,655	380	1,121,285
Vetch	*ha*	100	3,500	12,000	6,000	2,000	0	38,200
	t	100	3,850	6,000	7,200	3,000	0	38,590
Canola	*ha*	4,000	5,000	5,500	6,000	37,000	21,600	238,000
	t	8,400	7,000	5,500	9,000	92,500	75,600	578,380
Hay	*ha*	33,400	15,000	6,000	33,000	33,100	27,100	287,100
(not in total)	*t*	167,000	60,000	10,800	112,860	198,600	162,600	1,332,715
Total	*ha*	21,700	142,500	371,700	284,100	238,300	82,400	**4,233,940**
	t	63,260	295,680	628,200	637,050	702,232	333,880	**11,590,798**

TABLE 2 CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

		2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	5-year average	2026/27
Wheat	*ha*	2,195,400	2,185,955	2,230,600	2,014,500	2,120,600	2,149,400	2,173,200
	t	4,705,500	7,330,250	4,866,005	2,736,700	4,739,210	4,875,500	6,380,322
Durum	*ha*	35,800	37,200	36,600	34,400	28,000	34,400	35,000
	t	108,350	142,200	101,470	61,280	84,780	99,600	124,715
Barley	*ha*	917,400	858,600	842,700	798,140	843,540	852,100	885,040
	t	2,151,700	3,080,500	2,232,310	1,241,664	2,132,466	2,167,700	2,629,286
Oats	*ha*	75,300	75,700	72,600	73,900	73,900	74,300	75,000
	t	162,400	230,950	143,410	84,270	161,900	156,600	202,520
Rye	*ha*	6,600	9,100	9,000	6,700	9,600	8,200	9,300
	t	4,600	16,250	8,240	2,630	10,160	8,400	12,420
Triticale	*ha*	21,400	18,300	17,600	14,800	16,600	17,700	15,200
	t	30,150	49,600	32,480	13,640	28,400	30,900	34,270
Peas	*ha*	66,800	69,700	62,700	50,800	48,900	59,800	45,900
	t	92,500	137,550	90,050	39,620	73,515	86,600	84,285
Lupins	*ha*	45,900	54,200	52,900	55,200	56,800	53,000	56,400
	t	63,400	124,650	73,510	45,280	69,869	75,300	92,880
Beans	*ha*	107,300	102,100	105,700	105,400	100,100	104,100	101,500
	t	247,280	318,800	217,425	116,320	224,545	224,900	265,795
Chickpeas	*ha*	13,500	43,500	38,400	20,800	18,500	26,900	18,100
	t	15,450	81,650	33,900	10,680	19,200	32,200	26,050
Lentils	*ha*	197,200	191,600	240,200	408,600	485,600	304,600	543,100
	t	339,180	527,250	362,260	447,955	776,099	490,500	1,121,285
Vetch	*ha*	34,400	37,900	34,400	35,100	40,500	36,500	38,200
	t	15,050	63,950	24,405	17,839	33,353	30,900	38,590
Canola	*ha*	224,700	258,400	267,200	241,300	226,150	243,600	238,000
	t	509,750	684,000	518,000	351,810	506,602	514,000	578,380
Hay (not in total)	*ha*	220,800	210,600	218,300	296,760	301,800	249,700	287,100
	t	852,000	989,950	910,940	741,272	1,227,283	944,300	1,332,715
Total	*ha*	3,941,700	3,942,255	4,010,600	3,859,640	4,068,790	3,964,600	**4,233,940**
	t	8,445,310	12,787,600	8,703,465	5,169,688	8,860,099	8,793,100	**11,590,798**