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South Australian Crop and Pasture Report

2023-24 Spring Crop Performance

November 2023



Government
of South Australia

Department of Primary
Industries and Regions

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Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

Information current as of 14 November 2023
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Key link to Weather information

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

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 dryland and irrigated.

The estimates are based on information provided to PIRSA 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.

State Crops and Pastures – 2023/24 Spring Crop Performance

Summary

Warmer and drier conditions have been experienced across South Australia during August, September and October (figures 1 and 2) which is likely to limit crop potential to near-average for most crops and regions. Despite the dry spring conditions, stored soil moisture from the previous year has enabled crops to fill grain despite some moisture stress. The rainfall and temperature outlooks are favourable for harvest with good harvesting conditions expected.

Harvest is underway in most regions, with many producers experiencing their earliest ever commencement. Early yields are meeting or slightly exceeding producer expectations given the dry spring. Pasture growth has been limited in later regions due to a shortened growing season.

Frost events occurred in late-October through the Upper North, Mid North, Murray Plains and Upper South East regions which have had significant impact in some later maturing paddocks, however many producers will remain unaffected.

Crop production is estimated at 9.2 million tonnes, which is similar to the 2020-21 season. Early harvest grain prices are strong, and quality has been good overall, resulting in an estimated Farm Gate Value of \$3.6 billion.

Sown crop area and production for previous six seasons

Seasons	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 <i>estimated</i>
Area sown (ha)	3,572,000	3,898,000	4,003,000	3,942,000	3,942,000	<i>4,011,000</i>
Production (t)	5,795,000	6,467,000	9,135,000	8,445,000	12,788,000	<i>9,190,000</i>
Farm gate value	\$1.7 billion	\$2 billion	\$2.5 billion	\$3.3 billion	\$4.6 billion	<i>\$3.6 billion</i>

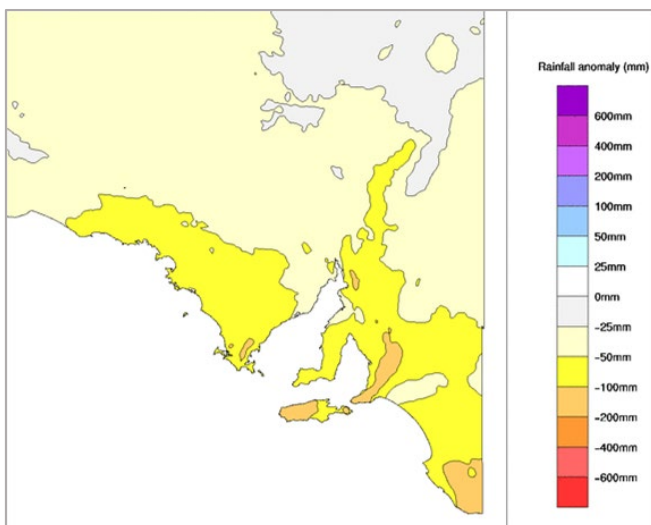


Figure 1: Rainfall anomalies (mm) for the three-month period 1st August to 31st October 2023.

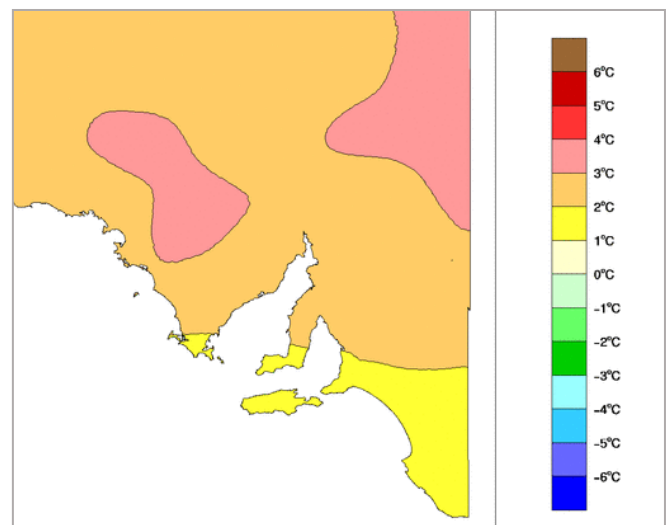


Figure 2: Maximum temperature anomalies (°C) for the three-month period 1st August to 31st October 2023.

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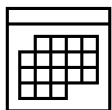
Season 2023/24

Weather



For the three-month period from 1st August to 31st October, total rainfall has been below average for all grain producing areas of the State, with the greatest deficits experienced in the Central Hills and Fleurieu, Kangaroo Island and Lower South East regions. Average maximum temperatures for the same period have been over 2°C above average in the northern regions, yet significant frost events in September and October have impacted the yield potential for some producers, depending on location and plant growth stage at the time of the frost.

Season outlook



The Bureau of Meteorology's El Niño declaration continues and is expected to persist until Autumn 2024. The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) remains positive, which typically leads to decreased rainfall for central and south-east Australia. The BOM climate outlooks predict that the warm and dry conditions will continue through harvest.

Subsoil moisture



Carry-over subsoil moisture from last growing season has allowed crops in many regions to develop well. Crops on the poorer soils on the Upper Eyre Peninsula and Northern Mallee experienced moisture stress early in spring, however, yield potential is still predicted to be close to average across the State.

Crop mix



The area of lentils is expected to further increase in the 2024/25 season, with some producers intending to reduce sheep numbers and include more lentils in their programs.

Cropping progress



Harvest is underway in most regions of state, with many producers experiencing their earliest ever commencement. Early yields are meeting, or slightly exceeding producer expectations given the dry spring. Hay production is complete in most regions and has been high quality with solid yields.

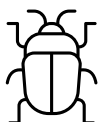
Pastures and livestock condition



Pasture growth in the Lower South East and Central Hills and Fleurieu regions has been limited due to a cool/wet start combined with a warm/dry finish. Below average livestock prices continue, and further scaling back of sheep numbers is expected in all regions next season. Livestock remain in good condition throughout South Australia.

Challenges and opportunities

Pests and diseases



Mid-season concerns regarding stripe rust, leaf rust and powdery mildew were well managed by producers, assisted by warm and dry weather conditions.

Cowpea aphids have been problematic in isolated areas where controls were not fully implemented, impacting lentil yields and causing some livestock health issues grazing infested vetch and legume pastures.



Regional issues and adverse events

Late frost events occurred on 23rd and 26th October through the Upper North, Mid North, Murray Plains and Upper South East regions which have had significant impact in some later maturing paddocks, however many producers will remain unaffected. Upper Eyre Peninsula yields are below average due to the widespread frost event on 9th September.

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	450,000	145,000	371,000	170,000	241,100	248,000	73,000	5,400
	t	742,500	551,000	742,000	646,000	506,310	719,200	255,500	9,720
Durum	ha	0	0	0	13,600	6,000	5,000	4,200	0
	t	0	0	0	47,600	13,800	14,000	12,600	0
Barley	ha	75,000	67,000	74,000	159,000	91,500	90,000	21,000	2,200
	t	127,500	254,600	148,000	620,100	201,300	279,000	73,500	6,160
Oats	ha	14,100	0	4,600	4,200	5,300	4,400	2,300	1,600
	t	18,330	0	6,900	11,340	9,010	11,000	5,980	4,160
Rye	ha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	t	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Triticale	ha	400	0	500	1,000	1,200	1,700	400	100
	t	560	0	800	3,400	2,400	4,760	1,200	300
Peas	ha	2,800	2,000	4,200	10,000	10,000	13,900	6,000	400
	t	2,800	4,000	5,040	20,000	12,000	22,240	10,800	600
Lupins	ha	0	10,500	4,800	1,000	2,900	1,800	500	1,000
	t	0	18,900	4,800	1,800	3,480	2,340	900	1,000
Beans	ha	400	10,000	400	11,000	12,200	12,900	3,100	3,400
	t	600	25,000	400	25,300	17,080	23,220	5,890	5,100
Chickpeas	ha	0	0	200	4,000	2,500	2,300	400	0
	t	0	0	200	6,800	3,000	2,760	520	0
Lentils	ha	20,000	10,000	20,000	133,000	12,500	20,000	6,800	0
	t	16,000	25,000	24,000	292,600	15,000	28,000	12,240	0
Vetch	ha	2,400	0	2,000	2,600	5,600	4,200	300	0
	t	1,200	0	2,000	3,120	2,240	2,520	300	0
Canola	ha	5,100	80,000	9,000	14,500	28,300	25,400	4,600	4,200
	t	5,100	184,000	9,900	29,000	42,450	45,720	8,740	9,240
Hay (not in total)	ha	5,500	6,400	10,000	13,700	22,000	38,000	10,000	7,600
	t	13,750	28,800	27,000	61,650	79,200	155,800	40,000	31,920
Total	ha	570,200	324,500	490,700	523,900	419,100	429,600	122,600	18,300
	t	914,590	1,062,500	944,040	1,707,060	828,070	1,154,760	388,170	36,280

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	8,000	62,500	220,000	130,000	81,000	25,300	2,230,300
	t	22,400	112,500	308,000	312,000	186,300	101,200	5,214,630
Durum	ha	300	500	0	0	7,300	0	36,900
	t	690	625	0	0	16,425	0	105,740
Barley	ha	7,000	55,000	60,000	94,500	39,500	7,000	842,700
	t	20,300	104,500	84,000	245,700	102,700	29,400	2,296,760
Oats	ha	1,500	3,000	2,200	3,500	21,200	4,700	72,600
	t	3,600	4,200	2,200	6,300	50,880	15,510	149,410
Rye	ha	0	1,500	3,500	2,400	1,600	0	9,000
	t	0	1,650	2,100	2,880	1,760	0	8,390
Triticale	ha	500	2,600	1,500	6,200	1,000	500	17,600
	t	1,350	3,640	1,800	9,300	1,900	1,750	33,160
Peas	ha	1,000	4,000	2,000	3,600	2,900	400	63,200
	t	1,800	3,600	1,000	4,320	3,770	920	92,890
Lupins	ha	1,600	2,000	3,000	10,100	11,000	2,700	52,900
	t	2,720	1,800	1,800	16,160	13,200	4,860	73,760
Beans	ha	1,000	1,100	0	1,200	34,500	14,500	105,700
	t	2,200	880	0	1,440	70,725	39,150	216,985
Chickpeas	ha	200	3,000	14,500	10,500	600	200	38,400
	t	200	2,400	5,800	12,600	720	300	35,300
Lentils	ha	200	4,000	4,300	6,300	2,900	200	240,200
	t	260	3,200	1,720	10,080	3,770	400	432,270
Vetch	ha	100	4,000	6,700	5,300	1,200	0	34,400
	t	200	3,600	2,345	7,420	1,320	0	26,265
Canola	ha	8,000	6,000	7,800	13,200	39,500	21,600	267,200
	t	13,600	5,400	2,340	19,800	71,100	58,320	504,710
Hay (not in total)	ha	23,900	7,200	5,000	13,800	28,100	27,100	218,300
	t	107,550	21,600	9,000	62,100	120,830	132,790	891,990
Total	ha	29,400	149,200	325,500	286,800	244,200	77,100	4,011,100
	t	69,320	247,995	413,105	648,000	524,570	251,810	9,190,270

TABLE 2 CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	5-year average	2023/24
Wheat	ha	2,000,400	2,112,100	2,201,600	2,195,400	2,185,955	2,139,100	2,230,300
	t	3,156,000	3,251,500	4,923,000	4,705,500	7,330,250	4,673,300	5,214,630
Durum	ha	42,000	42,900	37,800	35,800	37,200	39,100	36,900
	t	75,220	82,560	114,870	108,350	142,200	104,600	105,740
Barley	ha	818,600	990,000	953,500	917,400	858,600	907,600	842,700
	t	1,725,800	2,091,000	2,560,000	2,151,700	3,080,500	2,321,800	2,296,760
Oats	ha	74,700	72,800	77,700	75,300	75,700	75,200	72,600
	t	121,500	120,450	173,700	162,400	230,950	161,800	149,410
Rye	ha	5,300	5,700	8,600	6,600	9,100	7,100	9,000
	t	3,150	4,250	11,100	4,600	16,250	7,900	8,390
Triticale	ha	29,400	32,300	28,800	21,400	18,300	26,000	17,600
	t	33,470	42,250	70,750	30,150	49,600	45,200	33,160
Peas	ha	65,700	65,300	70,000	66,800	69,700	67,500	63,200
	t	53,620	70,100	113,700	92,500	137,550	93,500	92,890
Lupins	ha	61,000	51,100	50,600	45,900	54,200	52,600	52,900
	t	59,950	53,800	75,650	63,400	124,650	75,500	73,760
Beans	ha	63,100	98,400	100,600	107,300	102,100	94,300	105,700
	t	79,730	156,650	212,700	247,280	318,800	203,000	216,985
Chickpeas	ha	33,600	22,200	29,500	13,500	43,500	28,500	38,400
	t	23,870	17,000	44,050	15,450	81,650	36,400	35,300
Lentils	ha	149,800	164,300	186,700	197,200	191,600	177,900	240,200
	t	177,870	220,400	345,950	339,180	527,250	322,100	432,270
Vetch	ha	28,400	34,000	36,400	34,400	37,900	34,200	34,400
	t	5,810	9,420	27,750	15,050	63,950	24,400	26,265
Canola	ha	200,100	206,600	220,800	224,700	258,400	222,100	267,200
	t	278,900	347,400	461,800	509,750	684,000	456,400	504,710
Hay (not in total)	ha	436,000	320,600	263,500	220,800	210,600	290,300	218,300
	t	1,297,000	1,258,900	1,195,000	852,000	989,950	1,118,600	891,990
Total	ha	3,572,100	3,897,700	4,002,600	3,941,700	3,942,255	3,871,200	4,011,100
	t	5,794,890	6,466,780	9,135,020	8,445,310	12,787,600	8,525,900	9,190,270