Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

2020–21 Spring Crop Performance

November 2021

Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

Information current as of 5 November 2021

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

Disclaimer

All Enquiries

Dave Lewis, Agriculture Food and Wine
Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA)
Level 14, 25 Grenfell Street
GPO Box 1671, Adelaide SA 5001
T 08 8429 0472
E dave.lewis@sa.gov.au

Contents

State Summary 5

Weather 5

Crops 5

Pastures 5

Key links to other information 6

Notes on the calculation of crop estimates 6

Crop Estimates 7

District Reports 10

Western Eyre Peninsula 10

Weather 10

Crops 10

Pastures 10

Lower Eyre Peninsula 11

Weather 11

Crops 11

Pastures 11

Eastern Eyre Peninsula 12

Weather 12

Crops 12

Pastures 12

Upper North 13

Weather 13

Crops 13

Pastures 13

Mid North 14

Weather 14

Crops 14

Pastures 14

Yorke Peninsula....15
Weather....16
Crops....16
Pastures....16
Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island....16
Weather....17
Crops....17
Pastures....17
Lower Murray....17
Weather....18
Crops....18
Pastures....18
Northern Murray Mallee....19
Weather....19
Crops....19
Pastures....19
Southern Murray Mallee....20
Weather....20
Crops....20
Pastures....20
Upper South East....21
Weather....21
Crops....21
Pastures....21
Lower South East....22
Weather....22
Crops....22
Pastures....22

State Summary

Weather

- September rainfall was below average across most agricultural districts with large areas of very much below average rainfall on Eyre Peninsula, Yorke Peninsula, Mid-North and Lower South East. Only parts of the Northern and Southern Murray Mallee received average rainfall.
- October rainfall was average across most agricultural areas with Kangaroo Island and Lower Eyre Peninsula having above average rainfall.
- Mean maximum temperatures for September were above average across most of the agricultural areas. October mean maximums were average with Lower South East being below average.
- Mean minimum temperatures for September varied from above average on Lower Eyre Peninsula, Fleurieu Peninsula and the southern part of the Lower South East to below average in parts of Northern Yorke Peninsula and Mid-North. Mean minimum temperatures in October were average on Lower Eyre Peninsula and the Far West Coast and below average to very much below average in the remainder of the agricultural districts.
- Several frosts occurred in September and early October in a number of districts, including the Upper and Mid-North, Northern Murray Mallee and Upper South East.
- Severe thunderstorms with strong winds, hail and heavy rain on the 28 October affected parts of Lower and Eastern Eyre Peninsula, Mid and Lower North, Yorke Peninsula, Adelaide Hills, Lower Murray, Northern and Southern Mallee and Upper South East.

Crops

- Below average August and September rainfall reduced yield potential in most districts and crop production is now estimated at 7.71 million tonnes from 3.9 million hectares. This is similar to the ten-year average of 7.75 million tonnes.
- Despite the dry start to the season and dry spring, crops in many districts are likely to yield average to slightly below average. Northern and Southern Murray Mallee, and parts of the Upper North and Lower Murray are below average.
- Crops developed rapidly during warm dry conditions in September. Crops on heavier textured and shallow soils became moisture stressed in lower rainfall areas.
- Mild conditions in October combined with average rainfall slowed crop maturity of crops and ideal conditions for flowering and grain filling in many districts improved grain yield and quality prospects.
- Seasonal conditions appear to have favoured barley crops more than wheat in many districts. Wheat crops were more affected by moisture stress and late frosts than barley crops.
- Harvest of barley, lentils and peas commenced in early to mid-October. Cool, wet conditions has slowed harvest progress.
- Wheat and canola harvest commenced in late October; however, most canola was only windrowed in late October or early November. Approximately 50% of canola crops will be crop-topped to achieve even ripening and then direct headed.
- Frost in early October caused severe damage to crop, particularly wheat. Damage was confined to low-lying areas of Lower Eyre Peninsula, Upper and Mid North, and Northern Murray Mallee. Losses in the Upper South East were more severe and widespread.
- The worst frost damaged areas were cut for hay, but many producers left damaged crops to be reaped for grain, due to low hay and high wheat prices.
- Thunderstorms on 28 October brought hail and strong winds, causing caused severe damage to crops in strips across the Lower and Eastern Eyre Peninsula, Lower North, Yorke Peninsula, Northern and Southern Murray Mallee, Lower Murray and Upper South East.
- The area cut for hay is less than in previous seasons despite the increased area of frosted wheat cut. Yields and quality have been highly variable with below average yields and poorer quality on Yorke Peninsula to above average yields of good quality in the mid-North.

- Disease infection has been low in most districts because of the dry spring and proactive fungicide applications.
- Mice damaged small number of cereal heads in isolated areas across the Upper and Mid North and Yorke Peninsula.
- Shortage of some herbicides could delay or reduce the amount of summer weed control.

Pastures

- Pasture growth in most districts is adequate, however pastures have matured quickly, and pasture quality has correspondingly declined rapidly.
- There are poor amounts of pasture feed available in the Northern and Southern Murray Mallee and the northern part of the Lower Murray. Most farmers will place livestock into containment areas to protect vulnerable soils from erosion over summer and into autumn.
- Producers will move livestock onto crop stubbles as soon as crops have been harvested to maintain cover in pasture paddocks.
- Livestock are generally in good condition and producers are selling lambs as soon as they reach market weights.
- In areas where pasture growth was poor, producers are selling excess livestock to preserve pasture cover and reduce the amount of supplementary feeding required over summer.

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 Eyre Peninsula	Lower Eyre Peninsula	Eastern Eyre Peninsula	Yorke Peninsula	Upper North	Mid North	Lower North	Kangaroo Island
Wheat	*ha*	442 000	146 000	369 000	171 000	246 000	240 000	72 000	5 400
	t	618 000	513 000	628 000	563 000	420 000	626 000	275 000	15 400
Durum	*ha*	0	0	0	13 500	6 000	5 000	4 200	0
	t	0	0	0	41 000	13 200	13 000	15 100	0
Barley	*ha*	91 000	68 000	77 000	161 000	91 500	94 500	26 000	3 000
	t	146 000	250 000	138 500	581 000	183 000	274 500	109 500	9 500
Oats	*ha*	14 000	3 500	4 600	3 800	4 800	4 500	2 500	1 600
	t	16 200	8 300	6 900	10 300	7 700	11 000	7 500	4 500
Rye	*ha*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	t	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Triticale	*ha*	400	500	500	1 000	1 200	1 700	400	100
	t	400	1 500	750	2 800	2 200	4 200	1 400	400
Peas	*ha*	2 500	2 200	4 200	12 700	15 300	14 300	6 100	400
	t	2 500	3 750	3 800	20 000	18 300	20 300	13 500	500
Lupins	*ha*	1 500	10 000	5 000	1 000	3 000	1 800	500	1 000
	t	1 350	16 000	4 500	1 200	3 200	2 200	800	1 500
Beans	*ha*	400	9 200	400	11 200	13 500	13 000	2 500	3 400
	t	500	16 500	320	19 600	16 000	19 300	7 500	6 100
Chickpeas	*ha*	0	400	200	4 000	3 200	2 000	300	0
	t	0	500	200	5 200	3 800	2 600	450	0
Lentils	*ha*	2 400	8 000	2 000	139 000	12 000	16 000	7 000	0
	t	2 000	14 600	2 000	264 000	14 200	20 500	14 000	0
Vetch	*ha*	2 400	3 600	2 000	2 600	5 600	4 300	300	0
	t	700	1 800	900	1 800	1 700	2 500	200	0
Canola	*ha*	5 700	74 000	7 500	12 000	22 000	24 500	4 300	5 200
	t	7 400	162 500	8 900	22 400	33 200	37 500	9 500	11 000
Hay	*ha*	5 500	5 600	6 200	13 500	12 500	33 500	8 500	7 500
(not in total)	*t*	13 000	25 000	15 000	52 000	40 000	142 000	31 500	18 000
Total	*ha*	562 300	325 400	472 400	532 800	424 100	421 600	126 100	20 100
	t	795 050	988 450	794 770	1 532 300	716 500	1 033 600	454 450	48 900

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*	6 700	50 500	220 000	101 000	81 000	23 000	2 173 600
	t	18 100	55 500	154 500	111 000	147 000	81 000	4 225 500
Durum	*ha*	300	500	0	0	7 300	0	36 800
	t	600	600	0	0	14 500	0	98 000
Barley	*ha*	12 000	75 000	62 000	119 500	39 000	7 000	926 500
	t	34 000	90 000	43 500	143 000	109 000	29 000	2 140 500
Oats	*ha*	2 100	2 000	2 200	4 000	21 000	4 700	75 300
	t	5 000	2 000	1 500	4 000	53 000	15 000	152 900
Rye	*ha*	0	1 000	3 000	1 000	1 600	0	6 600
	t	0	900	1 200	600	1 900	0	4 600
Triticale	*ha*	500	2 000	1 500	10 500	1 000	500	21 800
	t	1 300	2 000	750	8 500	2 300	1 800	30 300
Peas	*ha*	1 000	1 500	1 500	2 100	2 900	400	67 100
	t	1 600	1 200	550	850	4 000	800	91 650
Lupins	*ha*	1 600	800	3 000	3 100	11 000	2 700	46 000
	t	2 500	650	900	1 300	15 200	4 800	56 100
Beans	*ha*	300	0	0	2 000	28 000	13 800	97 700
	t	550	0	0	800	43 500	34 500	165 170
Chickpeas	*ha*	200	800	1 000	1 000	600	200	13 900
	t	200	650	350	400	850	300	15 500
Lentils	*ha*	300	1 000	300	3 000	3 000	200	194 200
	t	420	800	110	1 200	4 000	300	338 130
Vetch	*ha*	0	3 100	4 200	5 100	1 200	0	34 400
	t	0	1 500	1 500	1 500	1 200	0	15 300
Canola	*ha*	2 800	1 000	2 200	3 000	24 500	15 500	204 200
	t	4 500	700	900	2 400	45 500	37 000	383 400
Hay	*ha*	27 000	10 000	2 500	25 000	37 000	27 000	221 300
(not in total)	*t*	114 000	25 000	1 800	50 500	185 000	140 000	852 800
Total	*ha*	27 800	139 200	300 900	255 300	222 100	68 000	3 898 100
	t	68 770	156 500	205 760	275 550	441 950	204 500	7 717 050

TABLE 2 CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

		2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	5 year ave	2021/22
Wheat	*ha*	2 237 700	2 024 100	2 000 400	2 112 100	2 201 600	2 115 200	2 173 600
	t	6 460 500	4 122 500	3 156 000	3 251 500	4 923 000	4 382 700	4 225 500
Durum	*ha*	55 200	55 700	42 000	42 900	37 800	46 700	36 800
	t	209 700	139 400	75 220	82 560	114 870	124 400	98 000
Barley	*ha*	799 300	714 600	818 600	990 000	953 500	855 200	926 500
	t	2 774 800	1 640 700	1 725 800	2 091 000	2 560 000	2 158 500	2 140 500
Oats	*ha*	94 600	77 000	75 700	72 800	77 700	79 600	75 300
	t	258 700	149 300	121 500	120 450	173 700	164 700	152 900
Rye	*ha*	10 500	6 500	5 300	5 700	8 600	7 300	6 600
	t	15 700	5 100	3 150	4 250	11 100	7 900	4 600
Triticale	*ha*	21 500	19 900	29 400	32 300	28 800	26 400	21 800
	t	58 130	35 050	33 500	42 250	70 750	47 900	30 300
Peas	*ha*	97 300	90 200	65 700	65 300	70 000	77 700	67 100
	t	176 100	113 750	53 600	70 100	113 700	105 500	91 650
Lupins	*ha*	76 800	62 800	61 000	51 100	50 600	60 500	46 000
	t	134 800	53 400	59 950	53 800	75 650	75 500	56 100
Beans	*ha*	75 500	67 400	63 100	98 400	100 600	81 000	97 700
	t	166 530	101 660	79 680	156 650	212 700	143 400	165 170
Chickpeas	*ha*	20 500	29 700	33 600	22 200	29 500	27 100	13 900
	t	34 360	33 580	23 870	17 000	44 050	30 600	15 500
Lentils	*ha*	169 600	184 700	149 800	164 300	184 700	170 600	194 200
	t	447 680	260 200	177 870	220 400	345 950	290 400	338 130
Vetch	*ha*	32 200	32 400	28 400	34 000	36 400	32 700	34 400
	t	34 800	15 350	5 760	9 420	27 750	18 600	15 300
Canola	*ha*	203 000	200 200	200 100	206 600	220 800	206 100	204 200
	t	372 900	261 400	278 900	347 400	461 800	344 500	383 400
Hay	*ha*	258 800	202 900	370 000	320 600	258 000	282 100	221 300
(not in total)	*t*	1 454 300	948 600	1 104 000	1 258 900	1 195 000	1 192 200	852 800
Total	*ha*	3 893 700	3 565 200	3 572 100	3 897 700	4 000 600	3 785 900	**3 898 100**
	t	11 144 700	6 931 400	5 794 900	6 466 800	9 135 000	7 894 600	**7 717 100**

District Reports

Western Eyre Peninsula

Weather

- Rainfall for September was very much below average and October rainfall was average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures in September were average. October mean minimums were average in the Far West and below average in the rest of the district.

Crops

- Dry conditions and warm days resulted in rapid maturity of crops. Despite later sowing, many crops reached maturity at the usual time.
- Harvest of pulse crops has commenced across the district from Nundroo to Wudinna. Small amounts of barley have also been harvested in the Far West and Central Eyre Peninsula with harvesting of barley expected to begin in the first week of November.
- Harvesting of wheat is expected to commence in mid-November.
- Windrowing of canola crops has begun near Streaky Bay, Wudinna and Mt Cooper.
- Soil profiles contain little soil moisture.
- Despite the dry spring, most crops are expected to yield average to slightly above average.
- Early lentil and pea yields range from 0.6 t/ha to 0.8 t/ha in Far West districts and from 1.2 t/ha to 1.8 t/ha near Wudinna.
- Early barley crops in the Far West yielded 0.8 to 1.2 t/ha. Near Wudinna, yields of 2.2 to 2.4 t/ha were reaped, with some exceptional yields of more than 3 t/ha. Crops on heavier soils were significantly moisture stressed and expected to yield only 0.3 to 0.5 t/ha.
- Grain quality so far has generally been good with low screenings.
- Some isolated hail damage occurred near Poochera in late October but very little reported in other areas.
- Some late infestations of armyworm and aphids occurred but numbers were generally below control thresholds.
- Snail numbers remained low.
- Reports of shortages of some herbicide products have concerned producers and many have already ordered supplies for summer weed control to avoid delays.

Pastures

- Pastures matured rapidly but grew enough during winter to ensure sufficient feed supplies until stubbles are available to graze.
- Most producers cut hay to replenish their supplies. Vetch and oat crops cut for hay are baled and some medic paddocks cut south of Streaky Bay are expected to be baled in the first week of November.
- Stubbles should provide adequate grazing through summer so supplementary feeding of livestock will not be required until February.
- Livestock are generally in excellent condition.

Lower Eyre Peninsula

Weather

- Rainfall for September was below average to very much below average. October rainfall ranged from very much above average around Mt Hope to average in the northeast of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Several frosts occurred in both September and early October, even in districts near Ungarra and Cummins that are not normally affected by frost.
- A severe thunderstorm with strong winds and hail on 28 October occurred from Mt Hope to Tumby Bay.

Crops

- Despite dry conditions and some warm windy days most crops remained healthy and crops on most soil types maintained average to above average yield potential.
- Some frost damage occurred in low-lying areas of paddocks, but the damage is isolated and expected to be compensated for by good yields over the remainder of the paddock.
- Strong winds and hail in late October caused some isolated crop losses in excess of 30%, however most crops had less than 5% yield loss.
- Soil moisture levels are generally low.
- Harvest is expected to be 7 to 14 days later than usual as later sowing, mild temperatures and spring rainfall slowed crop maturity.
- Windrowing of canola began toward the end of October. Some farmers will windrow crops to avoid grain losses from wind but most plan to direct head canola crops when ripe.
- Pulse crops responded well to October rainfall, and pod set on crops were unaffected by September's hot winds. Many pulse crops were still flowering at the end of October with farmers applying desiccant herbicides to ensure even ripening.
- Grain quality is expected to be good with adequate protein and low screenings.
- A rapid germination of summer weeds followed the mid-October rains. Some farmers began spraying them while waiting for crops to ripen.
- Hay cutting started in late September to replenish farm stocks. Good curing conditions for curing enabled baling before rains in October thus maintaining good quality.
- Pests and diseases were generally low during this period. A late flight of native budworm moths occurred in canola and pulse crops, but larvae were controlled with appropriate insecticide applications to avoid crop damage.

Pastures

- Pastures contain enough biomass to support livestock until crop stubbles become available for grazing.
- Cereal paddocks cut for hay in mid-September regrew rapidly, providing extra grazing and surface cover on these paddocks.
- Livestock are in excellent condition.

Eastern Eyre Peninsula

Weather

- Rainfall for September was below average in the Port Neil, Cleve to Mitchellville areas and very much below average in the remainder of the district. October rainfall was average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average in October.
- Mean minimum temperatures in September were average. October mean minimums were below average.
- Significant frosts in September and October occurred in the Lock, Murdinga and Tooligie districts.
- Hot north winds blew on 13 October.
- A severe thunderstorm on 28 October generated strong winds north of Verran and hailstorms from Wharminda to Port Neill and Arno Bay.

Crops

- Yields are generally expected to be average or slightly above average but are highly variable, depending on soil type and conditions at sowing.
- Crops on heavier soils near Buckleboo and Franklin Harbour were significantly moisture stressed and likely to produce well below average yields, while those on sandier textured soils have good potential.
- Several frosts damaged crops at flowering and grain fill stages in the Lock, Murdinga and Tooligie districts resulting in some crop loss. Some of the worst affected areas were cut for hay.
- Hot winds in mid-October rapidly dried some crops off, particularly those on heavier textured soils.
- Some pea, lentils and early sown barley crops have been harvested near Kimba and small amounts of barley in other districts. Lentils yielded 0.3 to 0.6 t/ha on heavier Buckleboo soils and 0.7 to 1.2 t/ha on loamy soils.
- Late October rains will extend the ripening period and aid grain fill of crops in the Cleve Hills but was generally too late for other areas of the district.
- Soil moisture contents were low by the end of October.
- Hail caused significant crop damage on October 28 with worst-hit areas from Mt Hill to east of Wharminda suffering 50% crop loss. Further east near Arno Bay, early estimates of crop losses are between 5 to 15%.
- Grain quality of harvested crops has been good with a low percentage of screenings.
- Late infestations of armyworm and aphids were detected in some crops, but numbers were generally below control thresholds.
- A late flight of native budworm occurred in pulses and canola, but these were easily controlled with appropriate insecticide applications.

Pastures

- Pastures have good amounts of biomass generated by the wet winter that will carry stock at least until stubbles become available for grazing.
- Some medic pastures, and vetch and oat crops with enough growth, were cut for hay at the end of September. Most of this was baled before rains in October and of good quality.
- Producers have prepared to supplementary-feed livestock in late summer, and most will retain adequate supplies of grain and hay on farm.
- Livestock are generally in excellent condition.

Upper North

Weather

- Rainfall for September was very much below average in south eastern corner and below average in the remainder of the district.
- October rainfall was average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October. Mean minimum temperatures in September were below average in the south east part of the district and average in the remainder. Mean minimums in October were mostly below average.
- Strong winds blew on 28 October.

Crops

- Crops developed rapidly and most are now only slightly behind normal development, despite the later start to the season.
- Harvest of barley, peas, lentils and some wheat has started in the western part of the district.
- Yields are highly variable with above average yields on well-managed lighter textured soils to well below average on some heavier textured soils.
- Harvest will start in other parts of the district in early to mid-November.
- There is still some stored soil moisture in most soil profiles.
- In the northern part of the district, crops were severely moisture stressed in late September and early October, particularly on heavier soil types, significantly reducing yields.
- Strong winds towards the end of October caused minor damage to some ripe crops with head and grain losses. Some hay was blown out of windrows, resulting in significant yield losses.
- Most wheat crops across the district have below to well below average yield potential, although late rain and cool conditions during flowering and grain filling benefited later maturing crops.
- Barley crops fared much better than wheat crops, with most likely to yield only slightly below average.
- Lentil crops performed well, and yields are likely to be close to average.
- High screenings percentages in some cereal crops in the western part of the district were reported, particularly from crops on heavier textured soils.
- Windrowing of canola crops started and direct heading of canola will commence in lower rainfall areas in early November.
- Disease infection was low in all crops, due to dry spring conditions and proactive fungicide applications.
- Low numbers of mice caused damage to cereal heads in isolated areas across the district.
- Hay cut in early to mid-October was affected by rain however hay cut in late October should be of high quality.

Pastures

- Dry conditions in September and early October stressed pastures, reducing growth and hastening maturity. Most pasture paddocks have adequate amounts of biomass to maintain livestock until crop stubbles become available for grazing.
- Most producers have cut hay to replenish on-farm reserves.
- An increased area sown to vetch, or vetch and cereal pastures in the northern part of the district has provided high amounts of good quality feed.
- Producers have been selling lambs as soon as they reach market weights to take advantage of high prices and to reduce grazing pressure.

Mid North

Weather

- Rainfall for September was very much below average in the northern part of the district and below average in the remainder. October rainfall was average across much of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were below average in the northern half of the district and average in the remainder for September. October minimum temperatures were below average.
- Frost occurred in the eastern part of the district in early October.
- Thunderstorms resulted in strong winds, heavy rain, and some small hail on 28 October.

Crops

- Dry conditions in September reduced yield potential across the district but most crops are still likely to yield average to slightly below average.
- Cool conditions in October favoured flowering and grain fill in all crops.
- Cereal crops are at grain filling to maturity stages.
- Harvest of pulses and barley commenced on the Koolunga flats with most areas expected to start in mid to late November.
- Canola crops were windrowed in early areas in late October and the remainder of windrowing will be done in early November. Approximately 50% of crops will be windrowed, the rest will be crop-topped and direct-headed.
- Frost in early October severely damaged crops in low-lying areas east of Clare. Approximately 5% of total crop was affected, cereals suffering the worst damage and smaller losses in some canola crops.
- Strong winds associated with thunderstorms in late October bent over stems of bean crops, however this is unlikely to cause significant yield loss. Some ripe barley crops suffered head loss, but most crops only suffered minor damage.
- Some small hail fell during the thunderstorms but did not cause significant yield loss to lentils and beans. However, pods were damaged which might result in grain discolouration and downgrading of quality.
- Moderate numbers of native budworm and Etiella larvae were present in pulse and canola crops at early pod set and controlled. Later in the season insect pests have been below control thresholds.
- Disease infections were low in cereal and pulse crops due to the dry spring and proactive fungicide application.
- Low numbers of mice caused damage to cereal heads in isolated areas of the district.
- Hay cutting and baling is approximately 70% complete with only later districts still baling.
- Hay yields have been above average with good to excellent quality.

Pastures

- Most pastures across the district have reasonable growth but drying-off of grasses and legumes has reduced pasture quality.
- Sown vetch pastures grew well and have been spray-topped and grazed.
- There is still adequate cover on most pasture paddocks, however as pasture quality deteriorates, producers will move livestock onto crop stubbles.
- Most producers have been selling lambs straight out of pasture paddocks soon after weaning, rather than feed lotting to achieve heavier weights, because of current high prices.
- Demand for ewes remains strong with high prices being paid for cull ewes.

Lower North

Weather

- September rainfall was below average. Rainfall for October was above average around Two Wells and Mallala and average in the remainder of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average for September and below average for October.
- Hail fell in mid-October between Tarlee, Kapunda and Bethel.
- Large hail fell on the 28 October over a widespread area, worst affected areas were from Roseworthy and Freeling to Gomersal and Rosedale.

Crops

- Most cereal crops are at grain filling stage.
- A few late sown crops are at early head emergence.
- Rain in late September and early October improved crop yields following dry conditions from early August. Most crops have above average yield potential.
- Most soils across the district still have 30 to 50% stored soil moisture, which will enable crops to finish.
- Many pulse crops have 50 to 100% above average yield potential, particularly in higher rainfall parts of the district.
- Cereal crops have 20 to 30% above average yield potential.
- A severe hailstorm on 28 October severely damaged crops, particularly in the eastern part of the district with large losses occurring in all crop types. Crop losses are being assessed but the full impact on grain yield and quality may not be known until harvest.
- Canola crops are at late flowering to pod fill. Most crops are relatively short, and farmers are likely to direct-head crops rather than windrow them.
- Cool conditions during October slowed crop development and harvest will not commence until late November.
- Disease infection was very low in all crops, due to a combination of proactive fungicide application and dry mild conditions throughout spring.
- The area of crop cut for hay was below average, due to lower demand and carryover hay stocks from last season.
- Early cut hay was damaged by rain, but later cut hay will be of good quality.
- Seed production crops of new medic varieties have grown well and have good yield potential. Hail damaged some medic seed crops, which might limit supplies of some varieties.
- Medic seed crops of Seraph are looking good. There is plenty of Cavalier seed left from last year. Penfield and Emperor seed crops are lagging due to late sowing, but some seed should be available.

Pastures

- A high amount of pasture feed is available from both sown and regenerating pastures; however quality is beginning to decline as pastures begin to hay-off.
- Barley grass was dominant in many pastures and paddocks have been spray-topped to control seed set.
- Reasonable supplies of good quality hay will be available for sale.
- Livestock numbers remained stable, and all stock are in good condition, leading into mating.
- Lambs are being sold as soon as they reach market weights.

Yorke Peninsula

Weather

- Rainfall for September was below average to very much below average. October rainfall was average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures for September were average and below average for October.
- A minor frost occurred in early October.
- Thunderstorms, with hail and strong winds, occurred on 28 October.

Crops

- Yields are expected to be average across most of the Yorke Peninsula.
- Coastal regions are expected to have higher yields than last season as conditions have been more favourable, however the inland area is likely to produce lower yields than last season.
- Harvest of lentils and peas started in the last week of October on Northern Yorke Peninsula and the coastal areas. Most farmers are expected to start harvest in the second week of November.
- Frosts occurred in October in areas prone to frost, but damage was minor. No crops were cut for hay given comparative prices for hay and grain.
- Low to moderate amounts of disease were present in cereal crops with little to no effect on yield. Powdery mildew infection in wheat required late fungicide applications despite drier conditions.
- Ascochyta was present in most lentil crops throughout winter however the fewer rainfall events during spring reduced disease pressure considerably and grain quality is not expected to be affected.
- Cereal yields are expected to be average with reasonable grain quality as most grains are filling well. Dry conditions in October might reduce test weight and increase screenings, particularly in high yielding barley varieties.
- Yields of all pulses are expected to be average, with coastal regions expected to yield better than last year.
- Canola crops had adequate pod development and average yield potentials. Dry conditions at the start of September when crops were flowering reduced yield potential. Grain size is expected to be good and oil content high due to cool temperatures during pod fill.
- Most canola crops were windrowed or crop-topped during the last week of October.
- Most crops will only incur minor yield loss from the high winds and hail in late October, with isolated cases of high losses.
- Strong winds shattered pods in some desiccated lentil crops on Northern Yorke Peninsula.
- The area of oaten hay was significantly reduced this season, with most crops in Northern Yorke Peninsula. Most were cut early due to dry conditions and severe moisture stress, significantly reducing quality and yield.
- Snail numbers increased with the cool spring and were highly active in October. There have not yet been any reports of contamination during harvest.

Pastures

- Amounts of pasture feed are sufficient but not excessive due to the dry spring.
- Many medic pastures went to seed early due to moisture stress and few had enough growth to be cut for hay.
- Cereal stubble should provide reasonable feed.
- Livestock numbers declined in the past two months as producers sold excess stock due to the lack of pasture feed and good stock prices.

Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island

Weather

- Rainfall for September was generally below average. October rainfall was above average on Kangaroo Island and the Fleurieu and average in the Hills.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average for September across Kangaroo Island and the northern Adelaide Hills and above average in the remainder. October mean minimums were average.
- Several frosts occurred in the Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu.
- Hail fell on the 28 October in the Adelaide Hills.

Crops

Central Hills/Fleurieu Peninsula

- Crop growth and development varies from late tillering to early ripening.
- Growth and expected yields are variable but generally average to above average.
- There are very low amounts of stored soil moisture across the region.
- Canola crops are at pod fill.
- Harvest is likely to commence in late November to early December.
- Some hay has been cut but recent hail and rain could affect quality. Cutting of later crops is progressing.

Kangaroo Island

- Beans and canola are at pod fill, some canola is still at late flowering stage. Most cereals have started grain fill.
- Dry conditions in spring did not stress crops. Waterlogging in July and August significantly reduced yield potential so most crop yields are likely to be average to below average.
- There is 50% plant available stored soil moisture in higher rainfall areas but less in drier areas.
- Russian wheat aphid damaged untreated cereals. Native budworm and diamond backed moth were controlled in canola crops.
- Harvest is expected to begin in early December.
- Hay cutting is just commencing, and yield expectations are only 50% of average.

Pastures

Central Hills/Fleurieu Peninsula

- High amounts of pasture feed of reasonable quality are available. Waterlogging in July, followed by dry conditions in spring, reduced pasture growth in some paddocks.
- The availability and quality of hay supplies are currently adequate, with a large amount of hay planned to be cut in early to mid-November.
- Livestock numbers and condition are good coming into mating season.
- Producers are enjoying increased profits due to high livestock prices.

Kangaroo Island

- Pasture quality improved as late rain increased clover content, however the quantity of pasture growth is still well below normal.
- Producers are selling lambs and other livestock to reduce stocking pressure, due to poor pasture growth.
- There is likely to be a shortage of hay on the island with supplies needed to be trucked in from the mainland.
- Lucerne pastures are being seriously affected by aphids.

Lower Murray

Weather

- Rainfall for September was below average in the north and average in the south. October rainfall was average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures in September were average and below average in October.
- Strong winds during the spring raised dust.
- Heavy rain and hail on 28 October fell in a strip from Palmer to Bow Hill.

Crops

- Crop yield potential vary markedly across the district, from around average in the south below Angus Valley Road, to well below average in the north and east.
- Predominantly heavy textured soils on flats and sandy rises in the northern areas suffered severe moisture stress.
- In the southern areas, cereal, pulse and oilseed crops received enough rainfall to maintain average growth.
- A strip of hail with strong winds and heavy rain caused between 10 to 30% crop damage from Palmer through to Bow Hill.
- Storm-damaged crops might provide more food for mice and encourage an increase in numbers over summer.

Pastures

- Pasture feed availability followed the same patterns as crop growth and rainfall, with low amounts in the north, and adequate feed in the south.
- Hay yields varied in both yield and quality across the district with as some was damaged by heavy rain before being baled.
- Containment feeding will be required in northern areas to protect vulnerable soils from erosion over summer and autumn.

Northern Murray Mallee

Weather

- September rainfall varied from above average around Alawoona to below average around Waikerie. Rainfall for October was average to below average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average in September and below average in October.
- A severe thunderstorm on 28 October brought large hail, strong winds and heavy rain to a strip from south of Waikerie through to Taplan.
- Several frosts occurred in September and early October.

Crops

- The late break, dry winter and lack of deep moisture diminished yield potential to well below average across the district, with western areas of the district suffering the most.
- Patchy rainfall events improved growth in some areas, but generally deep sands, shallow soils and heavy-textured flats were significantly moisture stressed and will yield very poorly.
- Cereal yields will vary between 0.4tha to 1t/ha. Late rainfall will increase barley grain size and increase grain number in wheat heads.
- Some frost damage occurred but was of low significance in moisture-stressed, low-yielding crops.
- Very few pulse and canola crops were sown this year, and all have well below average yield potential.
- Some pulse crops were sprayed to control native budworm larvae.
- Hail damage in a 5 km strip from south of Waikerie to Taplan in late October caused up to 100% crop damage in many paddocks at the centre of the storm, and between 10% and 20% damage on the edges. Heavy rain and strong wind also flattened some crops, making harvest of already short crops difficult.
- Storm damage left grain on the ground and raised the potential for mice numbers to increase over summer.

Pastures

- Pasture feed availability is poor, and producers will move stock onto crop stubbles as soon as crops are harvested. Stubbles will provide high quality feed; however, they will require careful management of grazing to retain cover.
- Late spring rains will provide summer growth, but many paddocks are very vulnerable to erosion and more farmers will use containment feeding to maintain soil cover.
- Most farmers are looking to maintain and build their sheep breeding flocks, as income from livestock has been crucial for all mixed farm enterprises in the district in recent years.

Southern Murray Mallee

Weather

- Rainfall in September was below average south of Lameroo and average in the north. October rainfall was generally average across the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures in September were average. Temperatures in October were above average.
- Thunderstorms on 28 October brought hail, strong winds and heavy rain.

Crops

- Crops have greatly reduced crop yield potential due to the late break of season, little subsoil moisture and a dry finish to the season.
- Heavy textured flats, deep sands and shallow stony soil suffered the most moisture stress with some areas not producing any grain.
- Barley crops are at or close to maturity and rain in late October was too late to benefit yields. Yields will be below average.
- Hail in an area southeast of Bow Hill in late October caused crops losses of 30 to 40% in some crops.
- Rain in late October will help grain fill in most wheat crops but yields will be below average.
- Pulse crops are very short, making their harvest difficult and most will only achieve half the average yield this season.
- Canola yields are also expected to be well below average.
- Some frost damage occurred but lack of good rainfall has clearly been the most yield-limiting factor this season.
- Most non-cereal crops were sprayed to control native budworm larvae.
- Most hay was cut and baled before rain in late October and will be of good quality, however yields have been well below average.
- Returns from high grain prices will partly help offset losses from low yields.

Pastures

- Pasture growth was limited to some modest growth in spring.
- Producers will move livestock onto crop stubbles as soon as they become available to preserve sparse surface cover on pasture paddocks.
- Some producers have been using containment areas to supplement pasture feed and maintain stock numbers.
- There has already been some reduction in livestock numbers to reduce the amount of supplementary feeding required over summer and to take advantage of high prices.

Upper South East

Weather

- Rainfall in September was average in an area north of Bordertown and below average in the remainder of the district. October rainfall was above average around Padthaway and average in the rest of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average to above average for September and average to below average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average for September and below average to very much below average for October.
- Several frosts occurred in mid-September and early October with temperatures of -4^{0}C for up to 8 hours.
- Hail fell in early October.
- A severe thunderstorm on the 28 October brought strong winds and heavy rain, and a narrow strip of hail east of Tintinara.

Crops

- Frost in early October occurred during flowering to early grain development in many wheat crops causing widespread yield losses of up to 100% in some places.
- Approximately 10% of wheat crops were cut for hay. Most crops have been left to be harvested for grain, due to the low demand for hay, high risk of stone and stubble contamination, and high wheat prices.
- Frost damage varied depending on soil type and previous year's crop with wheat on cereal (approximately 15% of wheat area) having 70 to 90% damage, wheat on canola 40 to 60% and wheat on beans 40%.
- Rain in October might help crops to compensate for grain losses from frost with remaining heads having more and larger grains.
- Wheat crops were the worst affected by frost with much lower losses in barley, canola and bean crops.
- Hail damage appears to be isolated to a narrow strip east of Tintinara with only a few farmers severely affected.
- Frost, hail damage and dry conditions in September severely affected wheat yields with well below average yield potential. Barley crops performed much better and have average to slightly above average yield potentials.
- Bean and canola crops have also performed well. Canola has average yield and beans average to slightly below average yield prospects.
- Dry conditions in August and September reduced the amount of disease in most crops, however stripe rust increased in susceptible wheat varieties.
- Aphid numbers increased in cereal crops and native budworm larvae were present in canola crops, however numbers are below thresholds for spraying and crops are being monitored.

Pastures

- Pasture growth is below average, due to the late break, wet July and dry September. Perennial pastures responded to October rainfall and should provide adequate feed.
- There has been little additional hay cut apart from frosted cereals as many producers have supplies on-farm from last season and hay prices are low.
- Sheep and cattle are in excellent condition and prices remain high.

Lower South East

Weather

- Rainfall for September was below average in the north to very much below average in the remainder of the district. October rainfall was above average in an area north of Naracoorte and average in the rest of the district.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average in the north and above average in the remainder of the district. Maximum, temperatures for October were below average.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average to above average for September and below average to very much below average for October.
- Frost occurred in early October in the northern part of the district.

Crops

- Crop growth slowed due to below average September and October rain and below average October temperatures.
- Some wheat crops in the Mid-South East were damaged by frost, however damage was less severe than further north and very few crops were cut for hay.
- Low hay prices and high grain prices resulted in most farmers choosing to let frosted crops mature and harvest the grain.
- Winter wheat crops in the southern part of the district are at flowering stage so recent rain and cool weather will benefit their yield potential.
- Barley crops have not been affected by frost and yields should be average to above average.
- Loose smut is increasing in barley crops across the district and current seed treatments are not providing effective control.
- Bean crops have mostly finished flowering with reasonable pod set and most have average yield potential.

Pastures

- Dry conditions in August and September slowed pasture growth and cool conditions in October did not allow them to respond as normal.
- Clover content in most pastures is less than normal.
- Producers are considering direct drilling alternative pasture species into permanent pastures to increase pasture growth.
- Livestock are in excellent condition, with lambs and vealers being sold.
- Silage and hay are being cut with most a week or more later than normal.

Government
of South Australia

Department of Primary
Industries and Regions