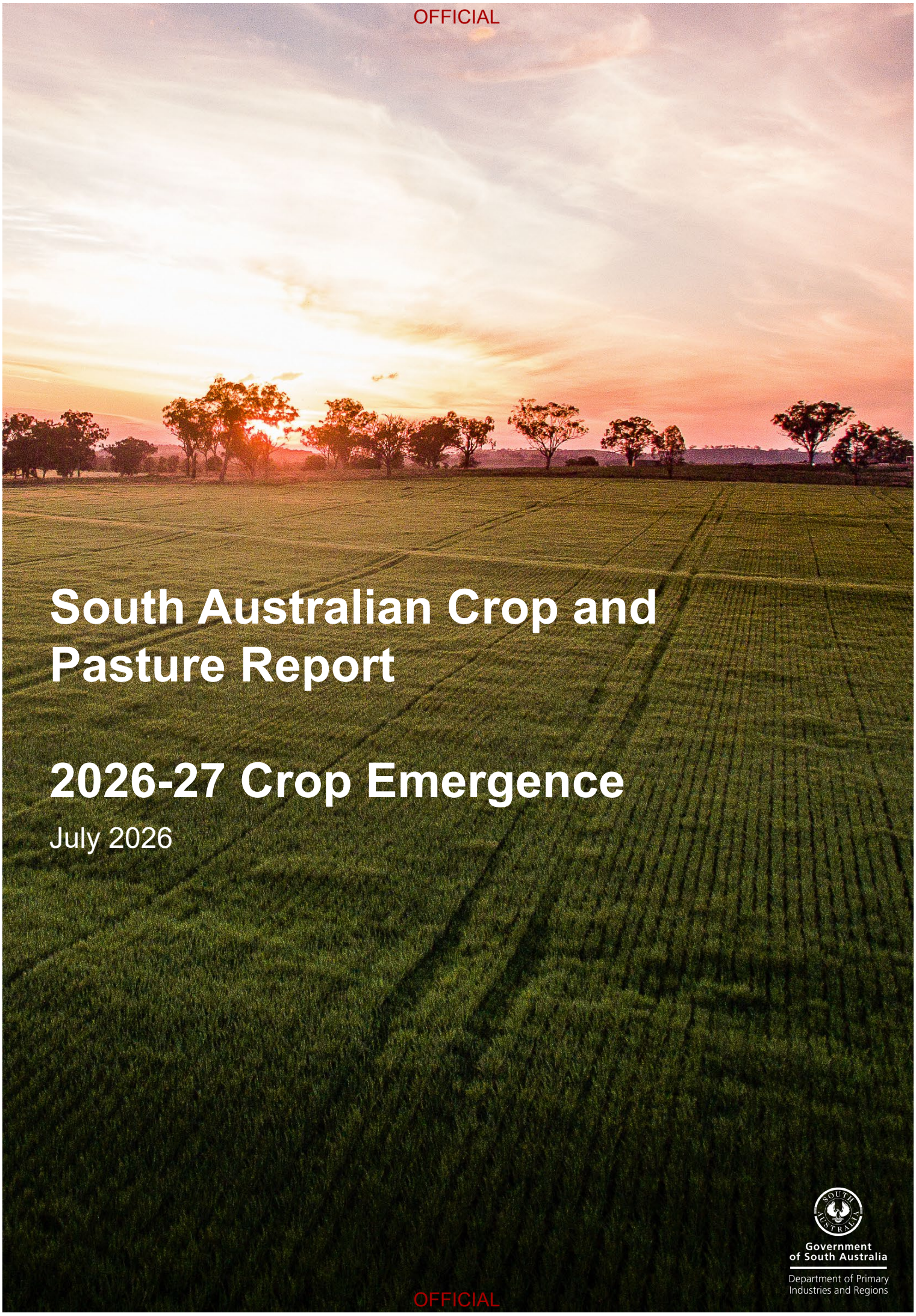

South Australian Crop and Pasture Report

2026-27 Crop Emergence

July 2026

Government of South Australia
Department of Primary Industries and Regions

Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

Information current as of 14 July 2026

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

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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 Crop Emergence

Summary

South Australia has enjoyed one of the strongest starts to a cropping season in recent years, with well above average autumn and early winter rainfall (figure 1) supporting excellent crop establishment and strong early growth. There are high subsoil moisture reserves across most regions (figure 2).

Some areas have experienced waterlogging and delays with spraying operations, but seasonal conditions have generally been highly favourable. Crop development is running well ahead of normal, with canola flowering earlier than usual, cereals progressing rapidly through vegetative growth stages and some lentils at canopy closure.

Pest and disease pressure has been higher this season in response to the favourable growing conditions. Reports of green peach aphid together with turnip yellows virus in canola have been prevalent this season. In addition, fungal diseases in barley (leaf rust and net blotch) have been common across different regions. However, most pest and disease issues are being managed effectively through timely monitoring and control measures. Strong pre-sowing weed control opportunities and good pre-emergent herbicide performance have resulted in cleaner crops than in recent seasons.

Good growing conditions have also supported exceptional pasture growth and abundant feed supplies across the state, resulting in excellent livestock condition, reduced reliance on supplementary feeding and strong lambing and calving performance. Livestock producer confidence is generally high, supported by strong livestock prices and some of the best grazing conditions seen in recent years.

Concerns around mice have eased considerably following effective baiting programs, with little reported impact on crops. Although fertiliser and fuel costs remain elevated, they have reduced from recent peaks, and improved product availability has enabled growers to implement planned seeding and nitrogen fertiliser topdressing programs.

Wheat area is near average, barley area has increased slightly, and lentils continue to expand as the dominant pulse crop. Canola and durum plantings have recovered from last season's reduced levels. The estimated grain production for 2026/27 is 9.8 million tonnes, which is 11% above the five-year average.

While there is cautious optimism about yield prospects given seasonal progress to date, achieving potential is still reliant on late winter and spring rainfall, and an absence of adverse weather events during flowering and grain fill. The Bureau of Meteorology outlook indicates an increased likelihood of drier conditions (figure 3) through late winter and spring due to El Niño influences. This is coupled with warmer temperatures. Caution is also warranted as this season’s earlier crop development and maturity creates greater vulnerability to possible frost events. Given these factors, yield estimates remain conservative.

Sown crop area and production for previous six 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	*4,233,000*
Production (t)	8,445,000	12,788,000	8,703,000	5,170,000	8,860,000	*9,789,000*
Farm gate value	$3.3 billion	$4.8 billion	$3.3 billion	$2.1 billion	$3.1 billion	

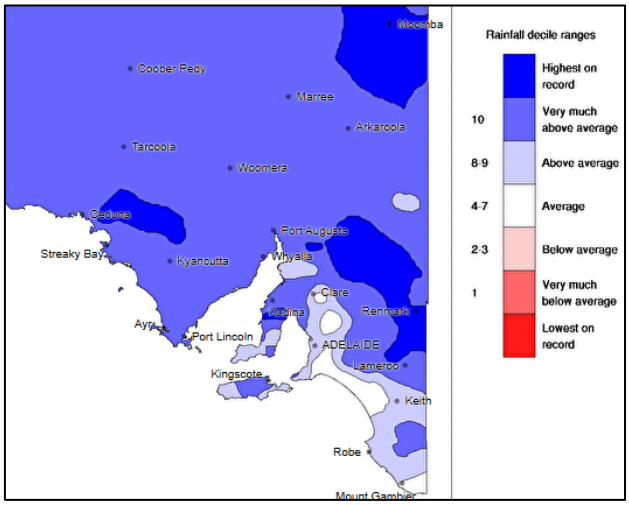


Figure 1: Rainfall deciles for 1st March to 30th June 2026 (issued 30 June 2026).

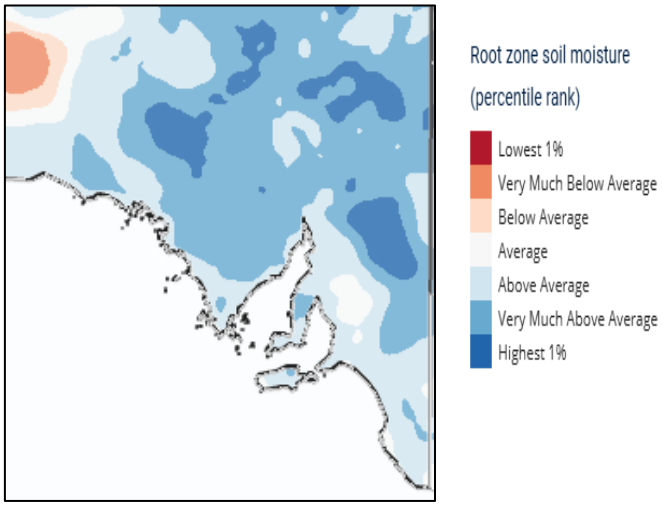


Figure 2: Lower layer soil moisture (issued 10 July 2026).

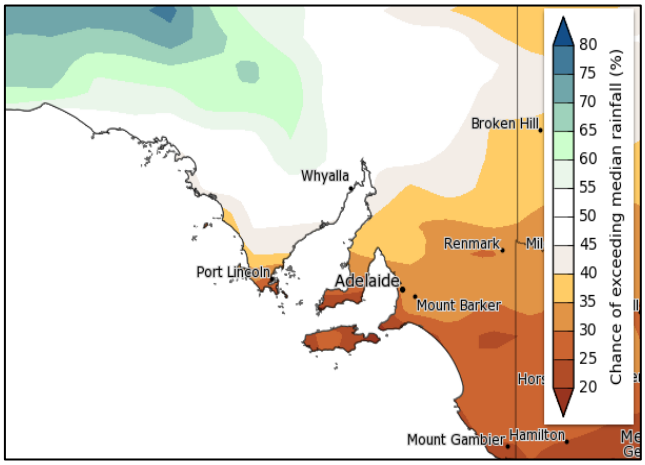


Figure 3: Chance of above median rainfall from 1st August to 30th October 2026 (issued 9 July 2026).

Season 2026/27

Weather

Weather conditions across South Australia have been very favourable, with most regions receiving well above average autumn and early winter rainfall (figure1). This has resulted in one of the best seasonal starts in recent memory. Some areas have experienced localised flooding, waterlogging, and delays to spraying operations due to persistent wet conditions. The combination of high soil moisture and mostly mild temperatures has driven rapid crop growth and created strong yield potential across most districts.

Season outlook

For South Australia, the Bureau of Meteorology's August–October 2026 seasonal outlook indicates a higher likelihood of below-average rainfall across much of southern Australia, including large parts of SA (figure 3). Daytime and overnight temperatures are likely to be warmer than average.

The key drivers are El Niño conditions in the Pacific Ocean which have potential to shift weather patterns toward warmer and drier conditions across southern Australia.

Subsoil moisture

Subsoil moisture reserves are generally excellent across most regions following a very wet autumn and early winter. Above-average rainfall has provided a full profile of soil water in many districts (figure 2) with soil moisture levels amongst the best in recent years.

Excessive moisture has created challenges in some areas, including reduced spraying opportunities, bogged machinery, and signs of temporary waterlogging in crops. Despite these issues, the overall impact of high soil moisture is considered overwhelmingly positive, underpinning cautious optimism for above-average crop production if frost and spring conditions remain favourable.

Crop mix

Compared to 5-year averages, wheat is near its 5-year average, while barley area (+4%) has increased slightly. Total lentil area has increased by 12% compared to last year, and as a result continues to be the dominant pulse crop in the state. Compared to last season, areas sown to canola have increased by 5% and durum by 11%, returning to near their 5-year averages. The total area of crops has increased, driven by increased sowings on Western and Upper Eyre Peninsula, and in the Upper North due to the favourable seasonal start.

Cropping progress

Crop development is running well ahead of normal across much of the state, with many crops establishing early and progressing rapidly due to favourable growing conditions. Canola is particularly advanced in several regions, with some crops already flowering or approaching full ground cover. Cereals in many areas have reached stem elongation stages much earlier than usual. Overall crop condition is excellent, with above-average yield potential if favourable conditions continue through spring.

Challenges and opportunities

Pests and diseases

Pest and disease pressure has increased in response to the favourable growing conditions, with green peach aphid reported in canola across several regions and some associated turnip yellows virus symptoms observed. In later sown, slow establishing crops on Kangaroo Island herringbone grubs and pasture looper caterpillars were reported and on the Fleurieu Peninsula, aphids and red legged earth mite are present.

Foliar diseases such as blackleg in canola, leaf rust in cereals, and net blotch in barley are present, although most are currently being managed effectively and at this stage, are not expected to significantly impact yield. Early monitoring and timely fungicide and insecticide applications have helped keep pest and disease impacts relatively low to date.

Weed control is better than in recent seasons due to excellent knockdown weed control opportunities before sowing. Additionally, good performance from pre-emergent herbicides has been achieved due to optimal soil moisture conditions for herbicide activation. As a result, crops are cleaner, with less pressure from broadleaf weeds and volunteers.

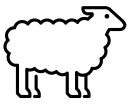
Some growers have faced delays to in-crop spraying as wet weather has limited access to paddocks. Concerns about ryegrass resistance remain, with increased reports of glyphosate-resistant populations reinforcing the importance of maintaining diverse weed control strategies.

Regional issues and adverse events

Earlier concern around mice in some South Australian regions has been largely mitigated through targeted baiting, with crop damage being minimal.

Fertiliser and fuel costs have remained elevated this season, increasing production expenses and putting pressure on farm budgets. However, product availability has improved, with most growers able to source and apply planned nitrogen requirements. Some fertiliser product substitution, using UAN and sulphate of ammonia as an alternative to urea, has assisted in supplying nitrogen fertiliser requirements to crops when urea supplies were initially tight. Strong early rainfall has increased nitrogen mineralisation from soil reserves. This has reduced the quantities of nitrogen required by many crops and partially offset cost concerns.

The exceptionally favourable start to the season has resulted in crops developing more rapidly than normal across many regions, with canola flowering and cereals reaching stem elongation earlier than usual. The accelerated development of crops increases the risk of frost impact during critical reproductive and early grain fill stages.



Pastures and livestock condition

Seasonal conditions and pasture cover

Favourable seasonal conditions, including consistent rainfall and mild temperatures, have driven exceptional pasture growth across much of the state. There is an abundance of feed available, supporting strong livestock performance and excellent ground cover. Producers are reporting unusually high levels of biomass production for this time of year. Some pastures are already generating surplus feed and creating opportunities for silage or hay production.

This is reflected in the pasture coverage map (figure 4), where growth is mostly very high relative to the 10-year average. This is particularly the case in Western Eyre Peninsula, the Upper North, Northern Murray Mallee and Mid North. Most other areas are also above the 10-year average, the exception being the Upper South East.

Supplementary feeding and containment

The abundance of pasture growth has significantly reduced the need for supplementary feeding across most regions, with livestock able to rely on ample green feed and strong biomass production to meet their nutritional requirements. As a result, containment feeding has been limited, with producers benefiting from well-above-average feed and excellent grazing conditions. This has reduced nutritional pressures, allowing producers to focus on routine management activities rather than feed shortages.

Livestock Condition and management responses

Livestock condition has improved markedly because of this abundant pasture growth and feed availability. Stock are generally in excellent condition, with strong growth rates reported. Autumn calving cattle and lambing ewes are benefitting from abundant feed, with very strong lambing and calving percentages.

Livestock prices are also strong, prompting discussions about enterprise mix with producers considering increasing livestock numbers.

However, despite good conditions and strong prices, restocking has been limited so far. This is particularly the case in pastoral areas, as producers are coming off poor seasons and prices for mutton remain attractive making it more expensive to purchase replacement breeding stock.

Overall, producer confidence is high, with livestock enterprises benefiting from some of the best winter grazing conditions seen in recent years, coupled with sound prices.

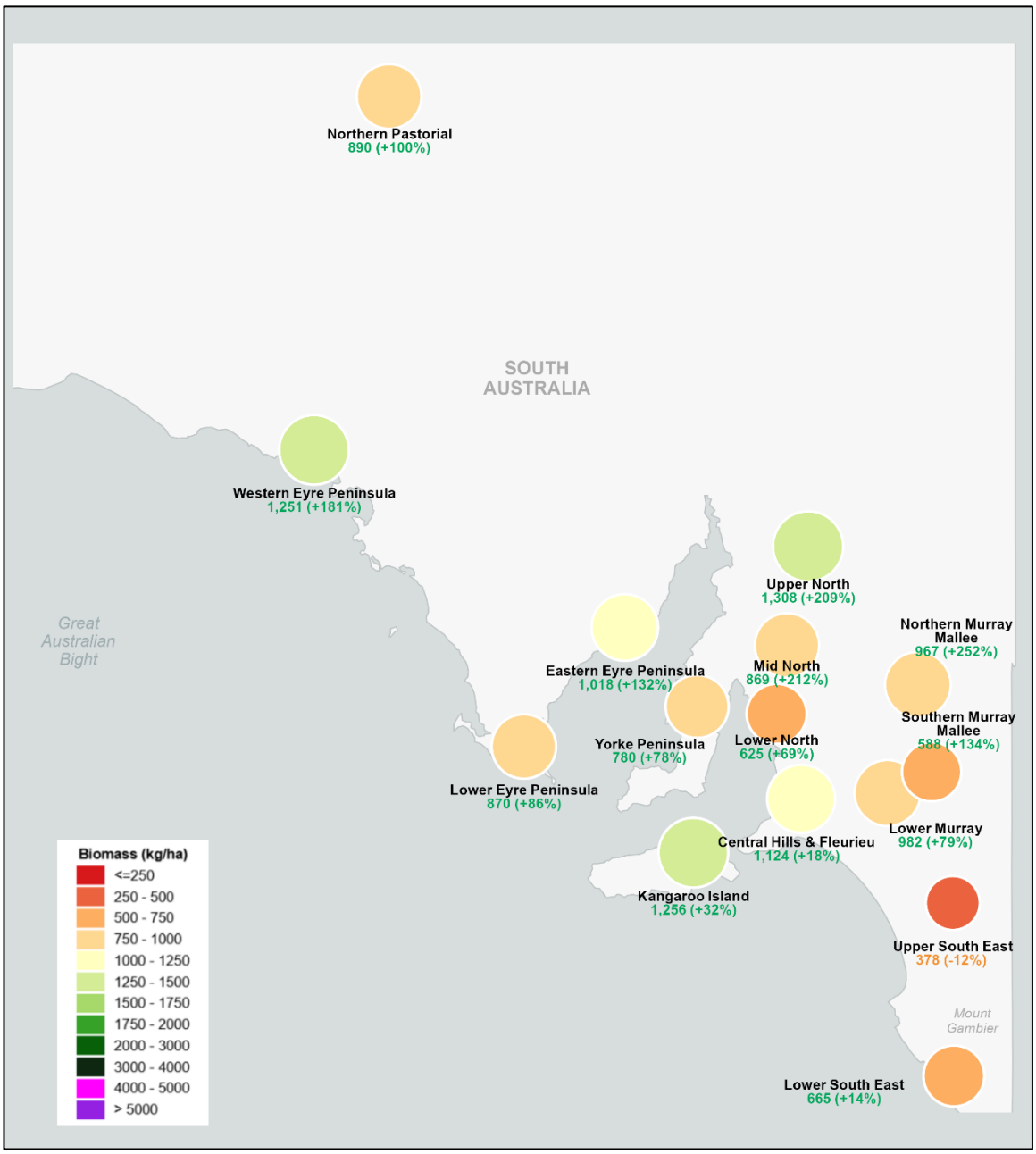


Figure 4: June 2026 pasture coverage (Total Standing Dry Matter). Bubble size and colour represent Total Standing Dry Matter (kg/ha). The percentage shown is the change relative to the 10-year average for the same month, highlighting regional patterns and seasonal differences.

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	828,000	551,000	740,000	680,000	540,000	720,000	242,000	12,540
Durum	*ha*	0	0	0	12,500	5,000	6,000	3,800	0
	t	0	0	0	47,500	12,000	17,400	12,920	0
Barley	*ha*	75,000	50,000	70,000	136,000	102,000	95,000	20,640	3,200
	t	146,250	192,500	154,000	544,000	234,600	294,500	76,368	12,160
Oats	*ha*	15,000	0	1,500	4,200	8,000	4,000	2,000	2,000
	t	22,500	0	2,400	12,600	14,400	10,000	5,400	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	3,400	0	2,470	1,200	300
Peas	*ha*	2,500	0	1,500	8,500	9,000	9,000	3,600	400
	t	3,000	0	1,500	18,700	13,500	15,300	6,480	600
Lupins	*ha*	1,500	7,500	5,000	1,000	2,500	1,800	500	1,000
	t	1,500	15,000	6,000	2,000	2,750	2,196	900	1,700
Beans	*ha*	500	8,000	1,000	9,000	11,000	12,500	3,200	3,200
	t	750	19,200	1,000	21,600	16,500	23,750	7,680	7,040
Chickpeas	*ha*	0	0	0	2,500	2,000	2,000	400	0
	t	0	0	0	5,000	2,600	2,600	600	0
Lentils	*ha*	95,000	55,000	95,000	165,500	40,000	33,000	17,500	0
	t	142,500	137,500	114,000	364,100	60,000	49,500	33,250	0
Vetch	*ha*	2,000	2,000	0	1,800	5,000	3,500	300	0
	t	1,600	4,000	0	2,880	2,750	2,590	300	0
Canola	*ha*	6,000	80,000	9,000	12,500	17,000	26,500	4,500	3,400
	t	6,600	208,000	11,250	28,750	25,500	47,700	10,350	9,180
Hay	*ha*	10,000	10,400	21,000	12,000	20,000	44,000	14,500	7,600
(not in total)	*t*	23,378	44,614	51,610	57,600	80,000	176,000	65,250	28,880
Total	*ha*	657,500	347,500	553,000	524,500	441,500	434,300	117,340	17,100
	t	1,152,700	1,127,200	1,030,150	1,730,530	924,600	1,188,006	397,448	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	18,560	100,455	240,000	225,600	217,280	131,000	5,246,435
Durum	*ha*	0	400	0	0	6,500	800	35,000
	t	0	640	0	0	16,900	3,600	110,960
Barley	*ha*	7,200	60,000	120,000	100,000	39,000	7,000	885,040
	t	22,320	114,000	168,000	197,000	117,000	36,400	2,309,098
Oats	*ha*	500	2,800	3,200	3,300	22,500	6,000	75,000
	t	1,300	3,920	3,200	5,346	60,750	25,200	173,016
Rye	*ha*	0	1,200	3,000	3,500	1,600	0	9,300
	t	0	1,440	2,400	4,340	1,920	0	10,100
Triticale	*ha*	500	2,200	1,500	7,000	1,000	500	15,200
	t	1,300	3,300	1,200	10,710	2,000	2,500	28,380
Peas	*ha*	500	2,800	2,500	1,800	2,900	400	45,400
	t	1,000	3,920	1,500	1,872	4,640	900	72,912
Lupins	*ha*	1,200	1,700	7,000	12,000	11,000	2,700	56,400
	t	2,040	2,295	4,200	14,400	17,600	5,400	77,981
Beans	*ha*	1,200	700	0	1,500	33,700	16,000	101,500
	t	2,760	945	0	1,380	84,250	48,000	234,855
Chickpeas	*ha*	200	2,400	7,000	0	600	1,000	18,100
	t	200	2,400	4,200	0	1,020	1,500	20,120
Lentils	*ha*	500	5,500	10,000	23,000	2,900	200	543,100
	t	650	5,500	6,000	19,320	4,930	360	937,610
Vetch	*ha*	100	3,500	12,000	6,000	2,000	0	38,200
	t	100	3,500	6,000	5,040	2,600	0	31,360
Canola	*ha*	4,000	5,000	5,500	6,000	37,000	21,600	238,000
	t	7,600	6,000	3,300	7,380	88,800	75,600	536,010
Hay	*ha*	33,400	15,000	6,000	33,000	33,100	27,100	287,100
(not in total)	*t*	153,640	52,500	10,800	112,860	172,120	135,500	1,164,753
Total	*ha*	21,700	142,500	371,700	284,100	238,300	82,400	**4,233,440**
	t	57,830	248,315	440,000	492,388	619,690	330,460	**9,788,837**

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	5,246,435
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	110,960
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	2,309,098
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	173,016
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	10,100
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	28,380
Peas	*ha*	66,800	69,700	62,700	50,800	48,900	59,800	45,400
	t	92,500	137,550	90,050	39,620	73,515	86,600	72,912
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	77,981
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	234,855
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	20,120
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	937,610
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	31,360
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	536,010
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	1,164,753
Total	*ha*	3,941,700	3,942,255	4,010,600	3,859,640	4,068,790	3,964,600	**4,233,440**
	t	8,445,310	12,787,600	8,703,465	5,169,688	8,860,099	8,793,100	**9,788,837**