

## JUNE 2011 AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS REPORT

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(see Dept. Primary Industries [drought conditions map](#))

Area in **Drought**: 0% (no change)

Area in **Marginal**: 15.7% (up from 14%)

Area in **Satisfactory**: 84.3% (down from 86%)

### **NEW DECLARATIONS (moved into drought)**

Nil.

### **REVOCATIONS (moved out of drought)**

Nil.

### **ALTERATIONS (moved between marginal and satisfactory)**

#### DECLINED (satisfactory to marginal)

Central North LHPA                      Part of District moved from Satisfactory to Marginal

North West LHPA                        Part of District moved from Satisfactory to Marginal

#### IMPROVED (marginal to satisfactory)

Nil.

### **RETROSPECTIVE (alterations to previous declarations)**

Nil.

### **RAINFALL FOR MAY 2011 (see Bureau of Meteorology rainfall maps)**

Most of NSW received some rainfall during May, though falls were light in the western third of the State. The eastern third of NSW including the coast and tablelands generally received falls between 50-100mm. The central coast strip around Newcastle and Sydney received up to 200mm. The central areas of the State received up to 50mm while the western third of NSW generally received 5-25mm of rain.

The rainfall deciles for May show that the majority of the State received average rainfall. A small area in the Central Tablelands and Hunter received above average rainfall, while in contrast, small patches in the north west, south west and north east received below average rainfall.

The three monthly rainfall decile displays average to above average rainfall across the majority of the State. A small area encompassing Broken Hill has received very much above average rainfall, while in contrast a small area north of Bourke has had below to very much below average rainfall.

Over the last six months rainfall deciles were generally above average to highest on record over most of NSW. The central coast and an area extending onto the central north of the State had average rainfall.

Annual monthly rainfall deciles show most of NSW had very much above average rainfall to highest on record in patches across the western and south west. The coastal strip from Port Macquarie to the Victorian border had average falls.

### **CROPS AND PASTURES (provided by Peter Matthews, Dept. Primary Industries, 9 June 2011)**

Winter crop estimates of 5.23 M ha comprise 4.49 M ha of winter cereals and 0.73 M ha of pulses and oilseeds. The majority of the canola (393,550ha), lupins (81,700 ha) and faba bean (44,980 ha) were planted by the end of May. An estimated 65% of the 3.24 M ha wheat crop has now been sown with some delays in planting in the north-west and western Riverina due to drier conditions. Conditions for the planting and establishment of winter crops have been variable across the state, with some areas badly affected by the variable rainfall or continuing mice problem.

The rainfall on the 22-24 May was welcomed in most areas of the state, this much needed rainfall will consolidate crops that have been sown. Regions that received better rainfalls were the North West Slopes and Plains around Coonamble and Coonabarabran (30-36 mm), the Central West Slopes and Plains, Dubbo, Forbes and Parkes (20-45 mm), and Condobolin, Nyngan and Gilgandra (15-35 mm). The South West Slopes received 20-38 mm around Albury, Cootamundra and Young. Further south in the Riverina, Narrandera received 20 mm and Griffith 30 mm.

Rain is still needed in the northwest plains in areas around Walgett and in the western Riverina districts to allow planting to continue as seed beds have dried out. Temperatures during late May have dropped, combining with frosts to slow the establishment of many later sown crops.

The forecast area of crop, particularly, canola and lupins may drop once it becomes clear to the extent of damage mice have done in the central and south western areas of the state. The sowing window for these broad-leafed crops has now past and growers will, where possible, need to re-sow these to a quicker maturing cereal crop option. In some cases due to the pre emergent herbicides used, these paddocks may need to be fallowed through to next season.

Pasture conditions across the state are beginning to deteriorate on the back of slow early pasture growth and the drop in quality of any standing dry feed. Whilst lucerne and perennial grasses had been providing some good quality feed, growth rates have now also slowed, with stock quickly utilising what is available. The newly germinating winter annual species have been set back by the earlier drier May conditions, whilst soil moisture levels have improved with the late May rain, the onset of cold frosty conditions have slowed pasture growth rates. Hand feeding stock, particularly pregnant or lambing ewes is on the increase.

The earlier sown grazing cereals are being utilised by growers to over come the stock feed shortage. However with many growers making the decision not to sow

dual purpose cereal crops on the back of the good earlier seasonal conditions and grain prices, they are now looking at the need to hand feed stock instead through the winter period.

The mice situation still remains the most significant factor affecting this years winter crop. On going crop damage in central and southern NSW has resulted in some total paddock losses, with growers needing to re sow where possible. Current feed back suggest that both canola and lupin areas in the central and south will decline, from lost crops. Cereal crops have also been affected, with some reports of total losses through to thinning of crops. The full extent of the damage will not become clear for several weeks as growers wait to see how crops establish from the more recently sown paddocks in late May. Timely bait supply has been a significant issue for growers with paddocks not being able to be baited on time to prevent damage or the re incursion of mice from surrounding pasture or riparian areas.

Unless the state receives a significant event (cold wet weather or disease outbreak), we are leading into a major issue for spring, with mice numbers expected to increase dramatically once the colder winter conditions ease. Ongoing baiting and vigilance by growers through winter will be the key to reducing mice numbers and potential crop losses at harvest.

Some reports of a few mites and grubs affecting broadleaf crops through the state, but no major issues.

The states summer crop harvest is starting wind up, grain sorghum production is forecast at 643,475 tonnes from an estimated 161,350 ha. Harvest of the estimated 23,105 ha of maize is expected to produce 171,088 tonnes for an average yield of 7.40 t/ha. Soybean production is estimated at 24,985 tonnes from 11,115 ha for an average yield of 2.25 t/ha.

The 23,460 ha of sunflowers are expected to produce 29,973 tonnes for an above average yield of 1.28 t/ha. The early crop (43% of plantings) is estimated to average 1.63 t/ha and the late crop around 1.01 t/ha.

Picking of the 341,740 ha cotton crop is almost with yields above average. The NSW crop could this year produce 2.19 M bales for an average yield of 6.4 bales/ha. Harvest is ongoing being slowed by the recent wet weather. The rice harvest is almost complete and is expected to produce around 800,000 tonnes from 80,000 ha for an average yield of 10 t/ha.

## **LIVESTOCK**

In general, conditions for stock remain good to excellent. Pasture conditions across the State are generally above average. Some of the dry standing feed in the northwest is losing quality as winter commences. Summer active perennial species have provided large amounts of feed, but value will decline during winter. Water supplies are generally very good.

## WATER SUPPLIES

**Note:** The State Water Storages report is no longer produced. An updated table will now be included to provide an idea of the State's water supply situation.

### STATE WATER STORAGES

River Valley	Status as at 5 May 2011	Status as at 2 June 2011
<i>Storage Dam, Nearest Town</i>	<i>Level %</i>	<i>Level %</i>
<b>Border Rivers</b>		
Pindari Dam, Inverell	100%	100%
<b>Lower Darling</b>		
Menindee Lakes, Broken Hill	113%	116%
<b>Gwydir Valley</b>		
Copeton Dam, Inverell	49%	49%
<b>Namoi Valley</b>		
Keepit Dam, Gunnedah	91%	90%
Split Rock Dam, Manilla	20%	20%
Chaffey Dam, Tamworth	97%	99%
<b>Macquarie Valley</b>		
Burrendong Dam, Wellington	90%	90%
Windamere Dam, Mudgee	45%	45%
Oberon Dam, Oberon	-	-
<b>Lachlan Valley</b>		
Wyangala Dam, Cowra	91%	91%
Carcoar Dam, Carcoar	74%	75%
<b>Murrumbidgee Valley</b>		
Burrinjuck Dam, Yass	96%	98%
Blowering Dam, Tumut	98%	97%
<b>Murray Valley</b>		
Dartmouth, Mitta Mitta (Vic)	62%	63%
Hume Dam, Albury	93%	94%
<b>Hunter Valley</b>		
Glenbawn Dam, Scone	84%	85%
Glennies Ck Dam, Singleton	72%	74%
Lostock Dam, Singleton	101%	105%
<b>Coastal Area</b>		
Toonumbar Dam, Kyogle	101%	101%
Brogo Dam, Bega	101%	101%

## **RAINFALL & TEMPERATURE OUTLOOK – June to August 2011 (see Bureau of Meteorology rainfall and temperature outlook and El Nino Southern Oscillation [ENSO] wrap-up)**

The rainfall outlook for winter across south-eastern Australia is generally neutral at 50-55% with the exception being the northeast of NSW where there is a 60-65% chance of a wetter than normal season.

There is a 60-65% chance that maximum temperatures are forecast to exceed the long-term median maximum temperatures in southwest. There is a 45% chance of exceeding maximum temperatures in the far north east while the rest of the State is forecast to be average.

There is a 60-65% chance that average minimum temperatures for winter will exceed the median minimum temperature in the south west of NSW while the rest of the coast is expected to remain average.

The 2010-11 La Niña event has ended with conditions now neutral. Climate models suggest the Pacific Ocean will continue to warm over coming months with neutral conditions likely to persist throughout winter.

**Ross Burton**  
**DIRECTOR, EMERGENCIES & ANIMAL WELFARE**  
**09 June 2011**

**Prepared by: Simon Oliver, Agricultural Protection Officer (Policy), General Emergencies Preparedness & Response**

Information sources:

### **NSW rainfall maps**

[http://www.bom.gov.au/cgi-bin/silo/rain\\_maps.cgi?map=contours&variable=totals&area=nsw&period=1month&region=nsw&time=latest](http://www.bom.gov.au/cgi-bin/silo/rain_maps.cgi?map=contours&variable=totals&area=nsw&period=1month&region=nsw&time=latest)

Rainfall outlook:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/rain.seaus.shtml>

Temperature outlook:

[http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/temps\\_ahead.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/temps_ahead.shtml)

ENSO Wrap-Up:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/>

Drought Statement:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/drought/drought.shtml>

# NSW rainfall (actual) May 2011

