

JULY 2012 AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS REPORT

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(see Dept. Primary Industries agricultural conditions map)

Area in **Drought**: 0% (no change)
Area in **Marginal**: 0% (no change)
Area in **Satisfactory**: 100% (no change)

NEW DECLARATIONS (moved into drought)

Nil

REVOCATIONS (moved out of drought)

Nil

ALTERATIONS (moved between marginal and satisfactory)

DECLINED (satisfactory to marginal)

Nil

IMPROVED (marginal to satisfactory)

Nil

RETROSPECTIVE (alterations to previous declarations)

Nil

RAINFALL FOR JULY 2012 (see Bureau of Meteorology rainfall maps)

NSW received good rainfall across most areas during June. The south eastern part of NSW generally recorded falls of up to 200 mm. The north eastern recorded falls of up to 300 mm. The western areas generally received falls between 25-50mm.

The three monthly deciles shows that the rainfall has ranged from lowest on average in parts of the south western part of NSW up to above average in the far north eastern and far south eastern parts of NSW.

The six monthly deciles shows that the rainfall has ranged from average to very much above average across NSW, except for a small section in the north eastern part, which has received below average rainfall.

The twelve monthly deciles shows that all of NSW has received average to very much above average rainfall, except for a section of the central northern part, which has received highest on record rainfall.

CROPS AND PASTURES (provided by Peter Matthews, Dept. Primary Industries, 10 July 2012)

The condition of the State's forecast 5.11 M ha winter crop is variable across the different regions following inconsistent rainfall through June. Good rainfall through July will be needed in all regions to consolidate this year's crop.

The early June rain was critical for the north-west plains where the surface soil had dried out and halted sowing operations. Further good rainfall followed in mid June for much of the central and south eastern regions of the State allowing sowing to be completed in these regions. The western Riverina and Lower Western areas are still struggling with rainfall urgently needed in early July to ensure crop establishment for later sown crops.

Except for a few fortunate areas east of Moree and in central NSW around Cowra and Grenfell districts, most areas are now looking for a good rainfall event in early July to consolidate crops and give some reprieve from the frosty conditions through June.

Regions that received better rainfalls in the first week of June were the North Western districts of Moree, Walgett, Gunnedah, Narrabri and Gunnedah (12-30 mm). The rest of the State received lighter falls but were still welcomed as it allowed sowing to continue. Central and southern eastern NSW got further good falls through mid June (10-28 mm).

In central NSW where the best rainfall for the month was recorded in the cropping regions, Forbes received 46.6 mm, Parkes 46.3 mm, Cowra 63.4 mm, Dubbo 41.6 mm and Young 56.6 mm.

Many areas across the State received below average rainfall for June. In the south, in the western Riverina and Lower Western region rainfall has continued to be scarce, with Griffith recording 12.2 mm and Deniliquin only 11.8 mm for the month of June.

Many areas have recorded severe frosts through June that has slowed both crop and pasture growth.

Pasture conditions across the State remain variable with the summer bulk now only of roughage value for stock, with supplementation necessary for any growing or breeding stock if this is the main fodder source. Pasture growth through June slowed as the drier conditions in parts of the State had an impact. Frosty conditions have also had a major impact slowing pasture growth rates also. Growers have been getting some relieve as dual purpose crops have allowed pastures to be rested for those that took the opportunity to sow these crop types earlier in the year. Reports indicate hand feeding stock is on going in the northern, central and southern regions.

Crop growth stages are variable across the State with most region having cereals from the 1-2 leaf stage up to crops that have reached the first node stage. Some early reports of canola crops in the northern and central western areas having began flowering, which is much to early for these regions and will expose these crops to potential frost damage at the critical flowering and early podding stage.

General crop health is good, with reports now just coming in of stripe rust being identified in early sown cereal crops. Black leg in canola is also an issue with most districts reporting it being present. Growers in most regions have

been proactive in black leg management with either resistant varieties used or in furrow or seed fungicides used to protect crops. We may see some applications of fungicide for blackleg management in the most severe or high risk cases.

Isolated reports of mice activity in some regions, but largely limited to around sheds and other farm facilities. No reports of crop damage by mice. Insect activity has been variable in the more favourable areas that have been receiving rain growers sowing into stubble paddocks have seen some damage by slugs, crickets, and slaters to canola crops, in rare cases some paddocks have had to have sections re-sown.

Cereal aphids have been active through early April and May and the effects are now been seen in some early sown cereal crops showing symptoms of Barley yellow dwarf virus.

Nitrogen topdressing of cereal and canola crops has commenced in the more favourable central and south eastern areas, however many of the western areas are waiting for more rainfall as the variable June conditions have slowed crop growth and dried the topsoil. Increasing the uncertainty is the current medium to long term forecast's indicating we are entering a drier cycle with El Nino conditions now being predicated by climate models for much of the State.

Weed control is ongoing in most regions, but has been hampered in the drier regions from moisture stress and by the severe frosts that reduce the effectiveness of some herbicides.

Winter crop status:

Wheat – Current estimates of 2.93 M ha are slightly down on the 2.94 M ha forecast in May. An estimated 198,300 ha remain to be sown, with the bulk of this in the north western region, which had to wait for a follow up sowing rain. Some of this area now may not be sown with the north western areas fallowed through to summer crop and areas in the central and south west long fallowed for the next winter crop. Crop establishment and growth is variable across the State, with the later sown crops struggling due to a cold frosty, drier June in some regions. The major emphasis currently is for weed control and early nitrogen applications to boost crop growth and yield potentials.

Barley – Sowing predictions of 641,540 ha are slightly down on earlier estimates of 646,270 ha. About 93% of the reported area is sown.

Oats – Predicted sowings of oats are 375,620 ha, down slightly on the May forecasts of 377,020 ha. Dual-purpose oat crops have been providing valuable feed on the slopes and tablelands, as pasture growth has been stalled by the cold, frosty, drier June.

Triticale – Planting estimates are for 118,350 ha, a slight decrease on the May forecast of 119,100 ha. Sowing is all but complete across the State. The major

production areas remain in the eastern Riverina and South West where planting conditions have been good.

Cereal Rye – Sowing predictions of 3,100 ha are down on the earlier estimate of 3,200 ha. The bulk of the cereal rye is sown in the Coonabarabran, Gunnedah, Cowra and Wellington districts.

Canola – The area sown to canola is estimated at 664,600 ha. Emergence and crop establishment have been variable due to well below average rainfall over the past three months in many areas, which dried seedbeds and resulted in staggered and patchy emergence in some crops. Some crop area will be abandoned in the Murray Valley due to extreme moisture stress. Flowering has commenced in early sown crops in the north and central west, ranging down to 4-6 leaf on crops that were sown a little later and have struggled in dry, cool/cold conditions. Soil nitrogen levels are low and topdressing is now widespread in front of the predicted rain in the first week of July. There is a full profile of soil moisture under most canola crops so yield potential is still good at this early stage of the season.

Chickpea – Estimates are for 222,095 ha, around 85% of the crop was sown by the end of June with a further 32,550 ha expected to be sown in early July. About 85% of the crop is in the north around Walgett, Moree and Coonamble, and 14% in the centre, mostly in the Macquarie Valley.

Faba bean – The final sowing estimate of 44,010 ha is down 5% on the May estimate of 44,980 ha. Around 94% of the crop is in the north with the major production area between Walgett, Moree and Coonamble. In this region crops have made good growth with early sown crops beginning flowering in mid June.

Field pea – An estimated 54,250 ha is expected to be sown this season with around 49,040 ha (90%) sown by the end of June. An increased proportion of the area in the south has been sown as a brown manure crop for weed and nitrogen management. Around 72% of the crop is in the south and 25% in the centre.

Lupin – An estimated 56,610 ha have been sown, up 10% on the May forecast or 53,500 ha. The Albus type comprises 55% of sowings, but the area sown is lower than last season.

**RAINFALL & TEMPERATURE OUTLOOK – July 2012 to September 2012
(see Bureau of Meteorology rainfall and temperature outlook and El Nino Southern Oscillation [ENSO] wrap-up)**

The chances of receiving above median rainfall during the July to September period are from 40% across most of NSW to 50% in the central part of NSW.

The chances that the average maximum temperature for July to September will exceed the long-term median maximum temperatures range from 60% along the coast and in the south eastern part of NSW up to 70% in the north western part of NSW.

The chances that the average minimum temperature for July to September will exceed the long-term median minimum temperatures range from 45% in the north eastern part of NSW up to 55% in the south western part of NSW.

Climate indicators continue to show a shift towards El Niño, in line with most model predictions. Eastern and central tropical Pacific Ocean temperatures have continued to warm over the past fortnight, while trade winds have remained weaker than normal. Likewise, the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) has become more strongly negative over the past month. Tropical Pacific Ocean observations are consistent with previous and current climate model forecasts, which have indicated that the tropical Pacific may approach or exceed El Niño thresholds sometime between mid-winter and spring 2012.

Conditions were drier than average across most of the southern part of Australia in April and May. Drier than normal late autumn-early winters have been experienced across southeast Australia for more than a decade. There has been a rainfall deficiency in the south western part of NSW over the last three months ranging from serious deficiency to severe deficiency.

WATER SUPPLIES

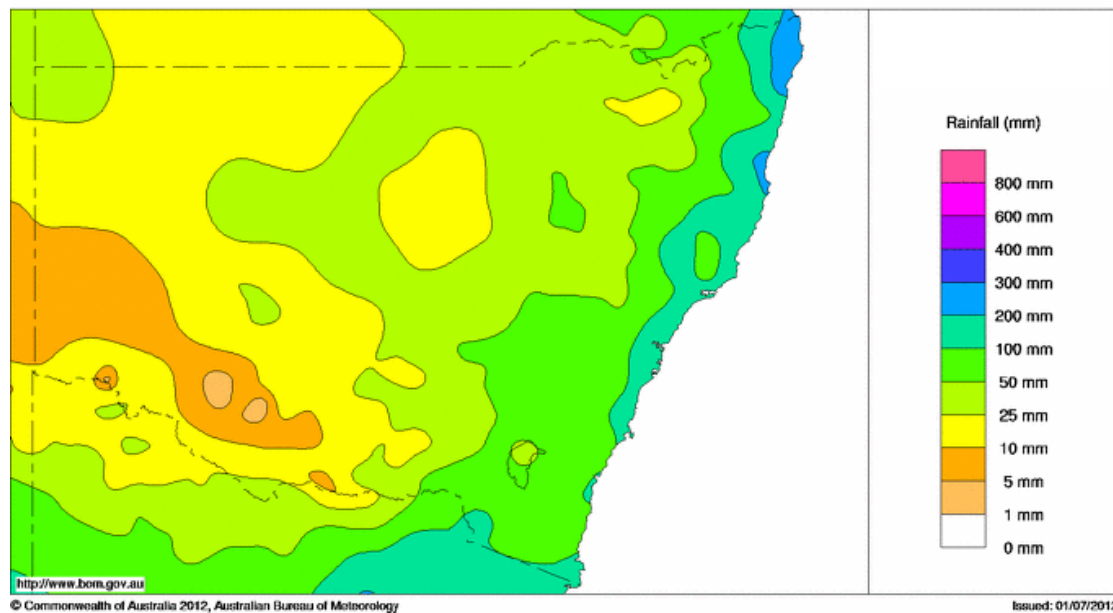
Note: The State Water Storages report is no longer produced. An updated table will now be included showing the situation for each of the major storages.

STATE WATER STORAGES

River Valley	5 June 2012	4 July 2012	Change
<i>Storage Dam, Nearest Town</i>	<i>Level %</i>	<i>Level %</i>	<i>%</i>
Border Rivers			
Pindari Dam, Inverell	95	89	(6)
Lower Darling			
Menindee Lakes, Broken Hill	unk	106	unk
Gwydir Valley			
Copeton Dam, Inverell	95	95	0
Namoi Valley			
Keepit Dam, Gunnedah	99	99	0
Split Rock Dam, Manilla	83	83	0
Chaffey Dam, Tamworth	99	100	1
Macquarie Valley			
Burrendong Dam, Wellington	102	102	0
Windamere Dam, Mudgee	58	58	0
Oberon Dam, Oberon	92	97	5
Lachlan Valley			
Wyangala Dam, Cowra	95	96	1
Carcoar Dam, Carcoar	100	unk	unk
Murrumbidgee Valley			
Burrinjuck Dam, Yass	94	94	0
Blowering Dam, Tumut	94	95	1
Murray Valley			
Dartmouth, Mitta Mitta (Vic)	84	87	3
Hume Dam, Albury	91	96	5
Hunter Valley			
Glenbawn Dam, Scone	99	100	1
Glennies Ck Dam, Singleton	99	99	0
Lostock Dam, Singleton	100	100	0
Coastal Area			
Toonumbar Dam, Kyogle	101	unk	unk
Broggo Dam, Bega	unk	unk	unk

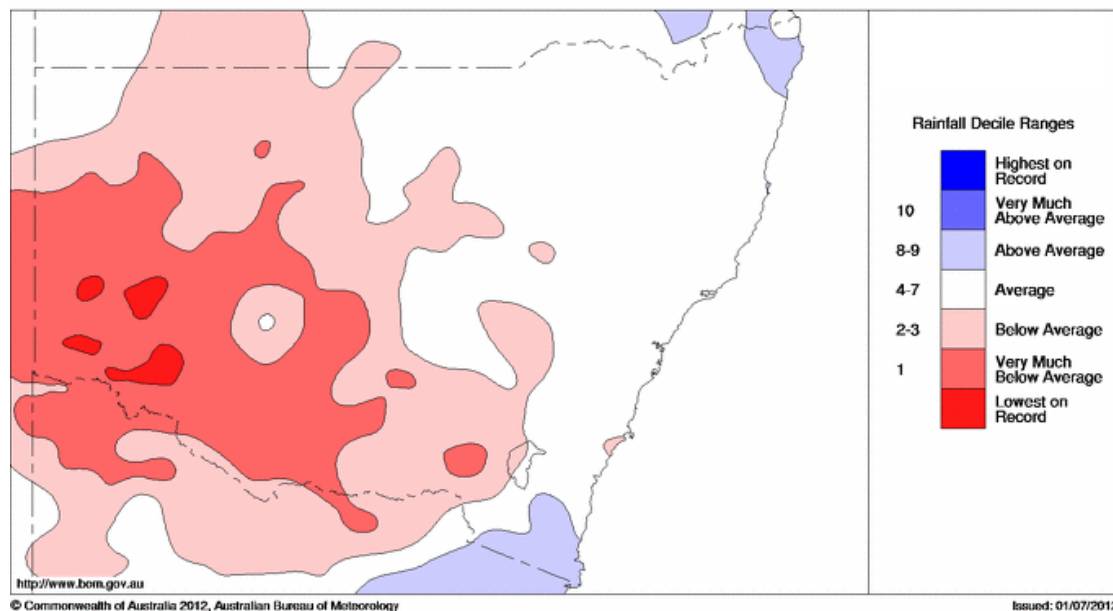
NSW rainfall (actual) June 2012

New South Wales Rainfall (mm) June 2012
Product of the National Climate Centre



NSW rainfall (3 month decile) April to June 2012

New South Wales Rainfall Deciles 1 April to 30 June 2012
Distribution Based on Gridded Data
Product of the National Climate Centre



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12 July 2012

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Information sources:

NSW rainfall maps

http://www.bom.gov.au/cgi-bin/silo/rain_maps.cgi?map=contours&variable=totals&area=nsw&period=1month®ion=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

ENSO Wrap-Up

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

Drought Statement

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

State Water Storage Report

http://waterinfo.nsw.gov.au/water.shtml?ppbm=STORAGE_SITE&da&3&dakm_url