

JUNE 2012 AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS REPORT

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(see Dept. Primary Industries agricultural conditions map)

Area in **Drought**: 0.0% (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 JUNE 2012 (see Bureau of Meteorology rainfall maps)

NSW received good rainfall across most areas during May, except the far west. The south eastern and north eastern parts of NSW generally recorded falls of up to 100 mm. The north eastern part of NSW generally recorded falls of up to 100 mm. The north western and south western parts of NSW generally received falls of up to 10 mm.

The three, six and twelve monthly deciles show that all of NSW has received average to very much above average rainfall, except for sections of the north eastern part, which has received below average rainfall, and sections in the central north that has received highest on record rainfall.

CROPS AND PASTURES (provided by Peter Matthews, Dept. Primary Industries, 7 June 2012)

Sowing of the States 5.14 M ha of winter crop is progressing, with current estimates indicating that 20% of the crop is yet to be sown. The current winter crop forecast indicates that 4.09 M ha of winter cereals and 1.05 M ha of pulses and oilseeds will be sown this year. The patchy rainfall through early May has meant the delay in planting of some crops across the State. Whilst in most areas there was good sub soil moisture, no useful rain in early May for most regions meant that the top soil had dried back, preventing sowing.

Conversely these early May dry conditions have been beneficial for harvest of summer crops allowing good paddock access and harvest conditions, particularly for cotton with it's later maturity. On the back of forecast rain in the

third week of May many growers took the opportunity to dry sow some of their remaining crop in an effort to catch up and prevent further delays in sowing.

Rainfall during late May was welcomed across the State. It consolidated crops that were sown, and will enable the bulk of the remaining crop to be sown. Further south in the western Riverina, Narrandera, Deniliquin and Griffith only recorded falls of 10-15 mm over a 4 day period. This has not been enough for many growers to restart sowing. Rain will be needed as soon as possible to allow sowing to be completed in the western Riverina.

Pasture conditions across the State deteriorated through May for much of the western regions. Summer pasture is now of very low feed quality, with growers now needing to supplement the low quality bulk on offer. Reports indicate hand feeding stock is being undertaken in the southwest, central and northern regions. Whilst winter pasture species had begun to germinate through March and April, the drier May and the drop in soil temperatures has slowed further establishment and early grow. The rain in late May for most of the State will get things moving, but in the interim hand feeding will still be needed. For growers fortunate enough to have made the decision to sow early dual purpose winter cereals, the need for hand feeding has been delayed with good quality feed being provided by these crops.

Reports of mice activity remain variable, with some reported activity around buildings, other farm infrastructure and in paddocks. Limited reports of damage to establishing crops, with isolated cases of baiting being undertaken in the central west.

Winter crop status:

Wheat – Current estimates of 2.94 M ha are 10% below the 3.24 M ha forecast for the same time last year. The drop in wheat area is tied to the continuing forecast for low wheat prices. Some areas in the State may not be sown due to the February-March floods; most of this area is confined to central NSW around Forbes and Wyalong.

Barley – Sowing predictions of 646,270 ha are down 7% on earlier forecasts of 693,950 ha.

Oats – Predicted sowings of oats are 377,020 ha, slightly down on earlier forecasts of 379,450 ha. Current estimates indicate 86% of the crop is sown, with a bigger focus this year on grazing oats crops to support livestock operations.

Triticale – Planting estimates are for 119,100 ha, a 5% reduction on the April forecast of 125,450 ha.

Canola – The area estimated to be sown to canola is 668,500 ha, 22% higher than the April forecast and easily the largest area on record. Establishment is patchy where seedbed moisture was marginal, the rain in late May has allowed most areas to finish planting.

Chickpea – Estimates are for 226,515 ha. About 15% of the crop was sown by moisture seeking down to 12-15 cm by 18 May, but following good rain across the north-west in late May, sowing restarted.

Faba bean – An estimated 46,170 ha is expected to be sown. Sowing began in the north in early April as growers capitalised on seedbed moisture and moisture-seeked crops in some cases.

Field pea – The area predicted to be sown is 55,600 ha.

Lupin – An estimated 53,500 ha has been sown. Over 90% was sown by 18 May.

Summer crop status:

Grain Sorghum – Production is estimated at 681,826 tonnes from the 163,160 ha harvested. Yields are expected to average 4.18 t/ha which is slightly higher than the previous season. Harvest is almost complete.

Maize - Harvest of the estimated 20,160 ha is expected to produce 168,640 tonnes for an above average yield of 8.37 t/ha. A mild flowering and grain filling period has led to record yields for the irrigated crop in the Riverina which is set to average 11.3 t/ha.

Mungbean - Harvest of the estimated 14,210 ha is expected to produce 12,846 tonnes for an average yield of 0.90 t/ha. Yields this season were generally disappointing with waterlogging and weeds being major constraints.

Soybean - Production is estimated at 46,410 tonnes from 21,530 ha for an average yield of 2.16 t/ha. Yields are lower than those anticipated prior to harvest and below the long-term average. Major factors for this were flooding damage on the North Coast and in the Riverina.

Sunflowers - The crop of 18,500 ha is expected to produce 26,586 tonnes for an above average yield of 1.44 t/ha.

Cotton - Picking of the 369,234 ha crop is about 85-90% complete overall. The NSW crop is expected to produce 2.71 million bales for an overall average yield of 7.34 bales/ha. The irrigated crop of 251,000 ha is averaging 8.78 bales/ha whilst the dryland crop of 118,234 ha is averaging 3.86 bales/ha. These yields are above the long-term average, with some exceptional yields of irrigated crops of 14-15 bales/ha being reported.

Rice - Riverina rice harvest is almost complete and is expected to produce a little over 900,000 tonnes. Yields have been variable and linked to the timing of low temperatures during the season. Overall industry yields are a little below the long-term average and lower than last season. Little rice was lost from the February-March flooding in the Murrumbidgee valley.

RAINFALL & TEMPERATURE OUTLOOK – June 2012 to August 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 June to August period are from 35% in the south western part of NSW up to 70% in the north eastern part of NSW.

The chances that the average maximum temperature for winter will exceed the long-term median maximum temperatures range from 50% in the north eastern part of NSW up to 70% in the south western part of NSW.

The chances that the average minimum temperature for winter will exceed the long-term median minimum temperatures range from 60% in the south western part of NSW up to 80% in the north eastern part of NSW.

Tropical Pacific climate indicators remain at neutral values for this time of the year. This includes the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI), trade winds, cloudiness, and sea surface temperatures. Ocean temperatures below the surface are currently warmer than average in the central and western Pacific on a monthly scale, with the eastern subsurface Pacific closer to normal, but slowly warming.

Climate models surveyed by the Bureau of Meteorology show that the tropical Pacific Ocean is likely to warm further over the coming months. All seven models surveyed indicate conditions are likely to approach, or possibly exceed, El Niño thresholds during the late winter to early spring period. Large parts of eastern Australia are typically drier and warmer than normal in winter/spring as El Niño events develop. No climate models favour a return to La Niña.

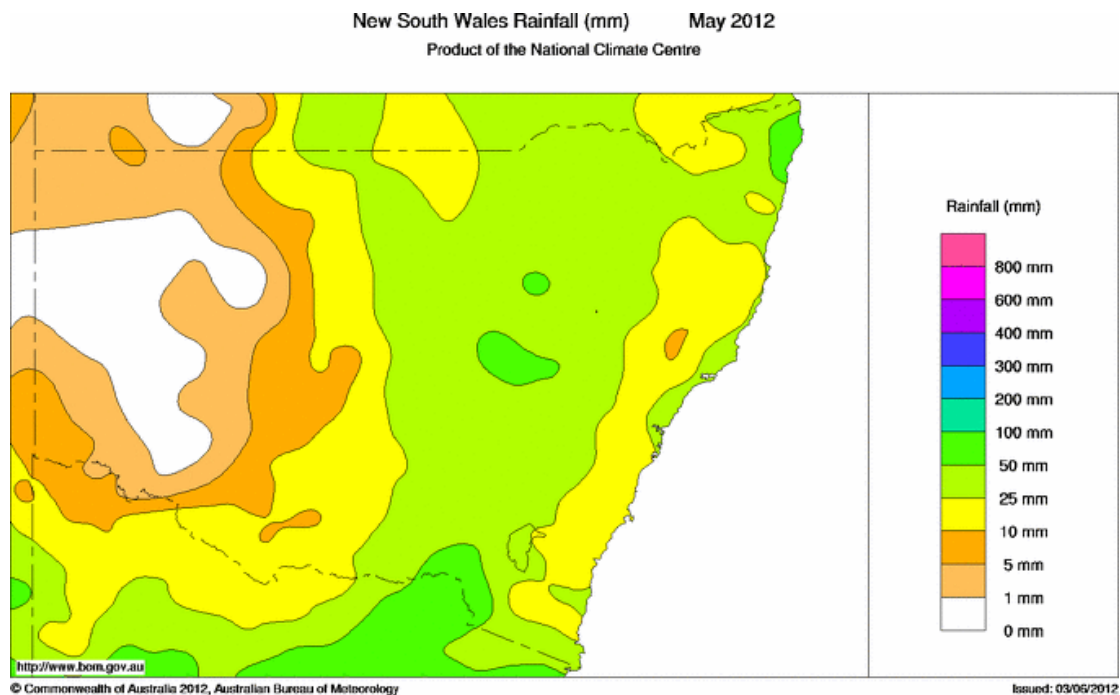
WATER SUPPLIES

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.

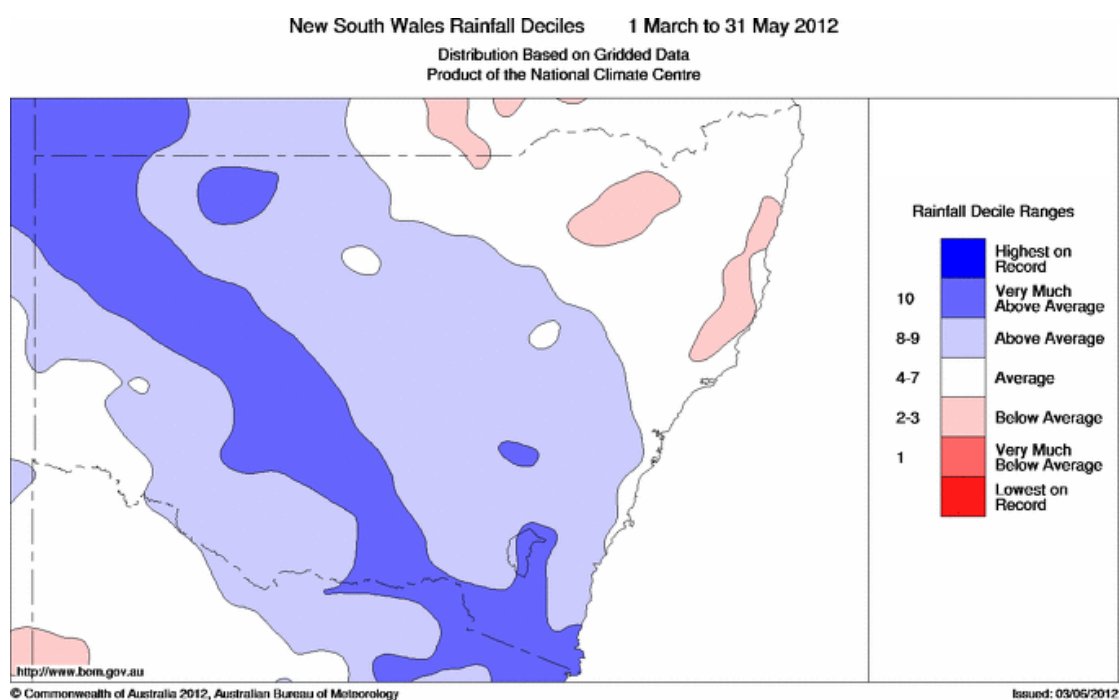
STATE WATER STORAGES

River Valley	3 May 2012	5 June 2012	Change
<i>Storage Dam, Nearest Town</i>	<i>Level %</i>	<i>Level %</i>	<i>%</i>
Border Rivers			
Pindari Dam, Inverell	97	95	(2)
Lower Darling			
Menindee Lakes, Broken Hill	unk	unk	unk
Gwydir Valley			
Copeton Dam, Inverell	97	95	(2)
Namoi Valley			
Keepit Dam, Gunnedah	99	99	0
Split Rock Dam, Manilla	83	83	0
Chaffey Dam, Tamworth	100	99	(1)
Macquarie Valley			
Burrendong Dam, Wellington	101	102	1
Windamere Dam, Mudgee	58	58	0
Oberon Dam, Oberon	90	92	2
Lachlan Valley			
Wyangala Dam, Cowra	94	95	1
Carcoar Dam, Carcoar	99	100	1
Murrumbidgee Valley			
Burrinjuck Dam, Yass	94	94	0
Blowering Dam, Tumut	94	94	0
Murray Valley			
Dartmouth, Mitta Mitta (Vic)	83	84	1
Hume Dam, Albury	87	91	4
Hunter Valley			
Glenbawn Dam, Scone	100	99	(1)
Glennies Ck Dam, Singleton	99	99	0
Lostock Dam, Singleton	100	100	0
Coastal Area			
Toonumbar Dam, Kyogle	102	101	(1)
Broggo Dam, Bega	102	unk	unk

NSW rainfall (actual) May 2012



NSW rainfall (3 month decile) March to May 2012



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15 June 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