

## NSW Seasonal Conditions Summary - May 2013

### Highlights

- Wetter conditions likely for northern & eastern NSW, normal to drier conditions in the south west.
- Cooler daytime temperatures & warmer night time temperatures likely for the north & north east. Warmer daytime temperatures likely in the south west.
- Limited rainfall in inland NSW during April. Relative monthly rainfall well below average or worse west of the divide, average along the coast. Yearly relative rainfall well below average in western & central NSW, with severe deficiencies in many areas.
- Relative April pasture growth generally well below average in central and western NSW & average to above average along the coast & eastern tablelands.
- Modelled topsoil moisture levels are extremely low over most of central & western NSW.
- Conditions have continued to deteriorate across central and western NSW. It is important that farmers have a clear plan & an understanding of their options. Considerable resources are available to assist in management. Details at

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/emergency/drought/managing>

### Summary

The outlook for NSW between May and July indicates that wetter conditions are likely for northern and eastern NSW. Near normal to slightly drier conditions are likely for far western and southern NSW.

Cooler than normal daytime temperatures are likely over this period for northern and north eastern NSW. For southern and south western NSW, warmer than normal daytime temperatures are likely. Near normal temperatures are likely in a band running from the far north west to the far south east. Warmer than normal minimum temperatures are likely for the central and northern areas of the State, and normal to cooler than normal in the south and south west.

Conditions deteriorated during the month over most of the Western, Darling, North West, Central West, Central North, Riverina and Lachlan LHPA districts, and also in areas of the Hume, Tablelands and New England. Severe rainfall deficiencies have developed in most of these districts over the last 6-12 months.

Reports from LHPA Rangers and DPI staff indicate that over much of inland NSW, conditions for winter crop sowing and for crop

and pasture growth are very poor and continuing to deteriorate. Some areas still have reasonable dry feed, but the nutritional value of this is low. While stock condition is stable in more favoured areas, this is a result of supplementary feeding and reasonable dry feed. In many areas, stock condition is declining and an increasing number of stock are being sold despite reduced prices. Stock water supplies are also declining across most of central and western NSW.

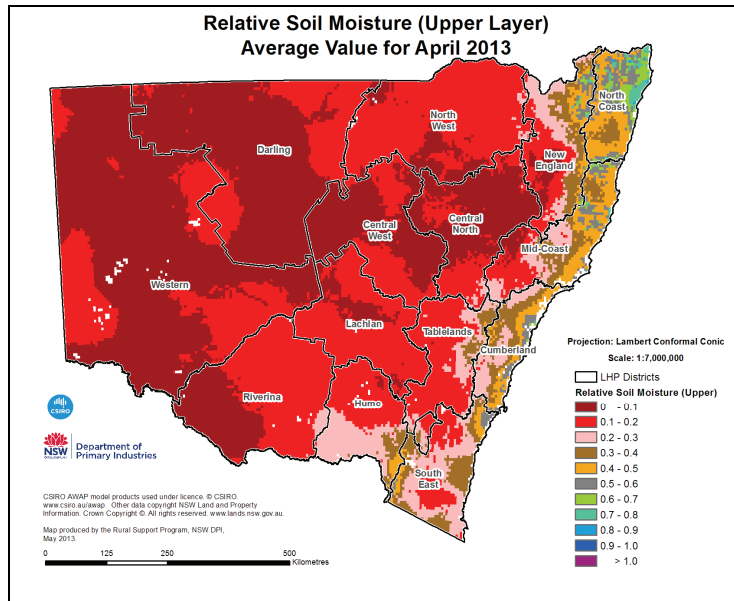
Rainfall across during April was limited west of the divide, with a large area of far western, central and north western NSW receiving no rainfall. Areas that did receive rainfall were generally limited to 1-10 mm, increasing up to 25 mm nearer to the tablelands. Coastal areas generally received between 50-200 mm with some heavy falls occurring due to a coastal low pressure system.

Relative to historical records, rainfall for April was well below average to extremely low west of the divide and along the edge of the tablelands. Relative rainfall over the coast and eastern tablelands was generally average. Relative rainfall for the last six months was well below average or worse for much of central NSW and the southern Riverina, and for most of the centre and west of the State over a 12 month period. Conditions on the coast were generally average.

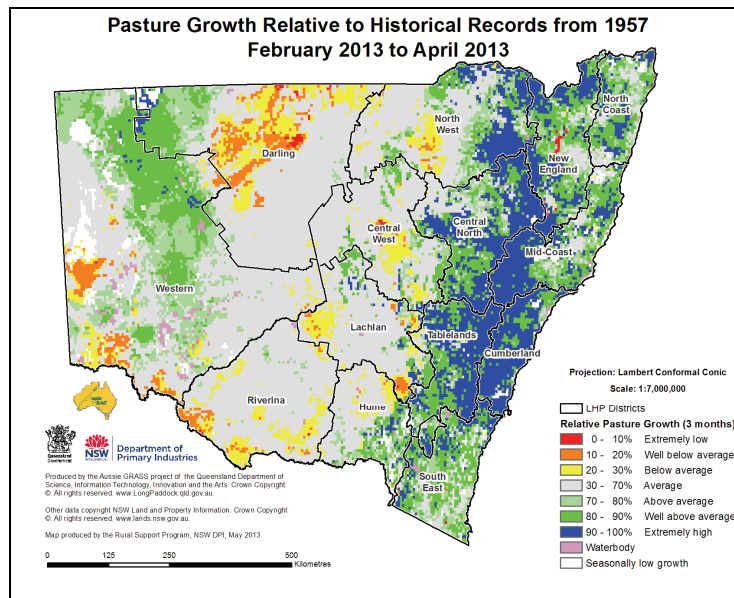
Topsoil moisture declined to very low levels across inland NSW during the month, delaying winter crop sowing and forcing many farmers to sow dry. The increases in topsoil moisture resulting from the late February/early March rainfall have largely disappeared.

Modelled pasture growth during April was variable, but generally extremely low across most of NSW. Modelled biomass levels were less than 1,000 kg/ha, with less than 500 kg/ha in central, far south west and south east NSW. Relative pasture growth for April was variable, but generally well below average for central areas of the State, and parts of the tablelands. Over the last 12 months, relative growth has been very low. Modelled relative biomass levels across central NSW were variable, with large areas being well below average. In many areas, supplementary feeding has become essential to maintain stock condition, particularly due to declines in standing feed and pasture growth.

## Relative monthly topsoil moisture



## Relative quarterly pasture growth



## More information

For more information, contact the NSW Department of Primary Industries on 02 6391 3100.

## Acknowledgments

Information used in this report was sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO, the Queensland Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts, NSW Livestock Health and Pest Authorities and the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

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