

## **AUGUST 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 July. The far south eastern and far north western parts of NSW generally recorded falls of up to 1 mm. The north eastern and south eastern parts recorded falls of up to 100 mm. The western half of NSW generally received falls between 25mm.

The three monthly deciles shows that the rainfall has ranged from very much below average in small parts of the south western part of NSW through to above average in the central north.

The six monthly deciles shows that the rainfall has ranged from below average in a small area in the central north and the far south western parts to highest on record in a small section in the central western part of the State.

The twelve monthly deciles shows that all of NSW has received average to highest on record rainfall.

### **CROPS AND PASTURES (provided by Peter Matthews, Dept. Primary Industries, 9 August July 2012)**

The condition of the States winter crop is variable across the different regions following inconsistent rainfall and cold conditions through July. Further good rainfall is needed in central and south western NSW to consolidate this year's crop.

Whilst most districts received rain through July it has been the pattern and the extremes that are causing some concern with this years winter crop.

Areas in the south west whilst they received good total rainfall for the month of July (Griffith 30.8 mm and Deniliquin 38 mm) it has been the amount and distribution of this that is still slowing crop growth and development. This rainfall has been spread across a large number of falls with most being below 4 mm, in the order of 1-2 mm. These small falls are insufficient to wet back up the soil profile and stimulate crop root growth into the deeper sub soil, where good soil water and nitrogen reserves remain. In contrast well above monthly rainfall in the north east has seen some waterlogging of paddocks, with crop being stressed. Tamworth received 91.8 mm, Gunnedah 77.4 mm, Narrabri 74.6 mm and Moree 95 mm. These condition have seen some paddock operations being delayed (weed control and fertiliser applications), on a more positive note it has kept soil profile full for this year summer crop, with the focus in these parts being cotton production.

Many areas have recorded severe frosts through July which has slowed both crop and pasture growth. The worst affected areas tend be in the central and southern regions, with temperatures as low as -4.9 'C and -4.7 'C recorded at Deniliquin and Dubbo respectively. Not only have we seen some cold conditions it has been the extended period of frosts that have slowed plant growth, with Young recording 19 days of a minimum temperature below 0 'C. This trend has continued into early August with more severe frost conditions being experienced in parts of the State.

Pasture conditions across the State are variable, growth of annual pastures have been severely stunted by the cold frosty conditions experienced in July. Native pastures are the worst affected by the frosty conditions, with improved pastures having higher growth rates. Reports indicate hand feeding stock is still common place in much of the State's cropping belt as growers look to supplement what pasture there is. Dual purpose crops were still being grazed through July, allowing growers to rest pastures and allow some growth and build up of biomass. The opportunity to graze crops is now starting to end as they move from being vegetative into the reproductive growth stages and continued grazing will damage the crops, resulting in lower crop yields. If the continued drier conditions in some part of the State continue growers may look at sacrificing some crop yield in order to continue to grow out saleable young stock.

Crop growth stages are variable across the State with most region having cereals from early tillering through to the more advance western crops of early stem elongation. Earlier sown canola crops in the western areas have began flowering, with some concern of frost damage, particularly with those that were flowering from late June and early July. Provided the good moisture condition continue in these regions any loss of flowers and early pod set can be compensated for due to the long flowering period of canola.

General crop health is good, with some reports of stripe rust being identified in early sown cereal crops. Yellow leaf spot is a concern in some wheat crops in the north eastern region from wet conducive conditions through July allowing

the disease to develop in crops sown back onto stubble. Canola crops have grown away from the early signs of blackleg lesion on leaves, with the full extent of any stem infections not being known until spring and the development of stem cankers.

Mice activity has declined, with no reports being made of activity in crop paddocks. Continued monitoring will be necessary as the weather warms up and they become active and begin to look for food.

Nitrogen topdressing of cereal and canola crops was the continuing focus for growers through July. With the variable rainfall through July some caution is being shown by growers in applying further fertiliser to crops on the back of continuing discussion of the State moving into El Nino conditions. The lack of nitrogen in cereal paddocks is now becoming evident as the crop start to build biomass and need more N than current soil reserves can supply. If growers do not continue to monitor crop nutrition and apply further nitrogen fertiliser and the season produces average rainfall conditions, crops will be nitrogen deficient and have low grain protein. Supplies of Urea is an ongoing concern in some parts, as the demand is currently exceeding supply coming into port and being able to be transported in land.

Weed control is ongoing in most regions in cereal crops, but has been hampered in the south west regions from moisture stress and severe frosts, whilst in the north eastern regions accessing paddocks is an issue given the above average rainfall in mid July. Both the frost and waterlogged conditions are affecting the effectiveness of many post emergent herbicides.

**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 30% across the western part of NSW to 50% in the eastern part of NSW.

The chances that the average maximum temperature for August to October will exceed the long-term median maximum temperatures range from 70% along the coast up to 80% across most of the northern half of NSW.

The chances that the average minimum temperature for August to October will exceed the long-term median minimum temperatures range from 60% around Sydney up to 70% across most of the western half of NSW.

Most climate indicators in the tropical Pacific Ocean remain at values near the threshold of an El Niño event. Although indicators such as the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) and trade winds are less El Niño-like than they were a month ago, ocean surface temperatures continue to show a patten, and in some places, values typical of the development stage of an El Niño. Climate models suggest weak El Niño conditions are likely to be reach some time in late winter or spring.

During El Niño events, large parts of eastern Australia are typically drier than normal during winter and spring, while southern Australian daytime temperatures tend to be warmer. However, El Niño does not guarantee widespread dry conditions.

Above-average rainfall in western NSW relieved short-term rainfall deficiencies in that region.

Serious to severe 4-month (April to July 2012) deficiencies now cover small sections in the south western part of NSW.

## WATER SUPPLIES

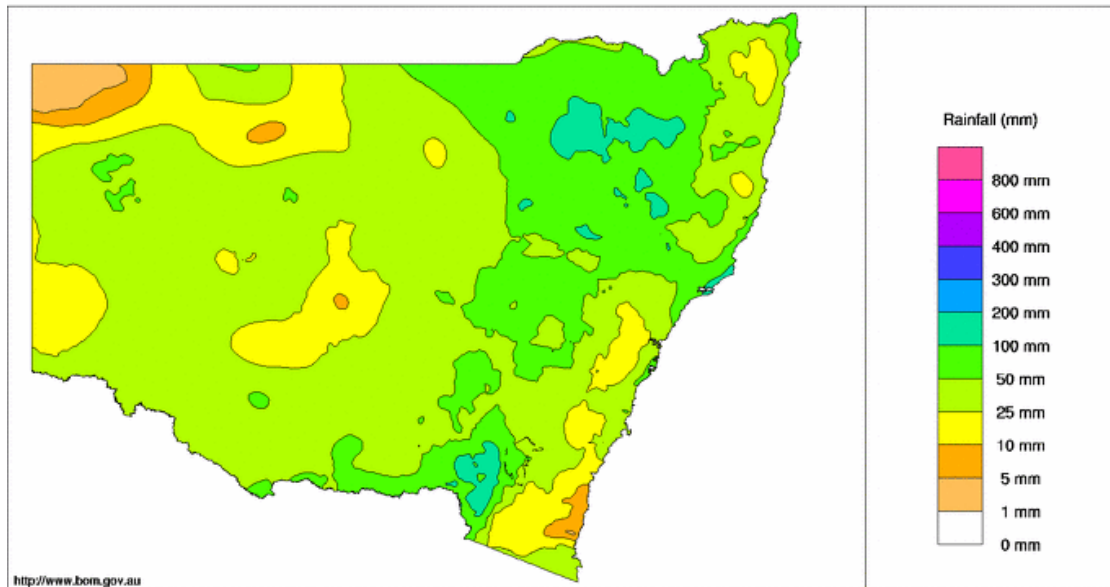
**Note:** The State Water Storages report is no longer produced. An updated table will now be included showing the situation for each of the major storages.

## STATE WATER STORAGES

River Valley	4 July 2012	6 August 2012	Change
<i>Storage Dam, Nearest Town</i>	<i>Level %</i>	<i>Level %</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Border Rivers</b>			
Pindari Dam, Inverell	89	91	2
<b>Lower Darling</b>			
Menindee Lakes, Broken Hill	106	119	13
<b>Gwydir Valley</b>			
Copeton Dam, Inverell	95	100	5
<b>Namoi Valley</b>			
Keepit Dam, Gunnedah	99	100	1
Split Rock Dam, Manilla	83	87	4
Chaffey Dam, Tamworth	100	100	0
<b>Macquarie Valley</b>			
Burrendong Dam, Wellington	102	105	3
Windamere Dam, Mudgee	58	60	2
Oberon Dam, Oberon	97	99	2
<b>Lachlan Valley</b>			
Wyangala Dam, Cowra	96	97	1
Carcoar Dam, Carcoar	unk	100	unk
<b>Murrumbidgee Valley</b>			
Burrinjuck Dam, Yass	94	97	3
Blowering Dam, Tumut	95	98	3
<b>Murray Valley</b>			
Dartmouth, Mitta Mitta (Vic)	87	91	4
Hume Dam, Albury	96	98	2
<b>Hunter Valley</b>			
Glenbawn Dam, Scone	100	101	1
Glennies Ck Dam, Singleton	99	98	(1)
Lostock Dam, Singleton	100	100	0
<b>Coastal Area</b>			
Toonumbar Dam, Kyogle	unk	101	unk
Broggo Dam, Bega	unk	101	unk

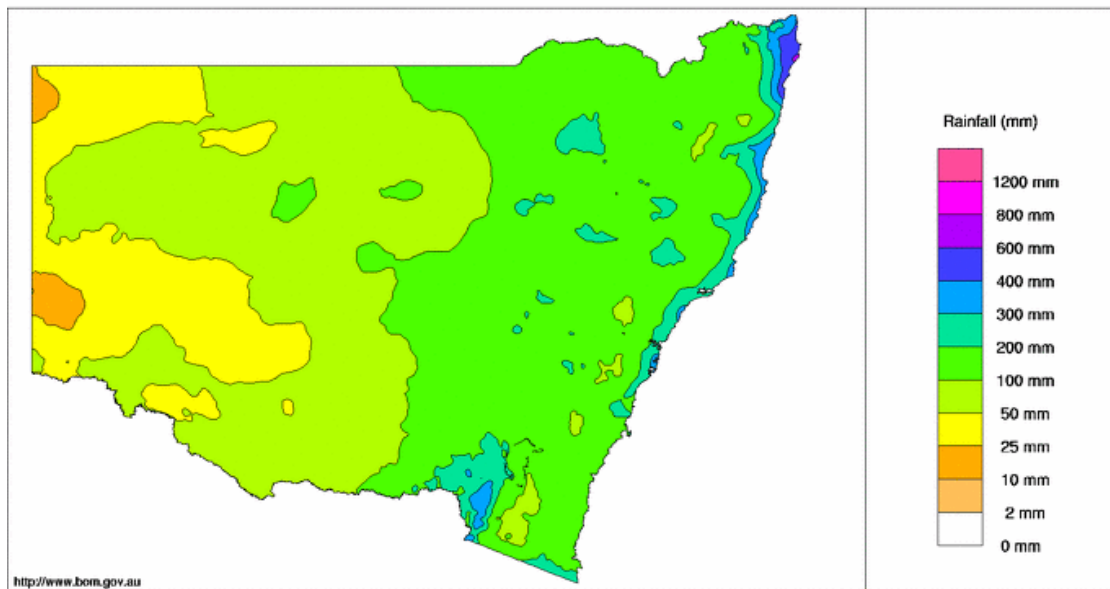
## NSW rainfall (actual) July 2012

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



## NSW rainfall (3 month decile) May to July 2012

New South Wales Rainfall Totals (mm) 1 May to 31 July 2012  
Product of the National Climate Centre



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**10 August 2012**

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**Information sources:**

**NSW rainfall maps**

<http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/rain/index.jsp?colour=colour&time=latest&step=0&map=totals&period=month&area=ns>

**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>

**State Water Storage Report**

[http://waterinfo.nsw.gov.au/water.shtml?ppbm=STORAGE\\_SITE&da&3&dakm\\_url](http://waterinfo.nsw.gov.au/water.shtml?ppbm=STORAGE_SITE&da&3&dakm_url)