Summary of key issues

- During the week ending 12 April 2017 rainfall was recorded across the Top End in the Northern Territory, the Cape York Peninsula, southern Queensland, northern and eastern New South Wales and in south-eastern South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania.

- During the week ending 11 April 2017 maximum and minimum temperatures were close to average across most of Australia.

- According to the Australian Plague Locust Commission, locust populations remained at low densities in most regions during March 2017. There is a low probability of swarm infestations during autumn and a low risk of widespread nymph infestations developing during spring.

- Neutral El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) conditions are expected to continue until at least June, with an increasing chance for El Niño conditions developing by August.

- The forecast for the next eight days indicates that rainfall totals in excess of 15 millimetres are mainly expected in Victoria, adjacent parts of southern New South Wales, and northern and eastern South Australia. Similar totals are forecast for central Western Australia, western and northern Tasmania, and southern parts of the Northern Territory. The highest totals are expected in parts of tropical northern Australia, with weekly rainfall totals to exceed 100 millimetres in parts of the Top End.

- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) decreased during the week ending 13 April 2017 by 342 gigalitres (GL) to 15,180 GL and are at 67 per cent of total capacity.

- In New South Wales there has been slight increases in general security water allocations in the Lachlan and Gwydir valleys.

- USDA estimates of global soybean stocks and exports in 2016–17 were revised upwards.

- Brazilian sugar exports are up 14 per cent year on year.

- Saleyard trade lamb prices achieved record highs in Victoria and New South Wales.

- The ratio of anhydrous milk fat to skim milk powder prices reached its highest ever level.
1. Climate

1.1. Rainfall this week

During the week ending 12 April 2017 rainfall was recorded across the Top End in the Northern Territory, the Cape York Peninsula, southern Queensland, northern and eastern New South Wales and in south-eastern South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania. Little to no rainfall was recorded across the remainder of country. The highest recorded weekly total was 281 millimetres at Maningrida airport, 400 kilometres east of Darwin in the Northern Territory.

The rainfall analyses and associated maps utilise data contained in the Bureau of Meteorology climate database, the Australian Data Archive for Meteorology (ADAM). The analyses are initially produced automatically from real-time data with limited quality control. They are intended to provide a general overview of rainfall across Australia as quickly as possible after the observations are received.


Rainfall for the week ending 12 April 2017
1.2. Temperature anomalies this week

During the week ending 11 April 2017 maximum temperatures were close to average across most of Australia, with parts of far western Western Australia recording maximum temperatures of between 4°C and 6°C above average. Minimum temperatures were generally close to average across most of Australia.

Maximum temperature anomalies for the week ending 11 April 2017

Minimum temperature anomalies for the week ending 11 April 2017

Note: Spatial temperature analyses are based on historical weekly temperature data provided by the Bureau of Meteorology. These temperature anomaly maps show the departure of the maximum and minimum temperatures from their long-term averages. Temperature anomalies are calculated using high-resolution gridded datasets from 1911 onwards. For further information go to http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/temp/index.jsp.
1.3. **Australian plague locust**

The Australian Plague Locust Commission (APLC) produces a monthly *Locust Bulletin* during the periods of locust activity (spring, summer and autumn). The bulletin gives regional summaries of the locust situation and weather events of potential significance for locust development. It also provides a forecast of likely developments for the next two months for the Australian plague locust (*Chortoicetes terminifera*), spur-throated locust (*Austracris guttulosa*) and the migratory locust (*Locusta migratoria*).

According to the APLC, Australian plague locust populations remained at low densities in most regions during March 2017. However, medium density adult populations were maintained in the Far North region of South Australia and in parts of Southwest Queensland following breeding in late January. Few nymphs were recorded during March, reflecting limited egg laying during February. Due to unsuitable breeding habitat conditions there are unlikely to be significant numbers of nymphs in most regions during April or May. Most eggs laid in autumn will enter diapause dormancy and not hatch until spring.

The outlook for the remainder of autumn is for locust population densities to remain low in most regions of New South Wales and Queensland. In South Australia adult numbers are likely to decline to low densities, although medium density populations could breed in parts of the Northeast and Western Agricultural regions. There is a low probability of swarm infestations in any state during autumn. Consequently, there is a low risk of widespread nymph infestations during spring.


![Australian plague locust distribution](image-url)

---

**Australian plague locust distribution**

1 March to 4 April 2017

Densities estimated for areas of locust habitat, based on current surveys and reports from current and previous month.

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Issued: 04/04/2017
1.4. **Rainfall forecast for the next 8 days**

The forecast for the next eight days indicates that rainfall totals in excess of 15 millimetres are mainly expected in Victoria, adjacent parts of southern New South Wales, and northern and eastern South Australia (see map below). Similar totals are forecast for central Western Australia, western and northern Tasmania, and southern parts of the Northern Territory. The highest totals are expected in parts of tropical northern Australia, with weekly rainfall totals to exceed 100 millimetres in parts of the Top End. These falls are associated with a tropical low off the Top End coast. This rainfall forecast is produced from computer models. As it contains no input from weather forecasters, it is important to check local forecasts and warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology.

*Total forecast rainfall (mm) for the period 13 to 20 April 2017*

1.5. **El Niño–Southern Oscillation Update**

Ocean conditions in the far eastern Pacific have warmed over the past weeks and international climate models suggest continued warming during the coming months. The Bureau of Meteorology’s [ENSO Outlook](#) status remains at El Niño WATCH. This means there is around a 50 per cent chance of El Niño developing in 2017, which is approximately twice the normal likelihood. However, caution is warranted as models have lower accuracy at this time of year and there is a wide spread in forecast outcomes.

El Niño is often, but not always associated with below average winter–spring rainfall over eastern Australia and warmer than average winter–spring maximum temperatures over the southern half of Australia.
2. Water

2.1. Water availability

Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) decreased during the week ending 13 April 2017 by 342 gigalitres (GL) to 15,180 GL and are at 67 per cent of total capacity. This is 37 percentage points or 8,346 GL more than at the same time last year.

Information on irrigation water available in the Murray–Darling Basin from 1 January 2001 to 13 April 2017 is shown above. The top horizontal (short dash) line indicates the storage level during a similar time last year. The bottom horizontal (long dash) line indicates the amount of ‘dead’ or unusable storage.
2.2. Water availability

The current water allocations for the 2016–17 water trading season for licence holders in New South Wales, Victorian and South Australian water systems are summarised in the following table.

- In New South Wales there has been slight increases in general security allocations in the Lachlan and Gwydir valleys.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New South Wales</th>
<th>Allocations at 13 April 2017 (%)</th>
<th>16 February 2017 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General security</td>
<td>High security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Murray Valley*</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Murrumbidgee Valley*</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Lower Darling*</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Macquarie and Cudgegong Valley*</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Hunter Valley</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Lachlan Valley*</td>
<td>129%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Lower Namoi*</td>
<td>125%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Upper Namoi*</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Gwydir Valley*</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Border Rivers*</td>
<td>100%/80%/80%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Peel Valley</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low reliability*</td>
<td>High reliability*</td>
<td>Low reliability*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Murray Valley</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Goulburn</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Campaspe</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Loddon</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Bullarook</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Broken</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High security</td>
<td></td>
<td>High security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia Murray Valley*</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Carryover water may also be available

a General Security A class. b General Security B class.
3. Commodities

3.1. Market focus

Oilseeds
The USDA released its latest World Agricultural Supply and Demand estimates on 11 April. Global oilseed production was revised upward based on higher expected soybean production from Latin America. World exports were also revised upward in recognition of increased supply.

Sugar
The Brazilian Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade reported raw sugar exports in 2016–17 (April to March) reached 28.7 million tonnes, 14 per cent higher than in 2015–16. This rise reflects a 14 per cent increase in sugar production in Brazil’s South-Central region, to around 35.6 million tonnes.

Sheep
Saleyard trade lamb prices reached record highs in Victoria and New South Wales at 679 and 687 cents a kilogram, respectively, in the week ending 7 April. Record prices were a result of strong restocker demand for flock rebuilding in response to greatly improved seasonal conditions. Processor and export demand has remained firm.

Dairy
The price of anhydrous milk fat (AMF) rose 2 per cent to US$5,936 a tonne at the Global Dairy Trade (GDT) auction event on 4 April 2017, while the price of skim milk powder fell by 2 per cent to US$1,913 a tonne. The ratio of AMF to skim milk powder is currently at the highest level since these products began trading on the GDT in 2010 (Figure 1). This divergence of milk fat to solids-not-fat follows large exportable surpluses of skim milk powder, particularly in the European Union, and strong global demand for milk fat.

![Figure 1 Ratio of AMF and SMP prices on GDT, March 2010 to April 2017](source: Global Dairy Trade)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Week ended</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Latest price</th>
<th>Price week prior</th>
<th>Weekly change</th>
<th>Price 12 months prior</th>
<th>Year on year change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected World Indicator Prices</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian Dollar - AUD/USD Exchange Rate</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>US$/A$</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat - US no. 2 hard red winter wheat, fob Gulf</td>
<td>11-Apr</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse Grains - US no. 2 yellow corn, fob Gulf</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola - Rapeseed, Europe, fob Hamburg</td>
<td>11-Apr</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>424</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton - Cotlook 'A' Index</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>USc/lb</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar - Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no.11 contract</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>USc/lb</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool - Eastern Market Indicator</td>
<td>06-Apr</td>
<td>Ac/kg clean</td>
<td>1,459</td>
<td>1,502</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>1,270</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool - Western Market Indicator</td>
<td>07-Apr</td>
<td>Ac/kg clean</td>
<td>1,459</td>
<td>1,488</td>
<td>-2%</td>
<td>1,309</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected domestic crop indicator prices</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milling Wheat - ASW1, track quote, Port Adelaide, SA</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>-25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed Wheat - General purpose, Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>-21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed Barley - Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>-16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola - Portland, Vic.</td>
<td>10-Apr</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Sorghum - Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>12-Apr</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected domestic livestock indicator prices</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef - Eastern Young Cattle Indicator</td>
<td>07-Apr</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>576</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton - Mutton indicator (18-24 kg fat score 2-3), Vic</td>
<td>07-Apr</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb - Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator</td>
<td>06-Apr</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>681</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig - Eastern Seaboard (60.1-75 kg), average of buyers &amp; sellers</td>
<td>31-Mar</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>-2%</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat - Eastern States (12.1-16 kg)</td>
<td>03-Apr</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>-2%</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live cattle - Light steers ex Darwin to Indonesia</td>
<td>01-Apr</td>
<td>Ac/kg lwt</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live sheep - Live wether (Muchea WA saleyard) to Middle East</td>
<td>03-Apr</td>
<td>$/head</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Week ended</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Latest price</td>
<td>Price week prior</td>
<td>Weekly change</td>
<td>Price 12 months prior</td>
<td>Year on year change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
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<td>-------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy - Whole milk powder</td>
<td>04-Apr</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>2,924</td>
<td>2,855</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2,013</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy - Skim milk powder</td>
<td>04-Apr</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>1,913</td>
<td>1,948</td>
<td>-2%</td>
<td>1,721</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy - Cheddar cheese</td>
<td>04-Apr</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>3,288</td>
<td>3,406</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>2,778</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy - Anhydrous milk fat</td>
<td>04-Apr</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>5,936</td>
<td>5,799</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3,203</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Global Dairy Trade prices are updated twice monthly on the first and third Tuesday of each month.
3.2. Selected world indicator prices

World wheat indicator price
US No. 2, hard red winter wheat, fob Gulf
Week ended 11 April 2017

World coarse grains indicator price
US corn No. 2, fob Gulf
Week ended 12 April 2017

World carola indicator price
Europe fob Hamburg
Week ended 11 April 2017

World cotton indicator price
Cotlook 'A' index
Week ended 12 April 2017
3.3. Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices

Whole milk powder price
4 April 2017

Skim milk powder price
4 April 2017

Cheddar cheese price
4 April 2017

Anhydrous milk fat price
4 April 2017
3.4. **Selected domestic crop indicator prices**

- **Grain sorghum indicator price**
  - Sydney, NSW
  - Week ended 12 April 2017

- **Feed barley indicator price**
  - Sydney, NSW
  - Week ended 12 April 2017

- **Feed wheat indicator price**
  - General Purpose, Sydney, NSW
  - Week ended 12 April 2017

- **Milling wheat indicator price**
  - ASW1, track quote, Port Adelaide, SA
  - Week ended 12 April 2017
Canola indicator price
Portland, Victoria
Week ended 10 April 2017

A$/t

Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec

2015 2016 2017
3.5. Selected domestic livestock indicator prices

- **Eastern Young Cattle Indicator**
  - Week ended 7 April 2017

- **Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator**
  - Week ended 6 April 2017

- **Mutton indicator price in Victoria**
  - (18–24 kg fat score 2–3)
  - Week ended 7 April 2017

- **Pig Indicator price Eastern Seaboard**
  - (60.1–75 kg)
  - Week ended 31 March 2017
3.6. Movements in selected fruit and vegetable prices – week ended 14 April 2017
4. Data attribution

Climate
Bureau of Meteorology

Water
New South Wales
Queensland
- Sunwater: www.sunwater.com.au
- Seqwater: http://seqwater.com.au
South Australia
- South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources: www.environment.sa.gov.au
Victoria
- Goulburn–Murray Water: www.g-mwater.com.au

Commodities
Fruit and vegetables
- Datafresh: www.freshstate.com.au

Pigs
- Australian Pork Limited: www.australianpork.com.au

Canola
- Weekly Times: hardcopy

Dairy

World wheat, canola
- International Grains Council

World coarse grains
- United States Department of Agriculture

World cotton
- Cotlook: www.cotlook.com/

World sugar
- New York Stock Exchange - Intercontinental Exchange

Wool

Milling wheat
- ProFarmer

Domestic wheat, barley, sorghum
- The Land: hardcopy or online at www.theland.farmonline.com.au/markets

Domestic canola
- The Weekly Times: hardcopy

Cattle, beef, mutton, lamb, goat and live export