Summary of key issues

- During the week ending 21 February 2018 rainfall was recorded in western, northern and eastern Australia and isolated parts of south-eastern Australia.
- Tropical Cyclone Kelvin brought rainfall totals exceeding 400 millimetres to the western Top End of the Northern Territory and the Kimberley region of Western Australia, with isolated totals up to 100 millimetres extending all the way through central Western Australia.
- Maximum temperatures were 2°C to 8°C above average across north eastern Australia during the week ending 20 February 2018. The highest anomalies (4°C to 8°C) were recorded in northern New South Wales, Queensland, north eastern South Australia and south eastern South Australia.
- The Australian Plague Locust Commission report that very low locust population level during spring continued in December and January. No high density locusts have been detected or reported, despite rainfall producing short-lived favourable habitat conditions in many areas.
- During the next eight days rainfall is expected in all states and territories, with the heaviest falls forecast across the north eastern half of Australia.
- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) decreased during the week ending 22 January 2018 by 247 gigalitres (GL) to 12,873 GL and are at 57 per cent of total capacity. This is 16 percentage points or 3,658 GL less than at the same time last year.
- Allocation prices in the southern Murray–Darling Basin decreased in the week ending 22 February 2018 to $99 per ML. This is a decline of $7 from the same time last week.

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Australia’s premier information and networking forum for public and private sector decision makers in agriculture. 6-7 March, Canberra. Visit www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/outlook
1. Climate

1.1. Rainfall this week

During the week ending 21 February 2018 rainfall was recorded in western, northern and eastern Australia and isolated parts of south-eastern Australia. Tropical Cyclone Kelvin brought rainfall totals exceeding 400 millimetres to the western Top End of the Northern Territory and the Kimberley region of Western Australia, with isolated totals up to 100 millimetres extending all the way through central Western Australia. Rainfall totals exceeding 100 millimetres were also recorded in northern and the eastern half of Queensland. Totals between 10 and 50 millimetres were observed in isolated parts of eastern New South Wales, eastern Victoria, southern South Australia and Tasmania. The highest recorded weekly total was 576 millimetres at West Roebuck near Broome in the northern Western Australia.

Rainfall for the week ending 21 February 2018

Note: 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. For further information go to http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/rainfall/
1.2. Temperature anomalies this week

For the week ending 20 February 2018, maximum temperatures were 2°C to 8°C above average across north eastern Australia, with the highest anomalies (4°C to 8°C) recorded in northern New South Wales, Queensland, north eastern South Australia and south eastern South Australia. Maximum temperatures were -2°C to -6°C below average around Wyndham in northern Western Australia. Minimum temperatures were generally close to average for most of the country, although they were above average (2°C to 6°C) across inland parts of Queensland and the Northern Territory.

**Maximum temperature anomalies for the week ending 20 February 2018**

![Temperature Anomaly Map](image1.png)

**Minimum temperature anomalies for the week ending 20 February 2018**

![Temperature Anomaly Map](image2.png)

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 the average over the 1961 to 1990 reference period. For further information go to: [http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/temp/index.jsp](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 (or from autumn to spring) for the Australian plague locust (*Chortoicetes terminifera*), spur-throated locust (*Austracris guttulosa*), and the migratory locust (*Locusta migratoria*).

According to the APLC, the very low locust population level during spring continued in December and January. No high density locusts have been detected or reported, despite rainfall producing short-lived favourable habitat conditions in many areas. Low numbers of locusts were recorded in the Riverina, Far West and Far Southwest of New South Wales, and the Central West, South Central and Central Highlands regions of Queensland during January. Small increases in population density were detected in the Central Highlands and South Central regions of Queensland. Although some localised low density breeding is likely to have occurred in other regions areas during December and January, most habitats dried out rapidly and extreme temperatures are likely to have caused increased mortality of nymphs and adults.

The outlook for February and autumn is for population densities to remain generally low in most regions of inland eastern Australia. Breeding is likely to continue during February and autumn, but given the current low population level there is a low risk of widespread regional infestations developing, and a very low risk of swarms affecting any agricultural region during autumn. The probability of a significant autumn nymph generation has declined, although localised higher density populations could develop if widespread heavy rainfall occurs during February.


*Australian Plague Locust Distribution 1 to 31 January 2018*
1.4. **Rainfall forecast for the next eight days**

Rainfall is expected in all states and territories during the next eight days, with the heaviest falls forecast across the north eastern half of Australia. Parts of northern Queensland are expected to record rainfall totals in excess of 400 millimetres due to a number of low pressure systems and troughs passing during the week. Rainfall totals between 50 and 100 millimetres are predicted in the Northern Territory and northern Western Australia. Rainfall up to 50 millimetres are expected across southern Queensland, northern and eastern New South Wales and Tasmania.

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 22 February to 1 March 2018**
2. Water

2.1. Water availability

Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) decreased during the week ending 22 February 2018 by 247 gigalitres (GL) to 12,873 GL and are at 57 per cent of total capacity. This is 16 percentage points or 3,658 GL less than at the same time last year.

Information on water available in dams used for irrigation in the Murray–Darling Basin from 1 January 2001 to 22 February 2018 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 allocations

On 15 February 2018 the Resource Manager for Northern Victoria announced seasonal determination increases of:

- 3 per cent for Victoria Campaspe low reliability to 55 per cent

The current water allocations for the 2017–18 water trading season for licence holders in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia water systems are summarised in the following table and charts.

### Water allocations in the Murray–Darling Basin (NSW, Victoria and South Australia)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allocations at</th>
<th>22 February 2018</th>
<th>15 February 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New South Wales</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Murray</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Murrumbidgee</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Lower Darling</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Macquarie and Cudgegong</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Hunter</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Lachlan</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Lower Namoi</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Upper Namoi</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Gwydir</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Border Rivers</td>
<td>100%(a)/19.62%(b)</td>
<td>100%(a)/19.62%(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Peel</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victoria</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Murray</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Goulburn</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Campaspe</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria Loddon</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</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><strong>South Australia</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia Murray</td>
<td>Class 3a/3b</td>
<td>Class 3a/3b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia Murray</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Select water allocation percentages in the southern Murray–Darling Basin

NSW Murray general security

Allocation (%)

01 Jul 01 Sep 01 Nov 01 Jan 01 Mar 01 May 01 Jul

2005 2008

NSW Murrumbidgee general security

Allocation (%)

01 Jul 01 Sep 01 Nov 01 Jan 01 Mar 01 May 01 Jul

2005 2008

Victorian Murray high reliability

Allocation (%)

01 Jul 01 Sep 01 Nov 01 Jan 01 Mar 01 May 01 Jul

2008
2.3. Water markets

Allocation prices in the southern Murray–Darling Basin decreased in the week ending 22 February 2018 to $99 per ML. This is a decline of $7 from the same time last week. This contrasts with an average price of $104 in January across the whole southern MDB, and $70 during the same time last year.

The trades shown reflect market activity and do not encompass all register trades. The price line reflects locally fitted price values for the entire southern Murray–Darling Basin. Data shown is current until 22 February 2018. Trade activity is shown as colour density.

| Allocation trade prices, southern Murray–Darling Basin trade zones (price per ML) |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
|                                                  | Southern MDB  | Victoria Goulburn | SA Murray | NSW Murrumbidgee | Victoria Murray | NSW Murray |
| Current week: 16/02/18 – 22/02/18                 | $99.37        | $81.71        | $120.00    | $137.36    | $107.12      | $109.28    |
| Last week: 09/02/18 – 15/02/18                   | $106.32       | $80.42        | $108.46    | $127.36    | $107.77      | $107.62    |
| December 2017                                    | $103.88       | $80.07        | $108.62    | $123.27    | $111.41      | $110.82    |
| December 2016                                    | $69.64        | $66.99        | $117.20    | $40.38     | $70.26       | $71.53     |
### 3. Commodities

<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>21-Feb</td>
<td>US$/A$</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>1% ↑</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>3% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat – US no. 2 hard red winter wheat, fob Gulf</td>
<td>20-Feb</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↑</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>12% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse Grains – US no. 2 yellow corn, fob Gulf</td>
<td>21-Feb</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola – Rapeseed, Europe, fob Hamburg</td>
<td>20-Feb</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↑</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>-4% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton – Cotlook 'A' Index</td>
<td>21-Feb</td>
<td>USc/lb</td>
<td>86.8</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↓</td>
<td>84.7</td>
<td>2% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar – Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no.11 contract</td>
<td>21-Feb</td>
<td>USc/lb</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>-1% ↓</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>-35% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool – Eastern Market Indicator</td>
<td>15-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg clean</td>
<td>1,812</td>
<td>1,818</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↓</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>26% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool – Western Market Indicator</td>
<td>09-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg clean</td>
<td>1,921</td>
<td>1,819</td>
<td>6% ↑</td>
<td>1,472</td>
<td>31% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selected domestic crop indicator prices</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milling Wheat – ASW1, track quote, Port Adelaide, SA</td>
<td>20-Feb</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>30% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed Wheat – General purpose, Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>21-Feb</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>31% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed Barley – Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>21-Feb</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>48% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola – Portland, Vic.</td>
<td>19-Feb</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>-2% ↓</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>-4% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Sorghum – Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>21-Feb</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>26% ↑</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>15-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>-2% ↓</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>-18% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton – Mutton indicator (18–24 kg fat score 2–3), Vic</td>
<td>16-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>-3% ↓</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>-22% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb – Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator</td>
<td>15-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>-5% ↓</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>-9% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig – Eastern Seaboard (60.1–75 kg), average of buyers &amp; sellers</td>
<td>09-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>-24% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat – Eastern States (12.1–16 kg)</td>
<td>19-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>478</td>
<td>-3% ↓</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>-28% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live cattle – Light steers ex Darwin to Indonesia</td>
<td>17-Feb</td>
<td>Ac/kg lwt</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>-15% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live sheep – Live wether (Mulchea WA saleyard) to Middle East</td>
<td>12-Feb</td>
<td>$/head</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>-20% ↓</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>-12% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Week ended</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Latest price</td>
<td>Price week prior</td>
<td>Weekly change</td>
<td>Price 12 months prior</td>
<td>Price 12 months prior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy – Whole milk powder</td>
<td>20-Feb</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>3,246</td>
<td>3,226</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
<td>3,189</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy – Skim milk powder</td>
<td>20-Feb</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>1,832</td>
<td>1,932</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>2,574</td>
<td>-29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy – Cheddar cheese</td>
<td>20-Feb</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>3,686</td>
<td>3,739</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>3,590</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy – Anhydrous milk fat</td>
<td>20-Feb</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>6,458</td>
<td>6,581</td>
<td>-2%</td>
<td>5,693</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

- World wheat indicator price
  US No. 2, hard red winter wheat, fob Gulf
  Week ended 20 February 2018

- World coarse grains indicator price
  US corn No. 2, fob Gulf
  Week ended 21 February 2018

- World canola indicator price
  Europe fob Hamburg
  Week ended 20 February 2018

- World cotton indicator price
  Cotlook ‘A’ index
  Week ended 21 February 2018
2.5. Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices

**Whole milk powder price**
20 February 2018

**Skim milk powder price**
20 February 2018

**Anhydrous milk fat price**
20 February 2018

**Cheddar cheese price**
20 February 2018
2.6. Selected domestic crop indicator prices

Grain sorghum indicator price
Sydney, NSW
Week ended 21 February 2018

Feed barley indicator price
Sydney, NSW
Week ended 21 February 2018

General wheat indicator price
General Purpose, Sydney, NSW
Week ended 21 February 2018

Milling wheat indicator price
ASW1, track quote, Port Adelaide, SA
Week ended 20 February 2018
2.7. Selected domestic livestock indicator prices

Eastern Young Cattle Indicator
Week ended 15 February 2018

Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator
Week ended 15 February 2018

Mutton indicator price in Victoria
(18–24 kg fat score 2–3)
Week ended 16 February 2018

Pig indicator price Eastern Seaboard
(60.1–75 kg)
Week ended 9 February 2018
2.8. Selected fruit and vegetable prices – week ended 17 February 2018
3. 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

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