Summary of key issues

- During the week ending 5 September 2018 rainfall was restricted to the east, and far south and west of the country. Rainfall totals of between 10 and 50 millimetres were recorded across parts of eastern New South Wales, southern and eastern Victoria, parts of eastern Queensland, the south and east of South Australia, southern Western Australia and western Tasmania.

- In cropping regions, rainfall totals of between 10 and 50 millimetres were recorded for parts of northern New South Wales, central Queensland, the far south-west of Victoria, western and central areas of South Australia and the south and west of Western Australia. For remaining cropping, weekly rainfall totals generally ranged from 1 to 10 millimetres.

- Winter 2018 was Australia’s fifth warmest winter on record for the country as a whole; the national monthly mean maximum temperature was 1.23 °C above average.

- Rainfall in August 2018 was generally below average to average across much of Australia. Nationally, August rainfall was 26 per cent below the 1961 to 1990 average.

- Winter 2018 was particularly dry across much of central and eastern Australia. Nationally it was the 14th-driest winter on record, and the eighth-lowest on record for New South Wales.

- Relative lower layer soil moisture in August 2018 was extremely low to well below average for much of New South Wales, eastern and northern Victoria, southern Queensland, parts of eastern South Australia, parts of central and northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

- Low rainfall during August 2018 exacerbated existing rainfall deficiencies over much of the southeast of the mainland. Year to date rainfall show significant dryness across the southeast of mainland Australia. Consequently, deficiencies have continued, intensified and expanded over most of New South Wales and southern Queensland.

- During the next eight days, rainfall is expected across eastern and southern Australia.

- In cropping regions, rainfall totals of between 0 and 10 millimetres are forecast for northern and western New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia during the next eight days. Heavier falls of between 10 and 25 millimetres are forecast for cropping regions in eastern New South Wales.

- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) increased during the week ending 6 September 2018 by 17 gigalitres (GL) to 12,363GL and are at 55 per cent of total capacity. This is 19 percentage points or 4,334 GL less than at the same time last year.

- Allocation prices in the southern Murray-Darling Basin declined in the week ending 6 September 2018 to $309 per ML. This is a decrease of $24 from the same time last week.
1. Climate

1.1. Rainfall this week

During the week ending 5 September 2018 little to no rainfall was recorded across much of mainland Australia, with falls restricted to the east, and far south and west of the country. Rainfall totals of between 10 and 50 millimetres were recorded across parts of eastern New South Wales, southern and eastern Victoria, parts of eastern Queensland, the south and east of South Australia, southern Western Australia and western Tasmania.

Higher rainfall totals in excess of 50 millimetres were recorded across isolated areas of north-eastern New South Wales. The highest recorded weekly total was 204 millimetres at Ballina Airport, in north-eastern New South Wales.

In cropping regions, rainfall totals of between 10 and 50 millimetres were recorded for parts of northern New South Wales, central Queensland, the far south-west of Victoria, western and central areas of South Australia and the south and west of Western Australia. For remaining cropping, weekly rainfall totals generally ranged from 1 to 10 millimetres.

Rainfall analysis for the week ending 5 September 2018
1.2. Seasonal temperatures

Winter 2018 was Australia’s fifth warmest winter on record in terms of maximum temperatures for the country as a whole; the national monthly mean maximum temperature was 1.23 °C above average. Almost the entire country recorded warmer than average days overall. It was amongst the warmest ten winters on record for Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and the Northern Territory. In contrast, most of mainland Australia saw slightly below average overnight temperatures, with only Tasmania recording above average overnight temperatures for winter.

### Maximum temperature deciles for winter 2018

![Maximum temperature deciles for winter 2018](image)

### Minimum temperature deciles for winter 2018

![Minimum temperature deciles for winter 2018](image)

Note: Maximum and minimum temperatures for winter 2018 compared with temperature recorded for that period during the historical record (1900 to present). For further information go to: [http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awa_temp/index.jsp](http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awa_temp/index.jsp).
1.3. Monthly rainfall

Rainfall in August 2018 was generally below average to average across much of Australia. Nationally, August rainfall was 26 per cent below the 1961 to 1990 average. Severely deficient to below average rainfall was recorded across large areas of Queensland, southern and western New South Wales, eastern Victoria, northern Western Australia and the south of the Northern Territory. In contrast, above average to extremely high rainfall was recorded in western South Australia, south-western Western Australia and parts of northern Australia. The remainder of the country recorded average August rainfall.

August 2018 rainfall in cropping regions was generally average in northern New South Wales, Victoria, eastern South Australia and Queensland. Average to extremely high rainfall was recorded in Western Australia and on the Eyre and Yorke Peninsulas in South Australia. However, rainfall was extremely low to well below average in southern cropping regions in New South Wales.

Rainfall percentiles for August 2018

Source: Bureau of Meteorology
Note: Rainfall for August 2018 is compared with rainfall recorded for that period during the historical record (1900 to present). For further information, go to http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/
1.4. Seasonal rainfall

Winter 2018 was particularly dry across much of central and eastern Australia. Nationally it was the 14th-driest winter on record, and the eighth-lowest on record for New South Wales. Rainfall for the season was below average for north-eastern Western Australia, much of the Northern Territory, the northern and eastern areas of South Australia, most of Queensland and New South Wales, and northern and eastern Victoria.

For each of the individual months of winter, rainfall has been below average across much of eastern mainland Australia. July was exceptionally dry for New South Wales with over 80 per cent of the state recording extremely low rainfall and as a whole the state observed its fifth-driest July on record. Numerous stations observed record low July rainfall across the State.

In contrast, much of the south-western Victoria, central and north-western Queensland, southern and western South Australia, Tasmania and the east of the Northern Territory recorded average to above average winter rainfall.

Nationally, the most notable rainfall event was towards the end of the season when a complex area of low pressure moved across drought affected areas of inland Queensland and New South Wales producing moderate falls over southern Queensland and parts of northern and central New South Wales. Totals in excess of 70 millimetres were recorded at some locations and were sufficient to result in a slight easing of rainfall deficiencies throughout those areas.

In the cropping regions, winter 2018 rainfall was average to above average in Western Australia, variable in Queensland, below average to average in Victoria and South Australia and extremely low across much of New South Wales.

Rainfall percentiles for winter 2018 (1 June to 31 August 2018)

Source: Bureau of Meteorology

Note: Rainfall for June to August 2018 is compared with rainfall recorded for that period during the historical record (1900 to present). For further information, go to http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/
1.5. Monthly soil moisture

Relative upper layer soil moisture in August 2018 was well below average to extremely low across large areas of New South Wales and Queensland, parts of eastern Victoria, northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory. Upper layer soil moisture was generally average to well above average across north-eastern New South Wales, the remainder of Victoria, the southeast of Queensland, South Australia, southern Western Australia, Tasmania and scattered areas of northern Australia.

In cropping regions, upper layer soil moisture was predominantly average in cropping regions in north-eastern New South Wales, Victoria, eastern South Australia and Queensland. It was generally above average to well above average in cropping regions in Western Australia and in the Eyre and Yorke Peninsula regions of South Australia. In southern and central cropping regions in New South Wales relative upper layer soil moisture was extremely low to well below average.

**Modelled upper layer soil moisture for August 2018**

[Map showing soil moisture conditions]

Source: Bureau of Meteorology (Australian Water Resources Assessment Landscape model)

Note: This map shows the levels of modelled upper layer soil moisture (0 to 10 centimetres) during August 2018. This map shows how modelled soil conditions during August 2018 compare with August conditions modelled over the reference period (1911 to 2015). Dark blue areas on the maps were much wetter in August 2018 than during the same period over the reference period. The dark red areas were much drier than during the reference period. The bulk of plant roots occur in the top 20 centimetres of the soil profile. Soil moisture in the upper layer of the soil profile is therefore the most appropriate indicator of the availability of water, particularly for germinating plants. The lower layer soil moisture is a larger, deeper store that is slower to respond to rainfall and tends to reflect accumulated rainfall events over longer time periods.
Relative lower layer soil moisture for August 2018 was extremely low to well below average across much of New South Wales, eastern and northern Victoria, southern Queensland, parts of eastern South Australia, parts of central and northern Western Australia and the Northern Territory. It was average to extremely high in southern Victoria, much of northern Queensland, southern and western South Australia, the remainder of Western Australia and Tasmania.

In cropping regions, lower layer soil moisture was generally extremely low to well below average in most cropping regions in New South Wales, northern and eastern Victoria, and the eastern Eyre Peninsula and upper north cropping regions of South Australia. It was generally average for most cropping regions in Western Australia, south-western Victoria, and much of the Eyre and Yorke Peninsulas in South Australia.

Modelled lower layer soil moisture for August 2018

Source: Bureau of Meteorology (Australian Water Resources Assessment Landscape model)
Note: This map shows the levels of modelled lower layer soil moisture (10 centimetres to 1 metre) during August 2018. This map shows how modelled soil conditions during June 2018 compare with August conditions modelled over the reference period (1911 to 2015). Dark blue areas on the maps were much wetter in August 2018 than during the same period over the reference period. The dark red areas were much drier than during the reference period. The bulk of plant roots occur in the top 20 centimetres of the soil profile. Soil moisture in the upper layer of the soil profile is therefore the most appropriate indicator of the availability of water, particularly for germinating plants. The lower layer soil moisture is a larger, deeper store that is slower to respond to rainfall and tends to reflect accumulated rainfall events over longer time periods.
1.6. Rainfall deficiencies

The rainfall deficiencies presented below are sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology’s monthly ‘Drought Statement’. As short to longer-term deficiencies become evident the Bureau of Meteorology monitors these events through their lifecycle – from emergence through to their dissipation – with the time-period of analysis each month increasing from a fixed starting point to the easing of the deficiencies.

For further information, go to http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/drought

Low rainfall during August 2018 has exacerbated rainfall deficiencies already being seen over much of the southeast of the mainland.

Year to date rainfall deciles (1 January 2018 to 31 August 2018) show significant dryness across the southeast of mainland Australia. Consequently, deficiencies have continued, intensified and expanded over most of New South Wales and southern Queensland. Areas of lowest on record rainfall have enlarged in north-western and central New South Wales. However, recent rainfall has seen a lessening of deficiencies through southern South Australia and to a lesser extent along the southwest coast of Western Australia.

Serious to severe rainfall deficiencies continue to persist at longer timescales. For the 17-months starting in April 2017, serious to severe rainfall deficiencies are evident across most of the northern two-thirds of New South Wales except the north coast, eastern Victoria, parts of eastern South Australia, southern and central Queensland, and coastal areas of the western and southern Western Australia.

Some areas of northern inland and the southeast coast of New South Wales and central Queensland have registered lowest on record rain for the 17-months from April 2017 to August 2018 (Bureau of Meteorology ‘Drought Statement’, 5 September 2018).

Rainfall deficiencies for the 8-month period 1 January 2018 to 31 August 2018

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Issued: 04/09/2018
Rainfall deficiencies for the 16-month period 1 April 2017 to 31 August 2018

Rainfall Deficiencies: 17 months
1 April 2017 to 31 August 2018
Distribution Based on Gridded Data
Australian Bureau of Meteorology

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Issued: 04/09/2018
1.7. **Rainfall forecast for the next eight days**

During the next eight days, rainfall is expected across eastern and southern Australia. Little to no rainfall is forecast across the remainder of the country.

Rainfall totals of between 10 and 50 millimetres are forecast for parts of eastern New South Wales, central and alpine regions of Victoria, isolated areas of eastern Queensland, the far south-east of South Australia, the far southwest of Western Australia, and western and northern Tasmania. Heavier falls in excess of 50 millimetres are forecast for parts of western Tasmania.

In cropping regions, rainfall totals of between 0 and 10 millimetres are forecast for northern and western New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia during the next eight days. Heavier falls of between 10 and 25 millimetres are forecast for cropping regions in eastern New South Wales.

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 6 to 13 September 2018*
2. Water

2.1. Water storages, water markets and water allocations - current week

Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) increased during the week ending 6 September 2018 by 17 gigalitres (GL) to 12,363 GL and are at 55 per cent of total capacity. This is 19 percentage points or 4,334 GL less than at the same time last year.

Water storages in the Murray-Darling Basin, 2001–2018

Allocation prices in the southern Murray-Darling Basin declined in the week ending 6 September 2018 to $309 per ML. This is a decrease of $24 from the same time last week. This contrasts with an average price of $316 in August across the whole southern MDB, and $133 during August 2017.

Allocation trade activity, All

Note: The trades shown reflect estimated 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 Thursday 6 September 2018. Trade activity is shown as colour density.

To access the full interactive weekly water dashboard, which contains the latest and historical water storage, water market and water allocation information, please visit http://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/publications/weekly_update/weekly-update-060918
# 3. Commodities

## Selected World Indicator Prices

<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>Australian Dollar – AUD/USD Exchange Rate</td>
<td>05-Sep</td>
<td>US$/A$</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-1% ↓</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-10% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat – US no. 2 hard red winter wheat, fob Gulf</td>
<td>04-Sep</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>1% ↑</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>21% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse Grains – US no. 2 yellow corn, fob Gulf</td>
<td>05-Sep</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>1% ↑</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>6% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola – Rapeseed, Europe, fob Hamburg</td>
<td>04-Sep</td>
<td>US$/t</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↑</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton – Cotlook 'A' Index</td>
<td>05-Sep</td>
<td>USc/lb</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↓</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>12% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar – Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no.11 contract</td>
<td>05-Sep</td>
<td>USc/lb</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>4% ↑</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>-24% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool – Eastern Market Indicator</td>
<td>30-Aug</td>
<td>Ac/kg clean</td>
<td>2,090</td>
<td>2,068</td>
<td>1% ↑</td>
<td>1,558</td>
<td>34% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool – Western Market Indicator</td>
<td>24-Aug</td>
<td>Ac/kg clean</td>
<td>2,255</td>
<td>2,279</td>
<td>-1% ↓</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>34% ↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Selected domestic crop indicator prices

<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>Milling Wheat – ASW1, track quote, Port Adelaide, SA</td>
<td>04-Sep</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>-2% ↓</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>59% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed Wheat – General purpose, Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>05-Sep</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>67% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feed Barley – Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>05-Sep</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>67% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola – Portland, Vic.</td>
<td>03-Sep</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↓</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>14% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Sorghum – Sydney, NSW</td>
<td>05-Sep</td>
<td>A$/t</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>31% ↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Selected domestic livestock indicator prices

<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>Beef – Eastern Young Cattle Indicator</td>
<td>30-Aug</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>5% ↑</td>
<td>553</td>
<td>-12% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutton – Mutton indicator (18–24 kg fat score 2–3), Vic</td>
<td>31-Aug</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>10% ↑</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>16% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lamb – Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator</td>
<td>30-Aug</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>878</td>
<td>843</td>
<td>4% ↑</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>39% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pig – Eastern Seaboard (60.1–75 kg), average of buyers &amp; sellers</td>
<td>24-Aug</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>&lt;1% ↑</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>-10% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goat – Eastern States (12.1–16 kg)</td>
<td>03-Sep</td>
<td>Ac/kg cwt</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>568</td>
<td>-5% ↓</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>15% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live cattle – Light steers ex Darwin to Indonesia</td>
<td>01-Sep</td>
<td>Ac/kg lwt</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0% ●</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>-9% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live sheep – Live wether (Muckea WA saleyard) to Middle East</td>
<td>14-May</td>
<td>$/head</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>-18% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Week ended</td>
<td>Unit</td>
<td>Latest price</td>
<td>Price week prior</td>
<td>Weekly change</td>
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<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices  
Dairy – Whole milk powder      | 04-Sep     | US$/t| 2,821        | 2,883            | -2% ↓         | 3,100                 | -9% ↓               |
| Dairy – Skim milk powder       | 04-Sep     | US$/t| 2,005        | 1,951            | 3% ↑          | 1,944                 | 3% ↑                |
| Dairy – Cheddar cheese         | 04-Sep     | US$/t| 3,631        | 3,484            | 4% ↑          | 4,118                 | -12% ↓              |
| Dairy – Anhydrous milk fat     | 04-Sep     | US$/t| 5,316        | 5,321            | <1% ↓         | 6,405                 | -17% ↓              |

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

World wheat indicator price
US No. 2, hard red winter wheat, fob Gulf
Week ended 4 September 2018

World coarse grains indicator price
US corn No. 2, fob Gulf
Week ended 5 September 2018

World canola indicator price
Europe fob Hamburg
Week ended 4 September 2018

World cotton indicator price
Cotlook ‘A’ index
Week ended 5 September 2018
3.2. Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices

Whole milk powder price 4 September 2018

Skim milk powder price 4 September 2018

Cheddar cheese price 4 September 2018

Anhydrous milk fat price 4 September 2018
3.3. **Selected domestic crop indicator prices**

- **Grain sorghum indicator price**
  - Sydney, NSW
  - Week ended 5 September 2018

- **Feed barley indicator price**
  - Sydney, NSW
  - Week ended 5 September 2018

- **Feed wheat indicator price**
  - General Purpose, Sydney, NSW
  - Week ended 5 September 2018

- **Milling wheat indicator price**
  - ASW1, track quote, Port Adelaide, SA
  - Week ended 4 September 2018
3.4. Selected domestic livestock indicator prices

- Eastern Young Cattle Indicator
  Week ended 30 August 2018

- Eastern States Trade Lamb Indicator
  Week ended 30 August 2018

- Mutton indicator price in Victoria
  (18–24 kg fat score 2–3)
  Week ended 31 August 2018

- Pig indicator price Eastern Seaboard
  (60.1–75 kg)
  Week ended 24 August 2018
3.5. Selected fruit and vegetable prices – week ended 6 September 2018

Weekly wholesale prices for blueberry, pineapple (smoothleaf), watermelon (seedless) & banana (cavendish)

Weekly wholesale prices for kiwifruit (hayward), strawberry, apple (royal gala) & avocado (hass)

Weekly wholesale prices for onion (brown), cauliflower, potato (white, brushed) & tomato (field gourmet)

Weekly wholesale prices for broccoli, lettuce (iceberg), pumpkin (grey bulk) & bean (round stringless)
4. Data attribution

Climate
Bureau of Meteorology
• Monthly and last 3-months rainfall percentiles: www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/rain/index.jsp
• Seasonal outlook: www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary/
• Soil moisture: www.bom.gov.au/water/landscape/

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
• Meat and Livestock Australia: www.mla.com.au/Prices-and-markets