Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

ABARES

Weekly Australian Climate, Water and Agricultural Update

No. 15/2026 23 April 2026

Summary of key issues

- In the week ending 22 April 2026, rainfall was recorded across the north-east of the country, as well as scattered areas of the southeast and southwest.
- Most cropping regions of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia saw little to no rainfall, with exceptions in northern Queensland where between 10-50 millimetres was observed.
    - Mainly dry conditions across Queensland and New South Wales are expected to support the harvest of late summer crops.
    - Across south-eastern and south-western regions, the mainly dry conditions would have provided unimpeded field access for the sowing of early canola and dual purpose crops (for forage and grain) such as oats, barley and vetch.
- Over the 8 days to 30 April 2026 **low pressure systems** are expected to bring rainfall to isolated parts of Australia, with conditions being broadly dry:
    - Low rainfall (0-10 millimetres) is forecast for Queensland, with 0-5 millimetres expected in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia. Falls of up to 25 millimetres are forecast for western regions of Western Australia.
    - If realised, falls across Western Australia are expected to support the germination and growth of early sown winter crops and provide a timely boost to soil moisture levels and encourage further plantings.
- The national rainfall outlook for May to July 2026 indicates an increased probability of below median rainfall across much of eastern and south-eastern Australia.
    - These expected below average falls represent an increased downside production risk for the upcoming 2026–27 winter cropping season and autumn pasture growth.
- Water storage levels in the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) decreased by 105 gigalitres (GL) between 16 April 2026 and 23 April 2026. The current volume of water held in storages is 10,156 GL, equivalent to 46% of total storage capacity. This is 14% or 1,629 GL less than the same time last year. Water storage data is sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology.
- Allocation prices in the Victorian Murray below the Barmah Choke increased from $381/ML on 16 April 2026 to $400/ML on 23 April 2026. Trade from the Goulburn to the Murray is closed. Trade downstream through the Barmah Choke is open. Trade from the Murrumbidgee to the Murray is open.

1. Climate

1.1. Rainfall this week

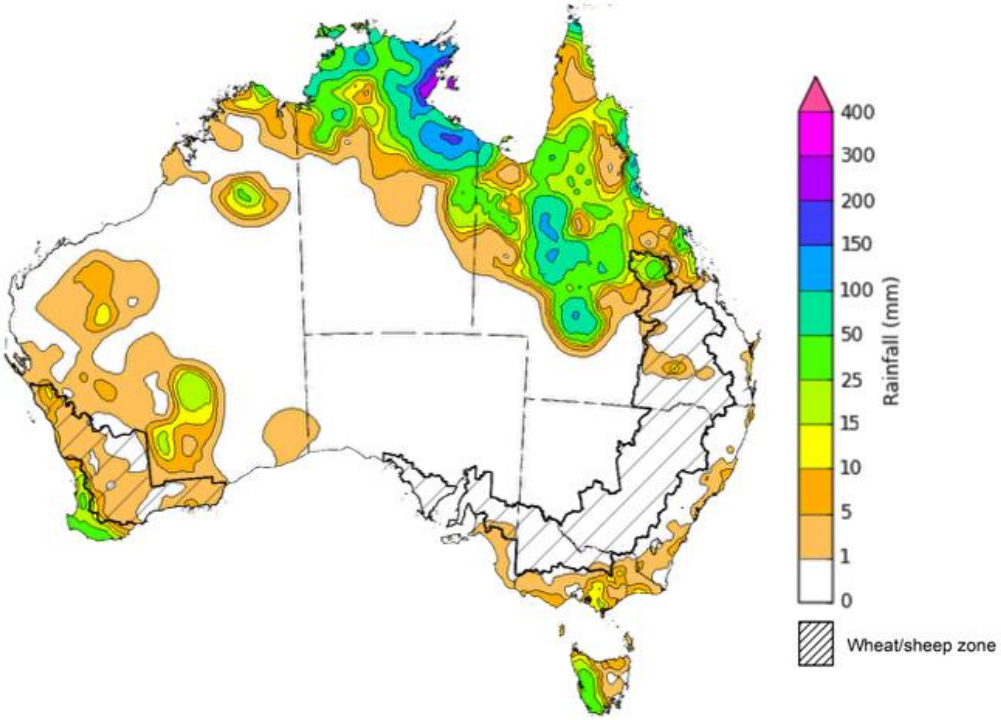
In the week ending 22 April 2026, rainfall was mainly recorded across the north-east of the country, as well as scattered areas of the southeast and southwest.

- In parts of northern and central Queensland, and the north of the Northern Territory, falls of between 5-100 millimetres were recorded. Northern Western Australia saw lower falls of 10-50 millimetres in scattered areas. Isolated parts of the Northern Territory saw up to 300 millimetres.
- In Tasmania, falls of up to 50 millimetres were observed in western regions. Meanwhile, falls of between 5-50 millimetres were recorded across scattered areas of southwest Western Australia and southern Victoria.
- Much of Queensland, New South Wales, the south of the Northern Territory, South Australia and the remainder of Western Australia and Victoria remained largely dry.

Across cropping regions, rainfall was broadly low.

- Most cropping regions of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia saw little to no rainfall, with exceptions in northern Queensland where between 10-50 millimetres was observed. In Western Australia, falls of 1-10 millimetres were recorded across most cropping regions.
    - Mainly dry conditions across much of Queensland and New South Wales are expected to support the harvest of late summer crops.
    - Across south-eastern and south-western regions, the mainly dry conditions would have provided unimpeded field access for the sown of early canola and dual purpose (forage and grain) crops such as oats, barley and vetch.

Rainfall for the week ending 22 April 2026



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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. Rainfall forecast for the next eight days

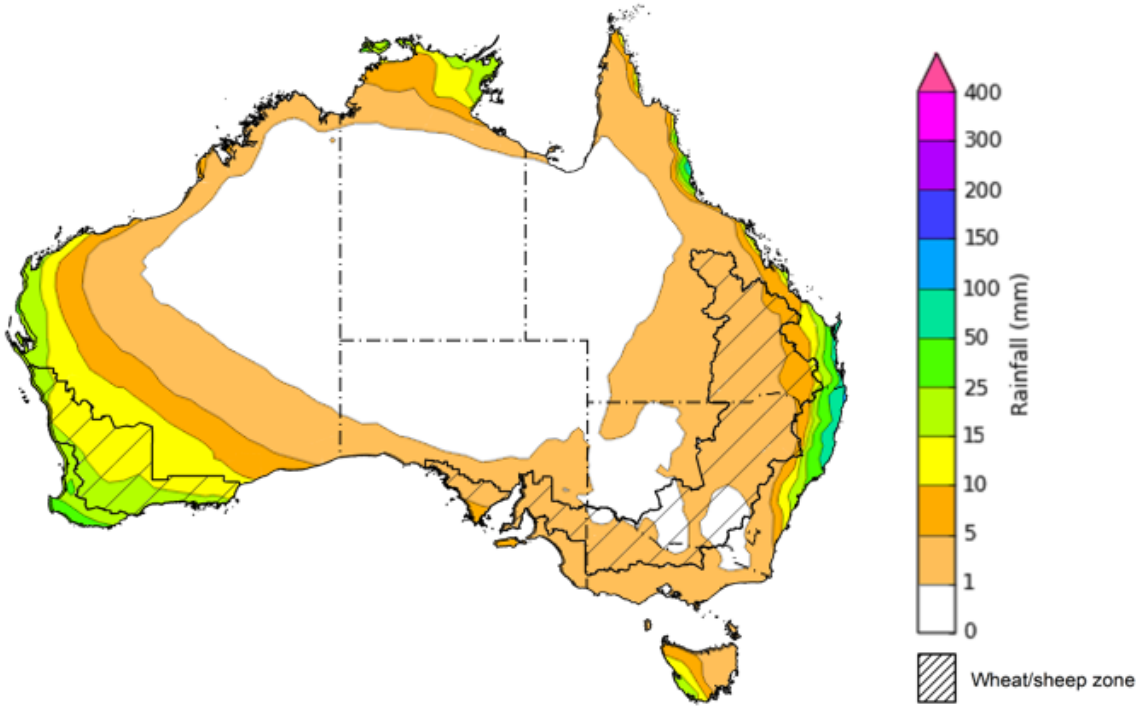
Over the 8 days to 30 April 2026, **low-pressure systems** are expected to bring rainfall to parts of the north, east and southwest. However, much of the remainder of Australia is forecast to remain largely dry.

- Falls of between 10-100 millimetres are forecast for north-eastern New South Wales and southeast Queensland, while southwest Western Australia is likely to see 10-50 millimetres. Isolated areas of Tasmania and the Northern Territory are forecast to see falls of up to 25 millimetres.
- Remaining regions are likely to see little to no rainfall.

Rainfall totals across many cropping regions over the coming week are forecast to be low, with exceptions in Western Australia.

- Low rainfall totals (0-10 millimetres) are forecast for Queensland, with 0-5 millimetres expected in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia
- Falls of up to 25 millimetres are forecast for western regions of Western Australia.
    - If realised, these falls are expected to support the germination and growth of early sown winter crops and provide a timely boost to soil moisture levels and encourage further plantings.

Total forecast rainfall for the period 23 April to 30 April 2026



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Note: This rainfall forecast is produced from computer models. As the model outputs are not altered by weather forecasters, it is important to check local forecasts and warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology.

1.3. National Climate Outlook

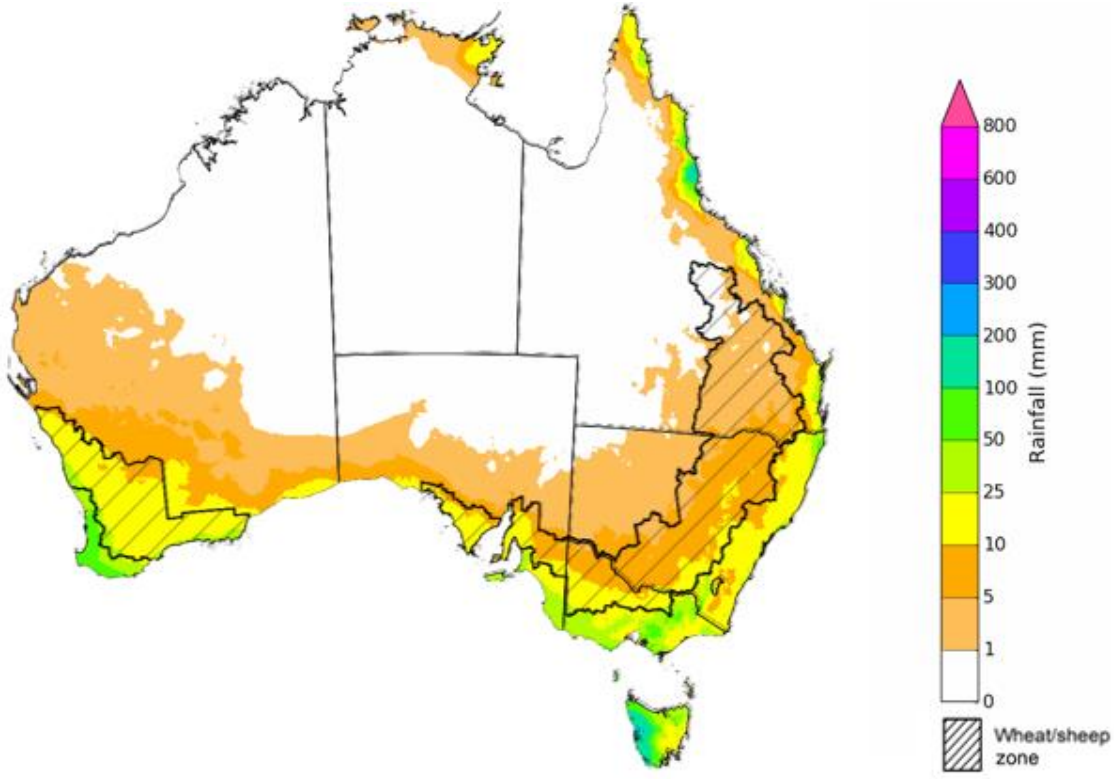
The Bureau of Meteorology has indicated that the 2025–26 La Niña has concluded. All models, including the Bureau of Meteorology's, forecast the tropical Pacific to continue warming in the coming months. Neutral El Niño–Southern Oscillation conditions are expected to persist until at least late autumn, with all models indicating warming to levels consistent with El Niño by the end of winter. There is some variation across models in the rate at which El Niño thresholds may be reached, with some suggesting development as early as May, while others show a slower warming with thresholds not met until late August. The Southern Annular Mode (SAM) is currently neutral and is forecast to remain neutral over the coming weeks. Similarly, the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) has returned to neutral conditions but is expected to reach positive values over the winter season.

The most recent rainfall outlook for May 2026 provided by the Bureau of Meteorology indicates that most of Australia is more likely to see below median rainfall, with parts of central Western Australia more likely to see close to median falls.

The Bureau of Meteorology's climate model indicates a 75% chance of May rainfall totals between 5-100 millimetres across Victoria and much of south-western Western Australia. In the east, including coastal parts of Queensland, and eastern and southern New South Wales, falls of 5-50 millimetres are expected. Similar falls are also expected for southern South Australia. Much of central and northern Western Australia, the Northern Territory, western Queensland, northern South Australia, and western parts of New South Wales are likely to see little to no rainfall.

Across south-eastern and western cropping regions, there is a 75% chance of receiving rainfall totals of between 5-25 millimetres during May 2026. Across most cropping regions in Queensland and northern New South Wales there is a 75% chance of receiving rainfall totals of between 0-10 millimetres.

Rainfall totals that have a 75% chance of occurring in May 2026



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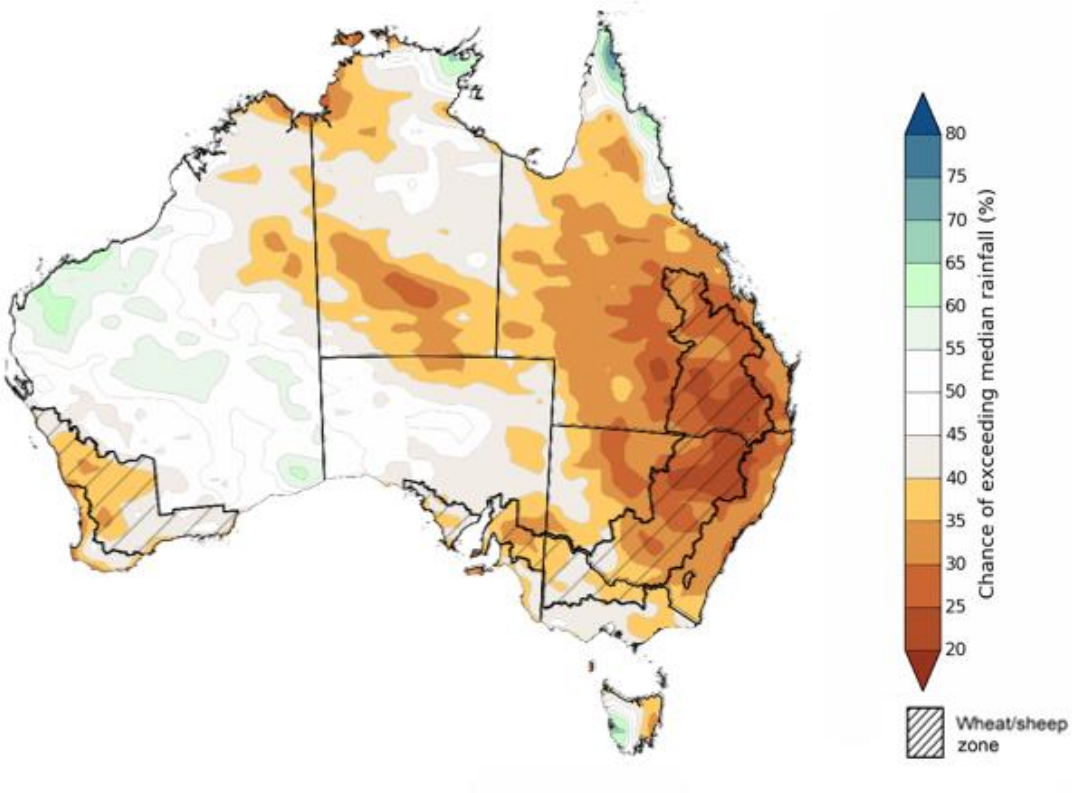
The rainfall outlook for **May 2026 to July 2026 indicates a strong likelihood of below median rainfall across much of eastern Australia**. However, there is an **increased probability of median to above median rainfall in parts of northern and central Western Australia.**

Across most cropping regions, the chance of receiving above median rainfall is 20-45%, with eastern regions on average having a lower possibility of seeing above median rainfall than southern and western regions.

Chance of exceeding the median rainfall May 2026 to July 2026



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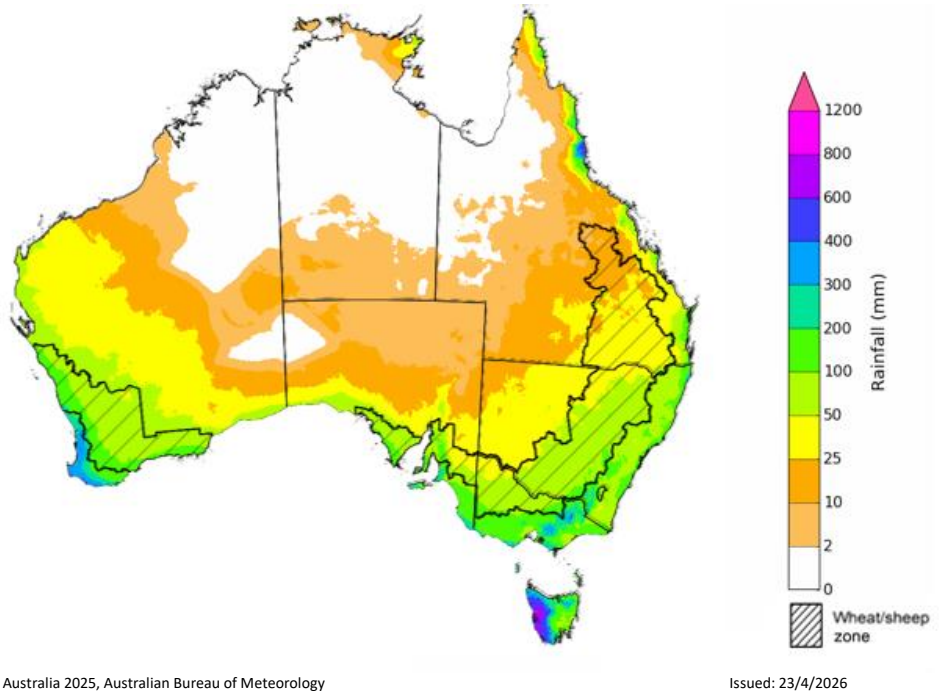
The rainfall outlook for May 2026 to July 2026 suggests a 75% chance of receiving rainfall totals of between 25-200 millimetres across parts of eastern and southern Australia. Higher falls in excess of 200 millimetres are expected across scattered areas of north-eastern Queensland, southwest Western Australia, western Tasmania, as well as alpine regions of Victoria and New South Wales. Lower rainfall totals are forecast for central and northern regions, with much of northern South Australia, central and northern Western Australia, the Northern Territory and western Queensland likely to see 0-25 millimetres.

In cropping regions, there is a 75% chance of receiving between 10-50 millimetres across much of Queensland. Cropping regions in Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales are likely to see 50-100 millimetres.

If forecast May through July rainfall totals are realised, the expected falls for much of south-eastern and eastern Australia are well below average and represents an increased downside production risk for the upcoming 2026–27 winter cropping season and late autumn pasture growth.

Rainfall totals that have a 75% chance of occurring May 2026 to July 2026



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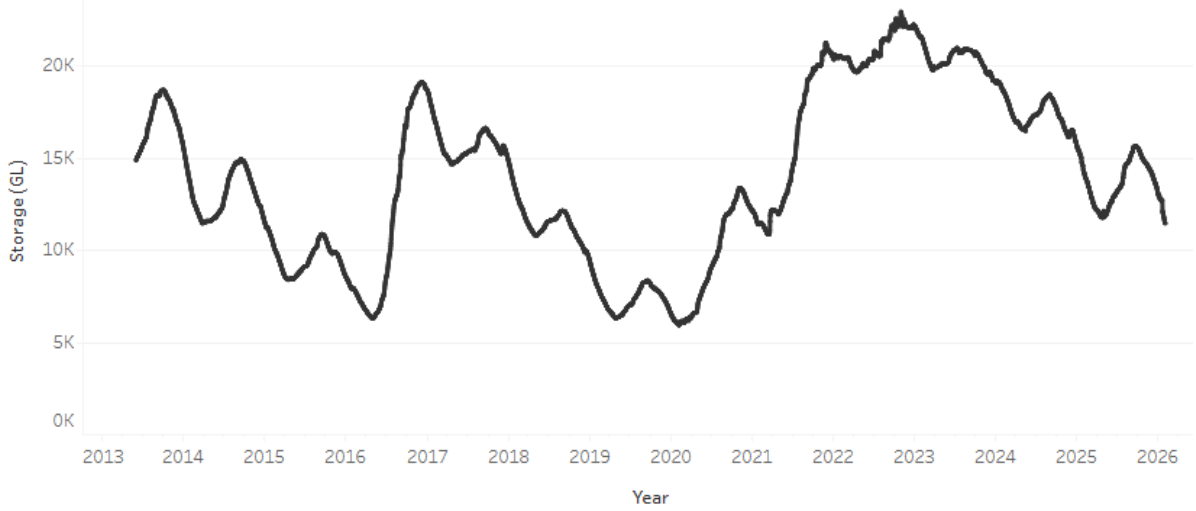
1.4. Water markets – current week

Water storage levels in the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) decreased by 105 gigalitres (GL) between 16 April 2026 and 23 April 2026. The current volume of water held in storages is 10,156 GL, equivalent to 46% of total storage capacity. This is 14% or 1,629 GL less than the same time last year. Water storage data is sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology .

Water storages in the Murray-Darling Basin, 2013–2026



Allocation prices in the Victorian Murray below the Barmah Choke increased from $381/ML on 16 April 2026 to $400/ML on 23 April 2026. Trade from the Goulburn to the Murray is closed. Trade downstream through the Barmah Choke is open. Trade from the Murrumbidgee to the Murray is open.

Water market prices, Southern Murray–Darling Basin

Region	$/ML
NSW Murray Above	308
NSW Murrumbidgee	436
Vic Greater Goulburn	363
Vic Murray Below	400

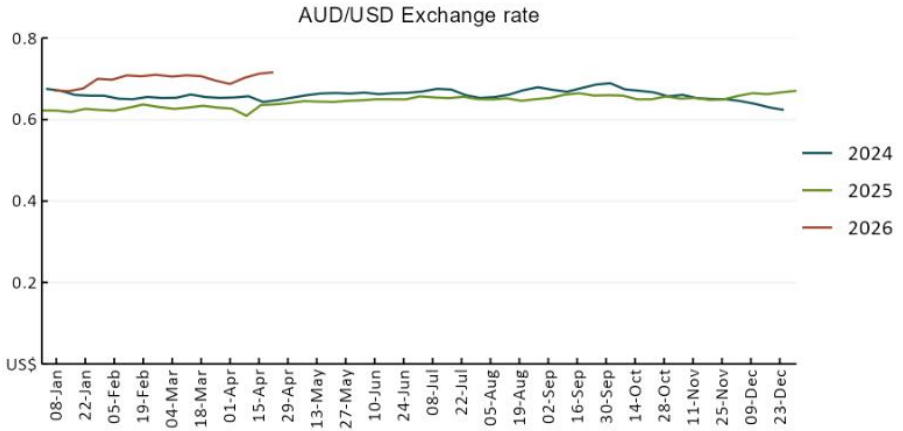
Note: The water allocation prices shown are volume weighted average prices based on the last 10 trades. Price data is sourced from Waterflow and current as at 22 January 2026.

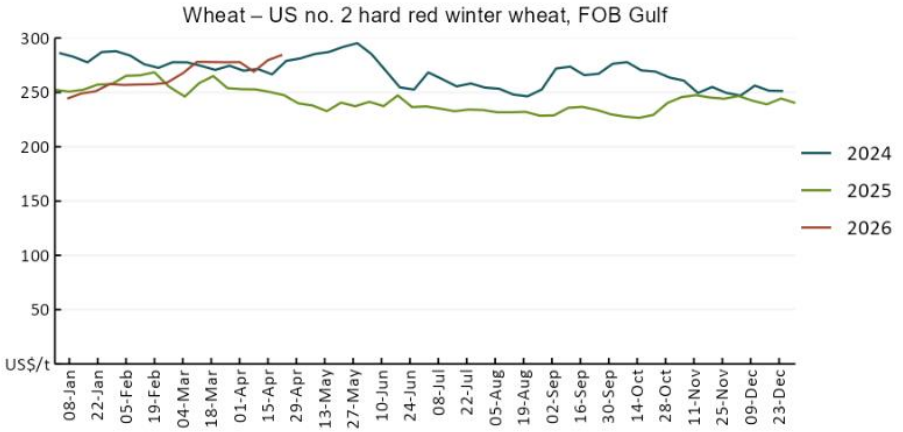
To access the full, interactive, weekly water dashboard, which contains the latest and historical water storage, water market and water allocation information, please visit https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/products/weekly_update/weekly-update-260423

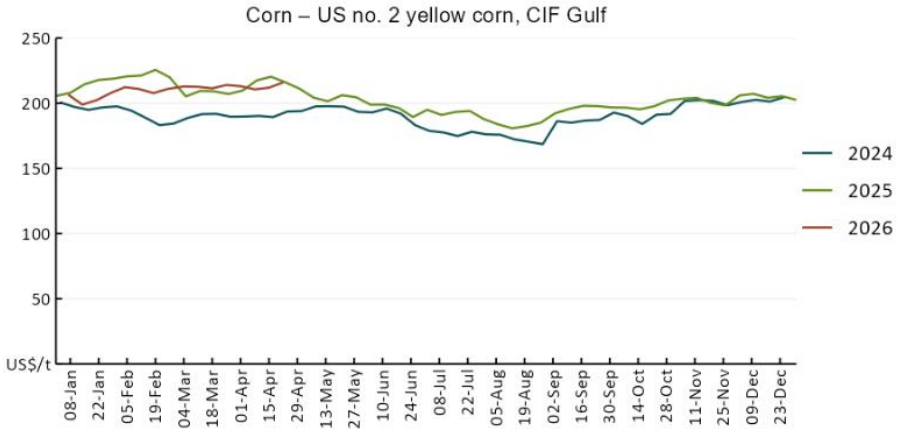
2. Commodities

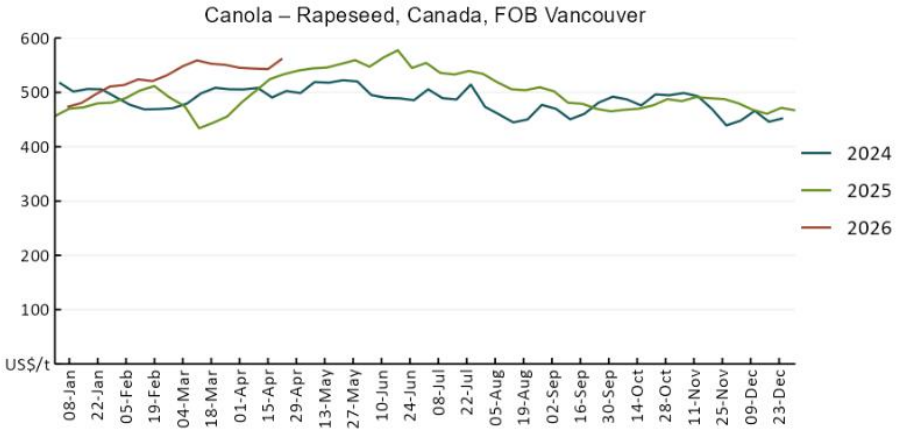
Indicator	Week average	Unit	Latest Price	Previous Week	Weekly change	Price 12 months ago	Annual change
Selected world indicator prices							
AUD/USD Exchange rate	22-Apr	A$/US$	0.72	0.71	1%	0.63	14%
Wheat – US no. 2 hard red winter wheat, FOB Gulf	22-Apr	US$/t	284	280	2%	249	14%
Corn – US no. 2 yellow corn, FOB Gulf	22-Apr	US$/t	216	212	2%	215	0%
Canola – Rapeseed, Canada, FOB Vancouver	22-Apr	US$/t	562	543	4%	517	9%
Cotton – Cotlook A Index	22-Apr	USc/lb	89.7	85.9	4%	78.1	15%
Sugar – Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no.11 contract	22-Apr	USc/lb	13.7	13.8	-1%	18.1	-24%
Wool – Eastern Market Indicator	22-Apr	Ac/kg clean	1,895	1,825	4%	1,238	53%
Wool – Western Market Indicator	22-Apr	Ac/kg clean	2,125	2,052	4%	1,394	52%
Selected Australian grain export prices							
Australian Premium White (APW) Wheat, FOB Port Adelaide, SA	22-Apr	A$/t	374	370	1%	399	-6%
Australian Standard White (ASW) Wheat, FOB Port Adelaide, SA	22-Apr	A$/t	371	367	1%	393	-5%
Feed Barley – FOB Port Adelaide, SA	22-Apr	A$/t	369	367	1%	372	-1%
Canola – FOB Kwinana, WA	22-Apr	A$/t	769	769	0%	795	-3%
Grain Sorghum – FOB Brisbane, QLD	22-Apr	A$/t	449	445	1%	438	2%
Selected domestic livestock indicator prices							
Beef – Eastern Young Cattle Indicator	22-Apr	Ac/kg cwt	800	809	-1%	700	14%
Mutton – Mutton indicator (18–24 kg fat score 2–3), VIC	22-Apr	Ac/kg cwt	823	827	0%	506	63%
Lamb – National Trade Lamb Indicator	22-Apr	Ac/kg cwt	1,196	1,202	0%	812	47%
Pig – Eastern Seaboard (60.1–75 kg), NSW buyer price	8-Apr	Ac/kg cwt	457	461	-1%	448	2%
Live cattle – Light steers to Indonesia	22-Apr	Ac/kg lwt	430	440	-2%	358	20%
Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices							
Dairy – Whole milk powder	22-Apr	US$/t	3,666	3,687	-1%	4,117	-11%
Dairy – Skim milk powder	22-Apr	US$/t	3,448	3,381	2%	2,836	22%
Dairy – Cheddar cheese	22-Apr	US$/t	4,798	4,766	1%	4,971	-3%
Dairy – Anhydrous milk fat	22-Apr	US$/t	6,537	7,027	-7%	6,772	-3%

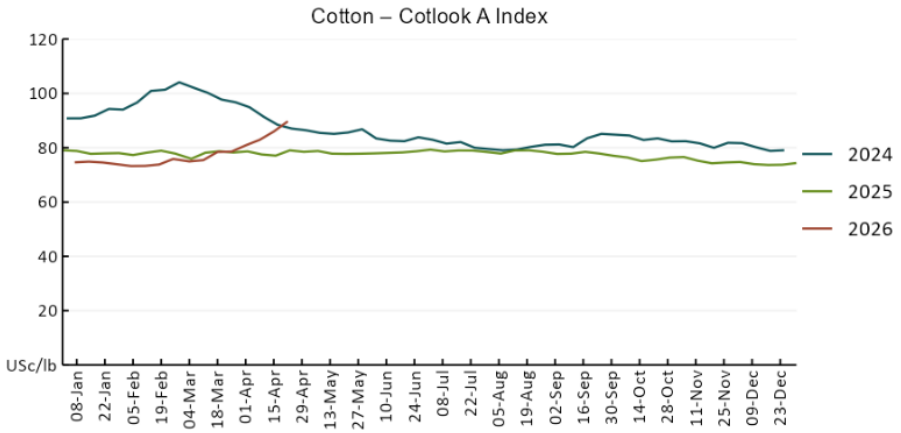
2.1. Selected world indicator prices

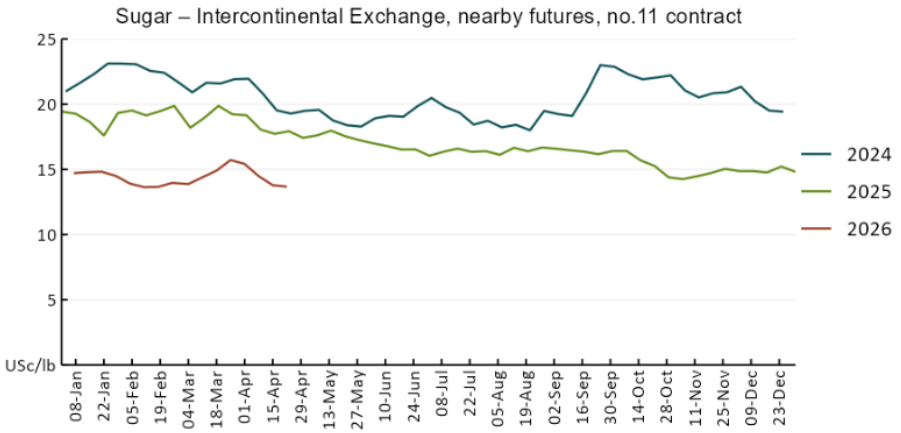









Cotton – Cotlook A Index
120
100
80
60
40
20
USc/lb
08-Jan
22-Jan
05-Feb
19-Feb
04-Mar
18-Mar
01-Apr
15-Apr
29-Apr
13-May
27-May
10-Jun
24-Jun
08-Jul
22-Jul
05-Aug
19-Aug
02-Sep
16-Sep
30-Sep
14-Oct
28-Oct
11-Nov
25-Nov
09-Dec
23-Dec
2024
2025
2026


Sugar – Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no.11 contract
25
20
15
10
5
USc/lb
08-Jan
22-Jan
05-Feb
19-Feb
04-Mar
18-Mar
01-Apr
15-Apr
29-Apr
13-May
27-May
10-Jun
24-Jun
08-Jul
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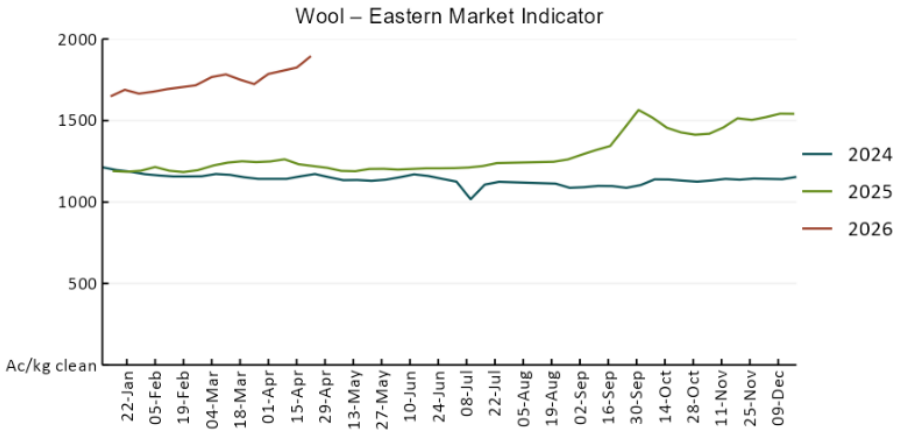
2026


Wool – Eastern Market Indicator
2000
1500
1000
500
Ac/kg clean
22-Jan
05-Feb
19-Feb
04-Mar
18-Mar
01-Apr
15-Apr
29-Apr
13-May
27-May
10-Jun
24-Jun
08-Jul
22-Jul
05-Aug
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14-Oct
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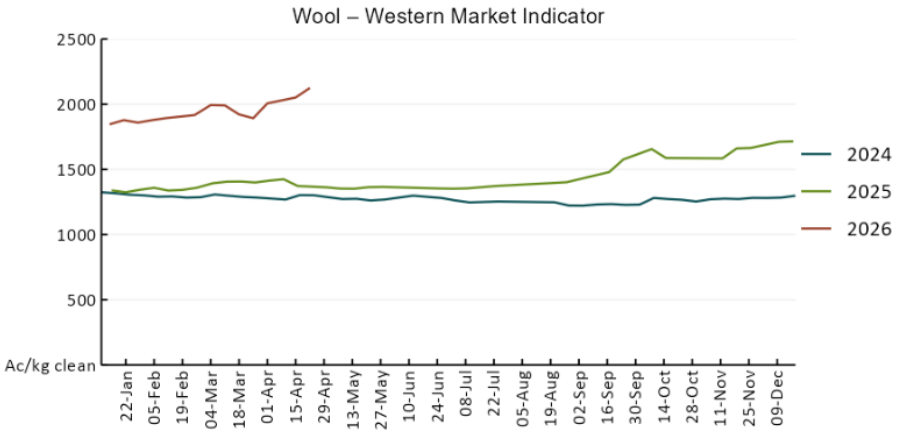
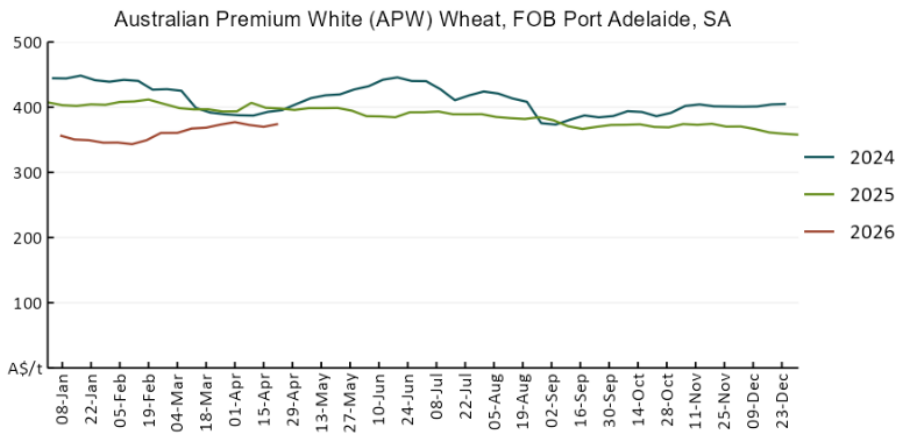
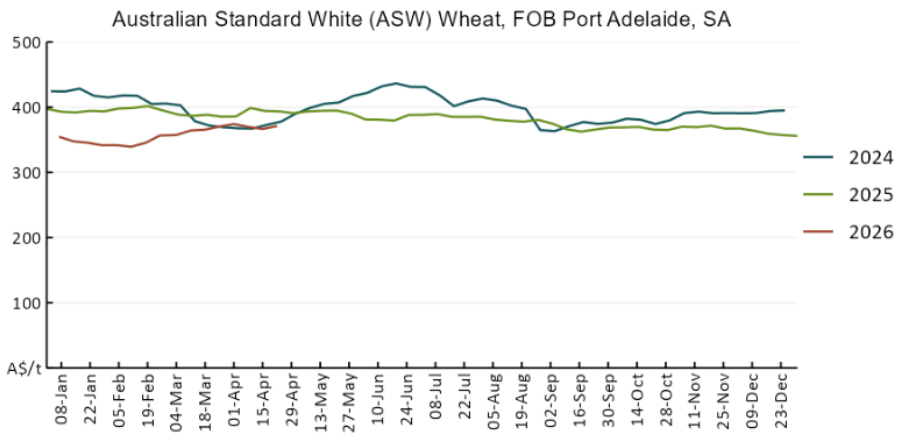
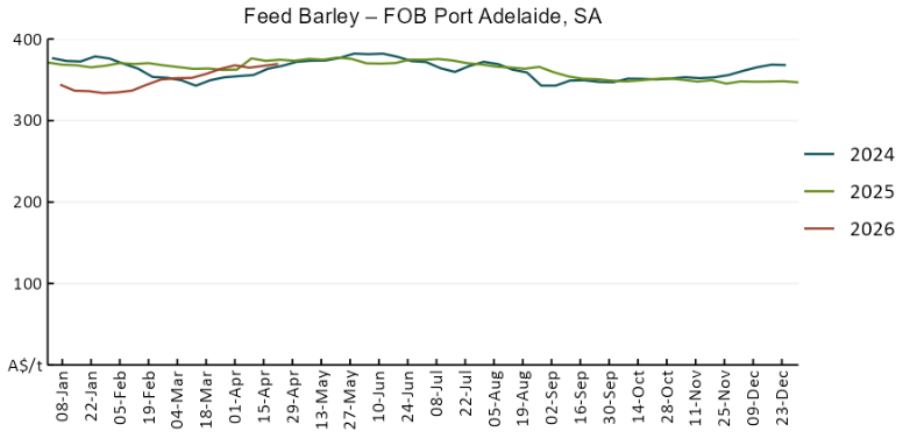
25-Nov
09-Dec
2024
2025
2026

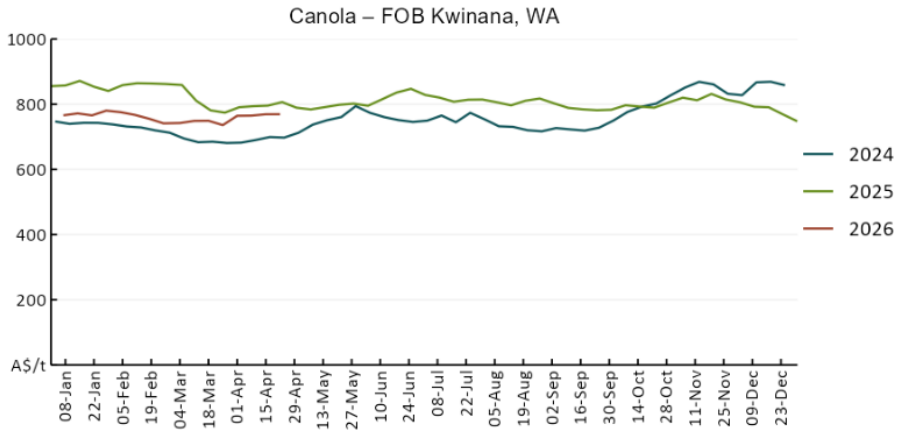

Wool – Western Market Indicator
2500
2000
1500
1000
500
Ac/kg clean
22-Jan
05-Feb
19-Feb
04-Mar
18-Mar
01-Apr
15-Apr
29-Apr
13-May
27-May
10-Jun
24-Jun
08-Jul
22-Jul
05-Aug
19-Aug
02-Sep
16-Sep
30-Sep
14-Oct
28-Oct
11-Nov
25-Nov
09-Dec
2024
2025
2026

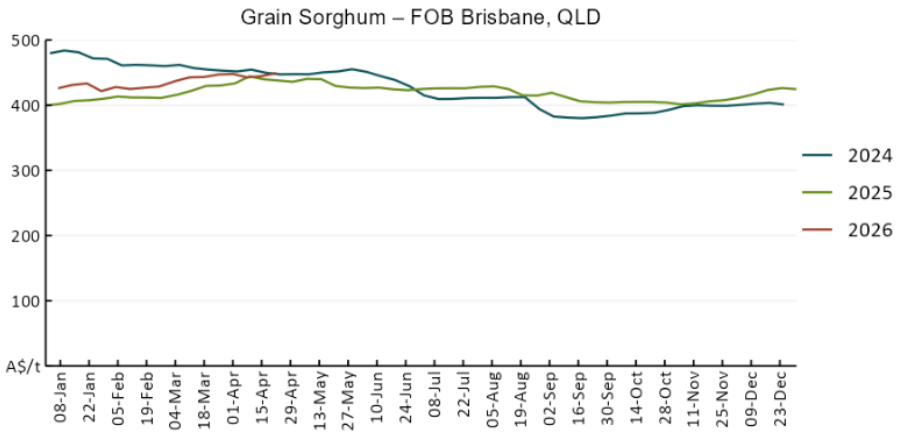
3.2 Selected domestic crop indicator prices










Grain Sorghum – FOB Brisbane, QLD
500
400
300
200
100
A$/t
08-Jan
22-Jan
05-Feb
19-Feb
04-Mar
18-Mar
01-Apr
15-Apr
29-Apr
13-May
27-May
10-Jun
24-Jun
08-Jul
22-Jul
05-Aug
19-Aug
02-Sep
16-Sep
30-Sep
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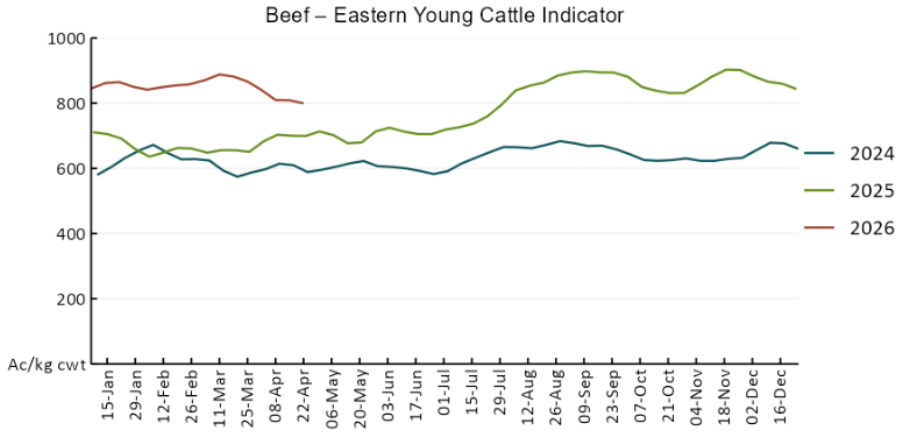
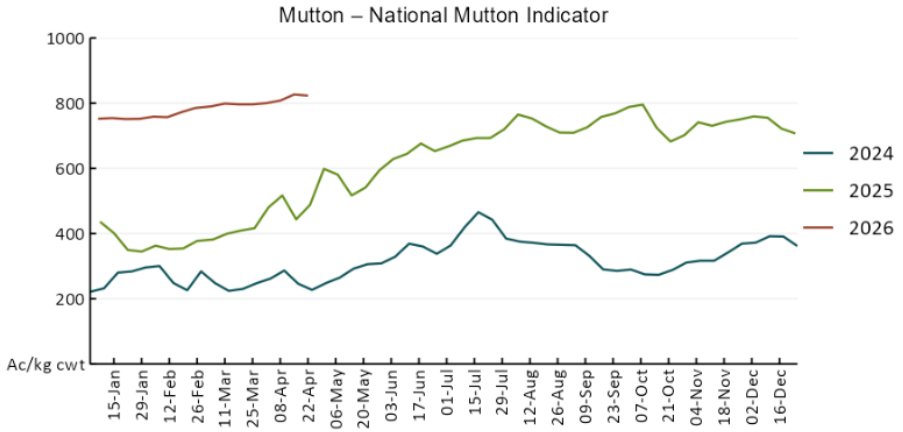
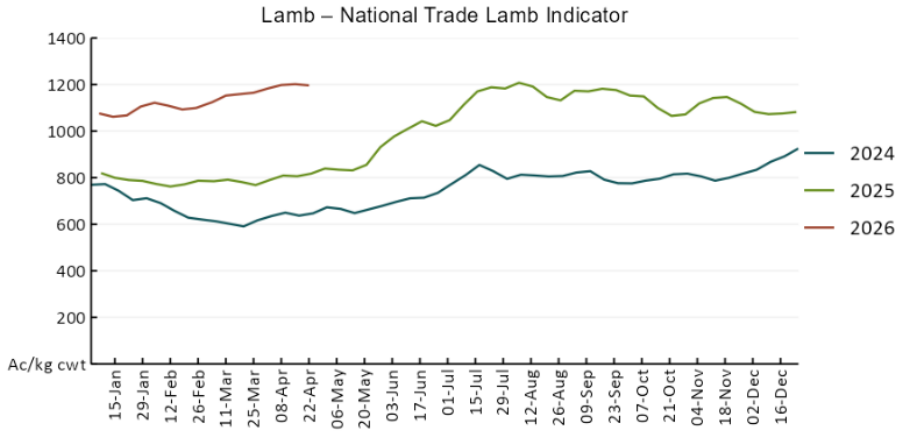
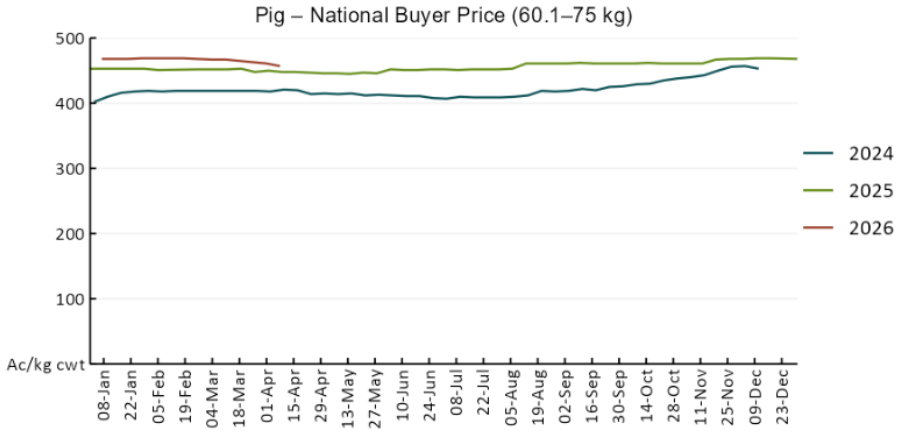
28-Oct
11-Nov
25-Nov
09-Dec
23-Dec
2024
2025
2026

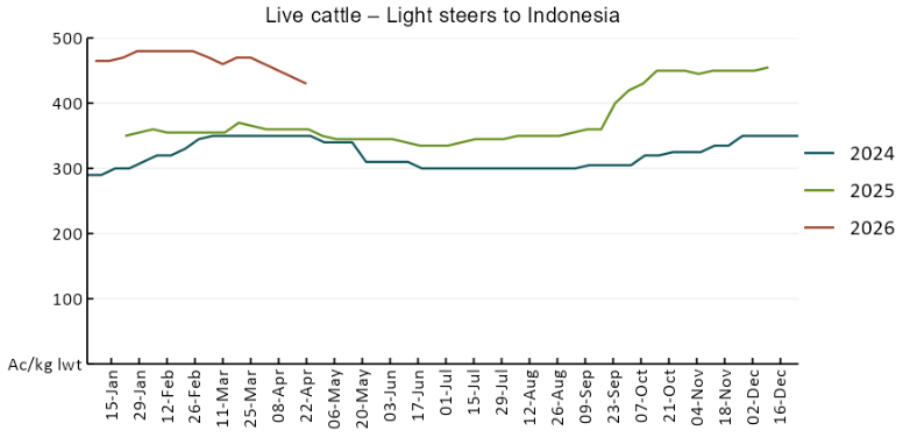
3.3 Selected domestic livestock indicator prices



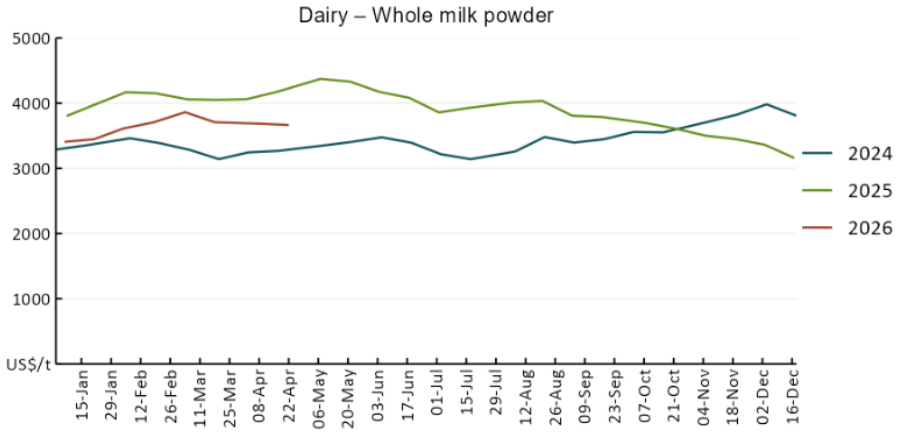


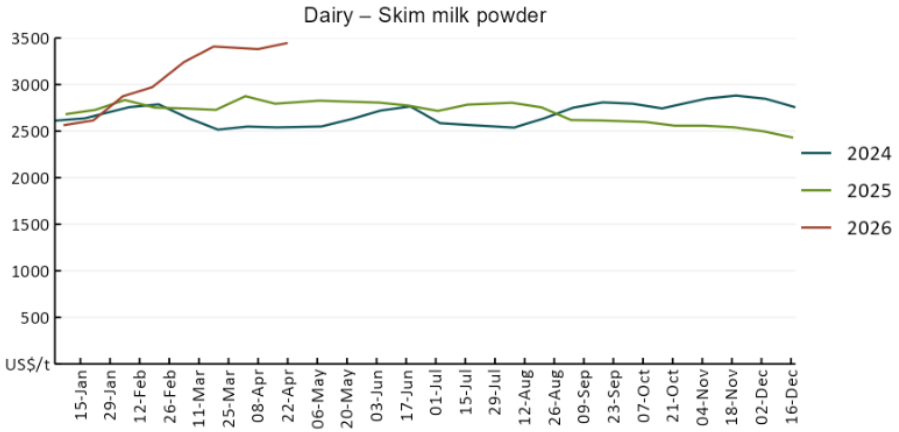


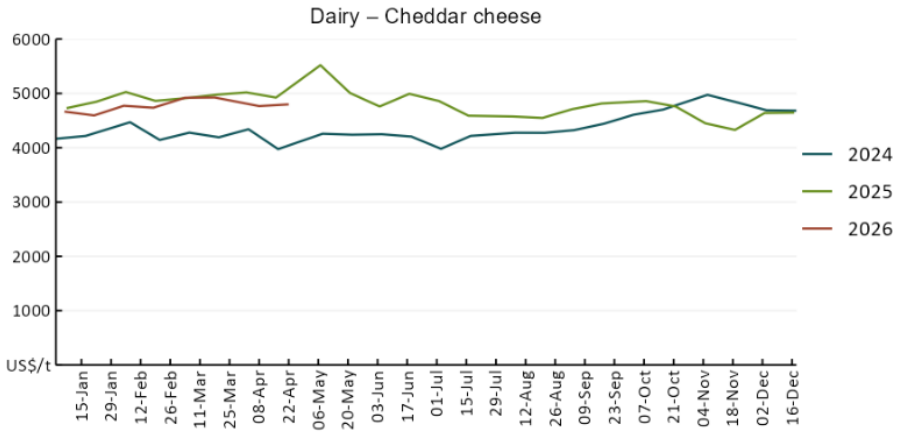


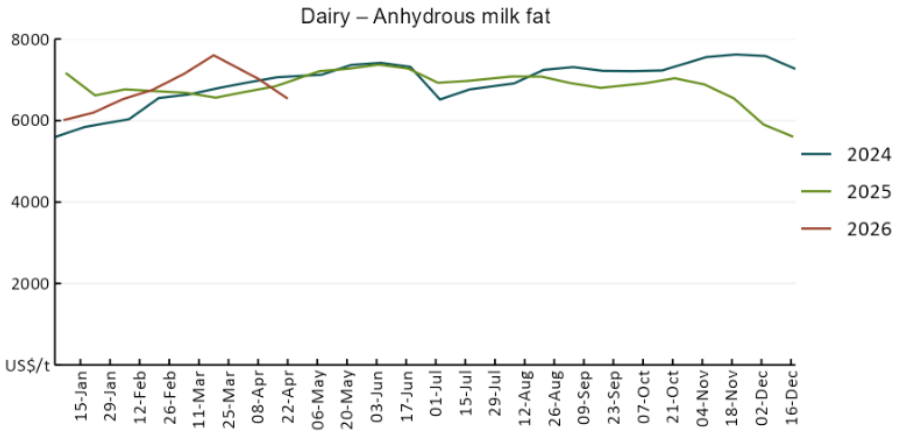

Live cattle – Light steers to Indonesia
500
400
300
200
100
Ac/kg lwt
15-Jan
29-Jan
12-Feb
26-Feb
11-Mar
25-Mar
08-Apr
22-Apr
06-May
20-May
03-Jun
17-Jun
01-Jul
15-Jul
29-Jul
12-Aug
26-Aug
09-Sep
23-Sep
07-Oct
21-Oct
04-Nov
18-Nov
02-Dec
16-Dec
2024
2025
2026

3.4 Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices

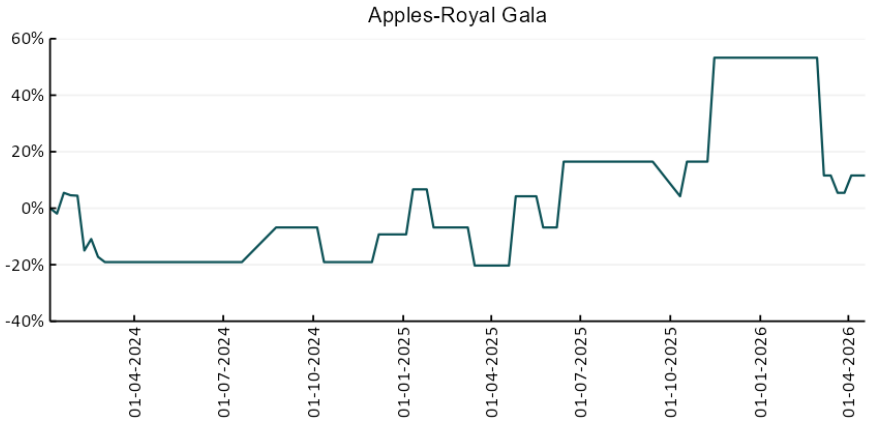


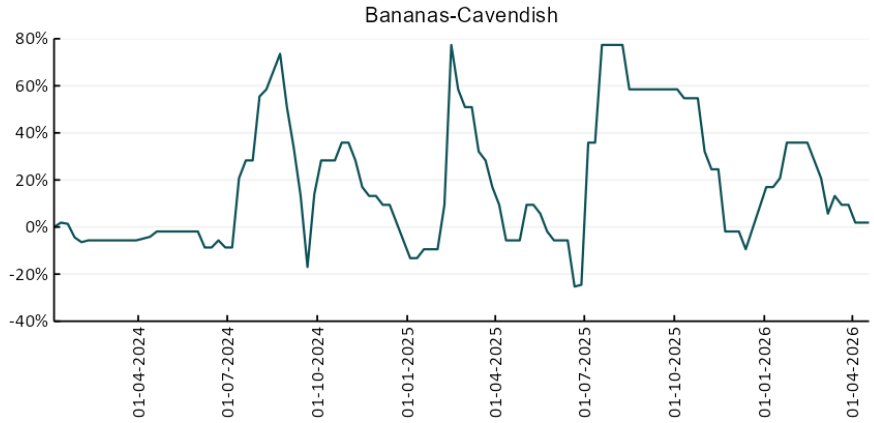


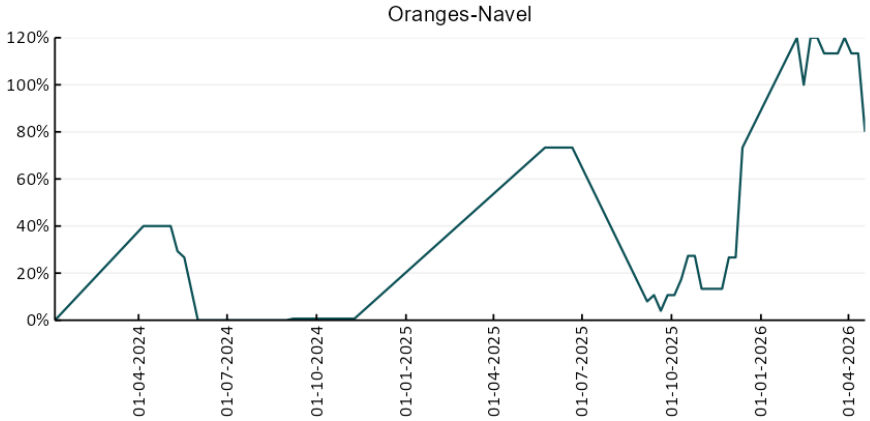


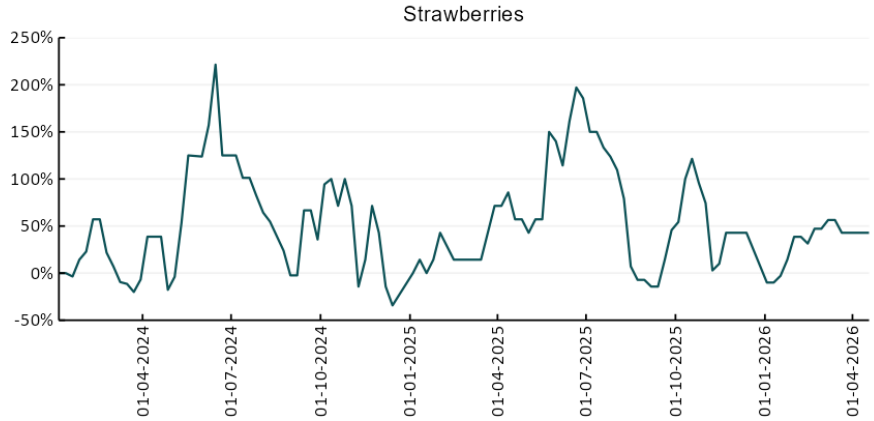


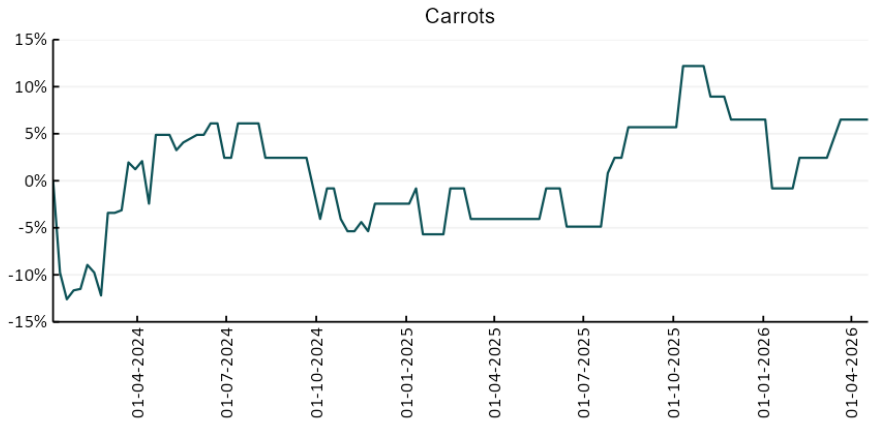
3.5 Selected fruit and vegetable prices

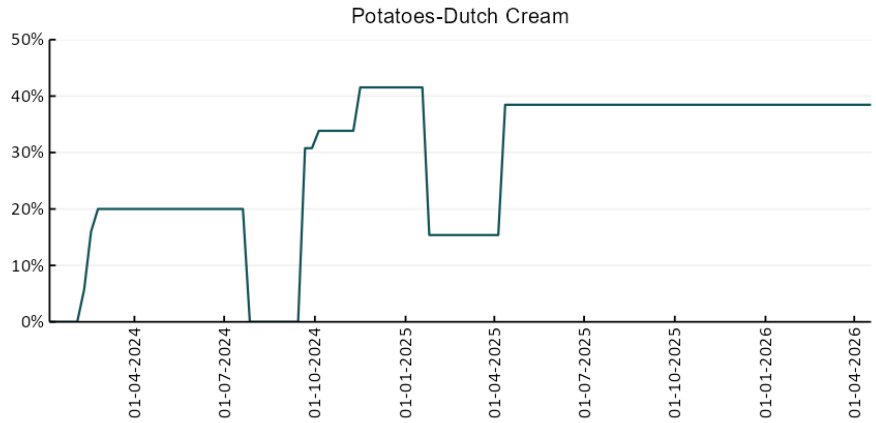


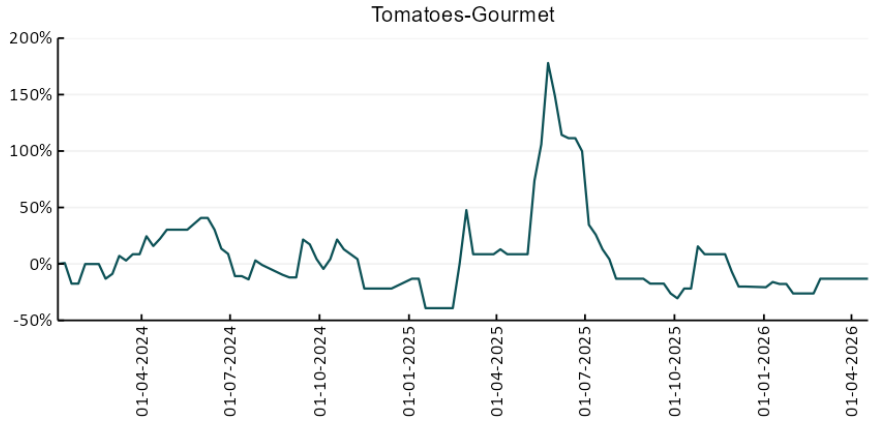


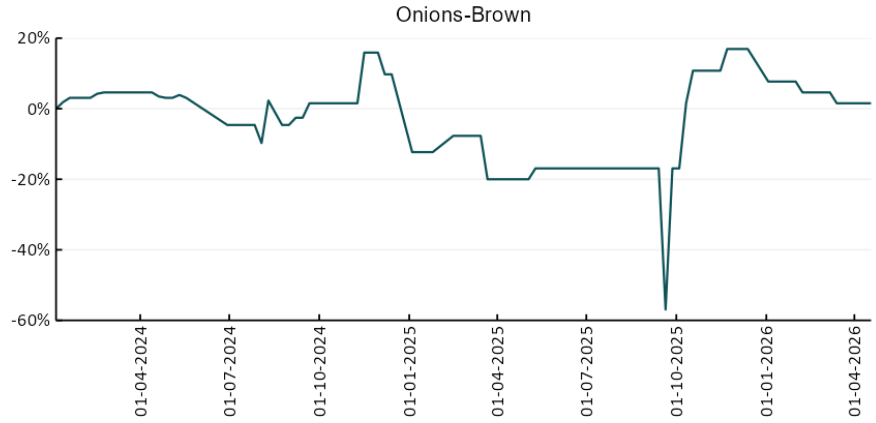




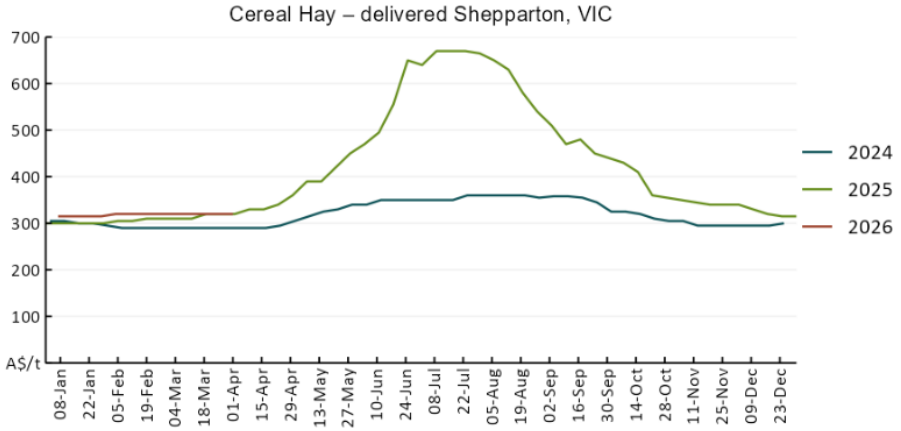

Carrots
15%
10%
5%
0%
-5%
-10%
-15%
01-04-2024
01-07-2024
01-10-2024
01-01-2025
01-04-2025
01-07-2025
01-10-2025
01-01-2026
01-04-2026

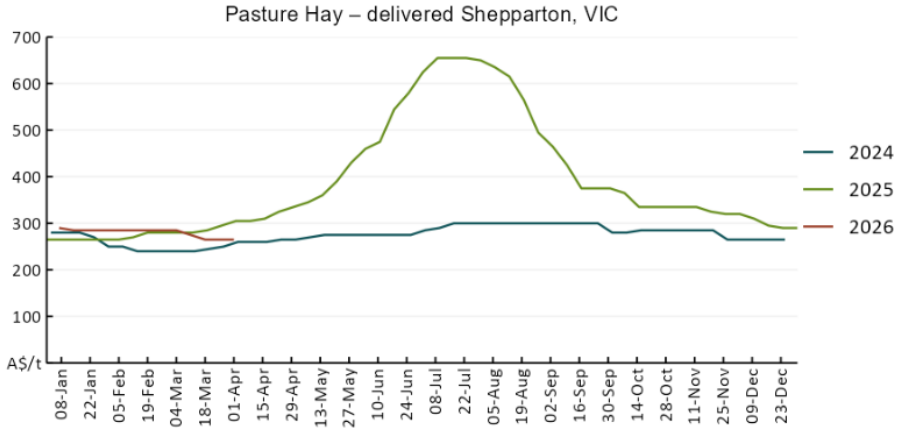

Potatoes-Dutch Cream
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
01-04-2024
01-07-2024
01-10-2024
01-01-2025
01-04-2025
01-07-2025
01-10-2025
01-01-2026
01-04-2026

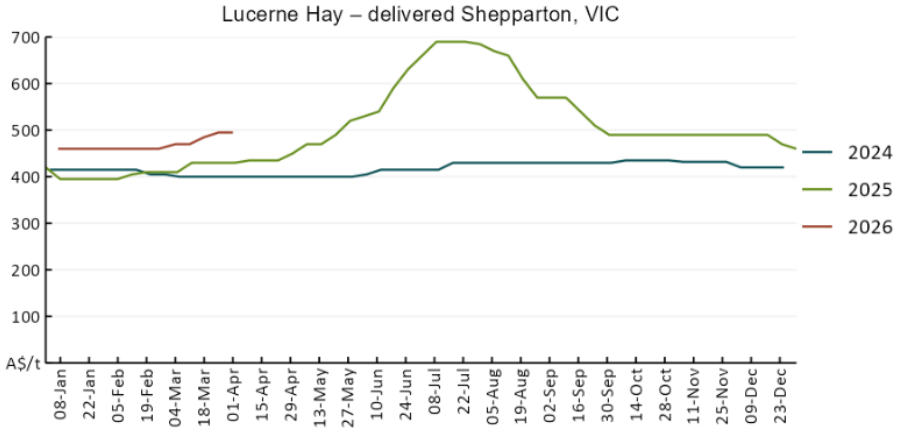

Tomatoes-Gourmet
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
-50%
01-04-2024
01-07-2024
01-10-2024
01-01-2025
01-04-2025
01-07-2025
01-10-2025
01-01-2026
01-04-2026


Onions-Brown
20%
0%
-20%
-40%
-60%
01-04-2024
01-07-2024
01-10-2024
01-01-2025
01-04-2025
01-07-2025
01-10-2025
01-01-2026
01-04-2026

3.6 Selected domestic fodder indicator prices







4. Data attribution

Climate

Bureau of Meteorology

- Weekly rainfall totals: www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/
- Monthly and last 3-month rainfall percentiles: https://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/#moreMaps
- Rainfall forecast: www.bom.gov.au/jsp/watl/rainfall/pme.jsp
- Seasonal outlook: www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary/
- Climate drivers: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/
- Soil moisture: https://awo.bom.gov.au/products/historical/soilMoisture-rootZone/

Other

- Pasture growth: www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au/aussiegrass/
- 3-month global outlooks: Environment and Climate Change Canada, NOAA Climate Prediction Center, EUROBRISA CPTEC/INPE, European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts, Hydrometcenter of Russia, National Climate Center Climate System Diagnosis and Prediction Room (NCC), International Research Institute for Climate and Society
- Global production: https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/ogamaps/cropmapsandcalendars.aspx
- Autumn break: Pook et al., 2009, https://rmets-onlinelibrary-wiley-com.virtual.anu.edu.au/doi/epdf/10.1002/joc.1833

Water

Prices

- Waterflow: https://www.waterflow.io/
- Ruralco: https://www.ruralcowater.com.au/
- Bureau of Meteorology:
- Allocation trade: http://www.bom.gov.au/water/dashboards/#/water-markets/mdb/at
- Storage volumes: http://www.bom.gov.au/water/dashboards/#/water-storages/summary/drainage

Trade constraints:

- Water NSW: https://www.waternsw.com.au/customer-service/ordering-trading-and-pricing/trading/murrumbidgee
- Victorian Water Register: https://www.waterregister.vic.gov.au/TradingRules2019/

Commodities

Fruit and vegetables

- Datafresh: www.freshstate.com.au

Pigs

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

Dairy

- Global Dairy Trade: www.globaldairytrade.info/en/product-results/

World wheat, canola

- International Grains Council
- https://www.igc.int/en/default.aspx
- United States Department of Agriculture

World cotton

- Cotlook: www.cotlook.com/

World sugar

- New York Stock Exchange - Intercontinental Exchange

Wool

- Australian Wool Exchange: www.awex.com.au/

Domestic wheat, barley, sorghum, canola and fodder

- Jumbuk Consulting Pty Ltd: Jumbuk AG | Agriculture Consulting

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

- Meat and Livestock Australia: https://www.mla.com.au/prices-markets/

Australian Agricultural Drought Indicators

About Australian Agricultural Drought Indicators

The Australian Agricultural Drought Indicators (AADI) links weather and agricultural data with a range of scientific and economic models to measure and forecast the effects of climate variability and drought on agricultural outcomes.

On AADI, projected broadacre farm profits are presented as percentile outcomes relative to simulated historical outcomes using the groupings:

Highest	95-100th percentile
Very much above average	85-95th percentile
Above average	65-85th percentile
Average	35-65th percentile
Below average	15-35th percentile
Very much below average	5-15th percentile
Lowest 5%	0-5th percentile

There are two AADI farm profit indicators:

- The AADI farm profit climate and price indicator shows the effect of climate and prices on broadacre farm business profits of current farms compared to the last 33 years.
- The AADI farm profit climate only indicator isolates the effect of climate on profits by holding prices fixed.

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