



# Weekly Australian Climate, Water and Agricultural Update

No. 18/2026

14 May 2026

## Summary of key issues

- In the week ending 13 May 2026, cold fronts brought some rainfall across parts of the southeast, while high pressure systems brought rainfall to the northeast.
  - Most cropping regions of Western Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland saw little to no rainfall, with light falls recorded across parts of Victoria and South Australia.
  - A continuation of mainly dry conditions across much of Queensland and New South Wales is leading to further declines in soil moisture levels and is expected to result in a significant decline in the area planted to winter crops during 2026–27.
- Over the 8 days to 21 May 2026, low pressure troughs and rainbands are expected to bring rainfall to parts of southeast, central and northwest Australia:
  - Falls of 15-50 millimetres are forecast for much of the southeast, including South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. Falls in Queensland are forecast to up to 25mm.
    - If realised, these expected falls are likely to provide a timely boost to soil moisture levels across south-eastern cropping areas following a period of dry conditions in many regions. These falls are also expected to support the germination and growth of early sown winter crops and encourage further plantings.
    - In areas across northern New South Wales and south-eastern Queensland that have experienced ongoing rainfall deficiencies, these expected falls will provide a timely boost to soil moisture levels but may not be sufficient to encourage the widespread planting of winter crops.
- The national rainfall outlook for June to August 2026 indicates an increased probability of below median rainfall across large areas of southern and eastern Australia.
  - Below average expected rainfall totals across most southern growing regions are likely be sufficient to support the establishment and growth of winter crops. However, below average expected falls for north-eastern growing regions continues to represent an ongoing downside production risk for the 2026–27 winter cropping season.
- Water storage levels in the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) increased by 19 gigalitres (GL) between 07 May 2026 and 14 May 2026. The current volume of water held in storages is 10,003 GL, equivalent to 45% of total storage capacity. This is 16% or 1,901 GL less than the same time last year. Water storage data is sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM).
- Allocation prices in the Victorian Murray below the Barmah Choke decreased from \$416/ML on 07 May 2026 to \$390/ML on 14 May 2026. Trade from the Goulburn to the Murray is closed. Trade downstream through the Barmah Choke is closed. Trade from the Murrumbidgee to the Murray is open.

# 1. Climate

## 1.1. Rainfall this week

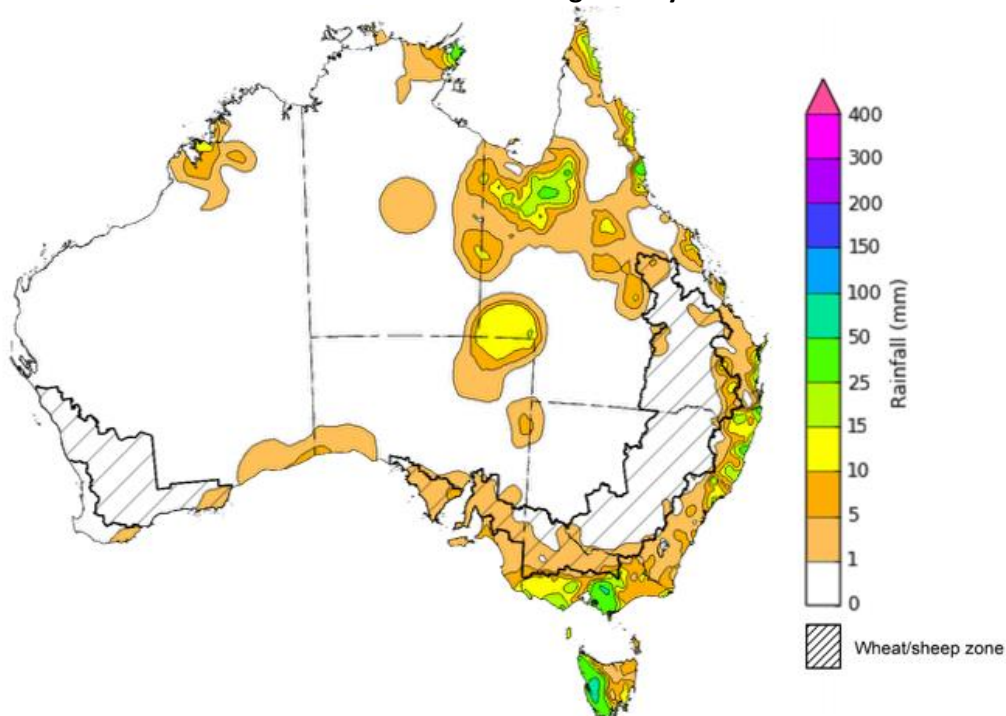
In the week ending 13 May 2026, cold fronts brought isolated falls to parts of the southeast, while low pressure systems brought rainfall to parts of the northeast. Western and central regions remained largely dry.

- In the south, falls of 5-50 millimetres were recorded across parts of southern Victoria and western Tasmania, with isolated areas seeing higher falls. Eastern parts of New South Wales and southern Queensland saw lower falls of 5-25 millimetres, while southern South Australia saw 1-10 millimetres.
- Scattered areas of the northern tropics saw 5-25 millimetres of rainfall, with parts of northern Western Australia and north-eastern Queensland seeing higher falls of up to 50 millimetres.
- Much of southern Queensland, northern and western New South Wales, the Northern Territory, northern South Australia, and Western Australia remained largely dry.

Across cropping regions, rainfall was generally low, with limited rainfall in the south and dry conditions elsewhere:

- Most cropping regions of Western Australia, New South Wales and Queensland saw little to no rainfall.
  - A continuation of mainly dry conditions across much of Queensland and New South Wales is leading to further declines in soil moisture levels and is expected to result in a significant decline in the area planted to winter crops during 2026–27.
- In Victoria and South Australia, falls of 0-5 millimetres were observed.

**Rainfall for the week ending 13 May 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

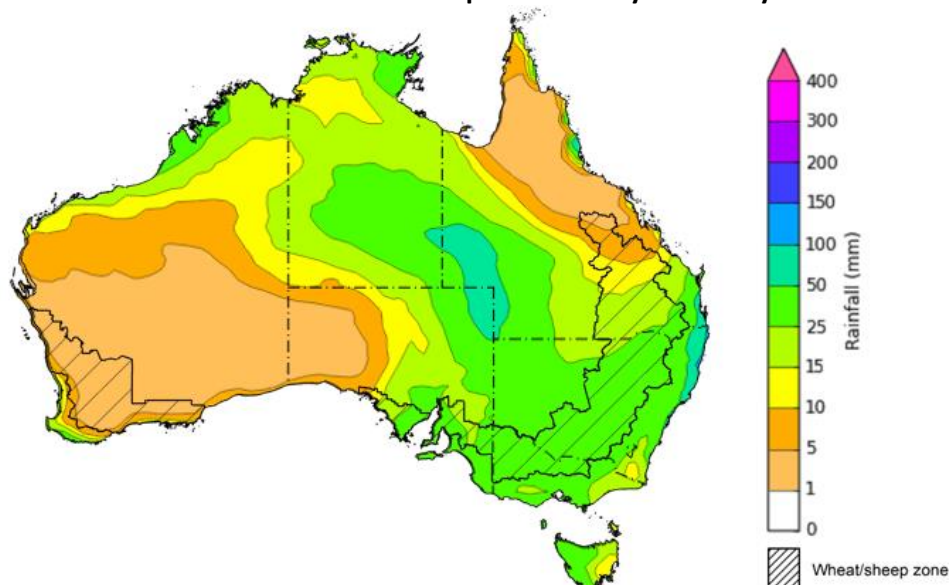
Over the 8 days to 21 May 2026, **low-pressure troughs and rainbands** are expected to bring rainfall to parts of northwest, central, and south-eastern Australia. However, much of the northeast and southwest of Australia is forecast to remain largely dry.

- In the southeast, falls of between 10-50 millimetres are forecast for Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales, southern Queensland, and eastern South Australia. Isolated areas are forecast to see up to 100 millimetres.
- Similarly, much of the Northern Territory, northern Western Australia and western Queensland are forecast to see 10-50 millimetres of rainfall, with up to 100 millimetres in isolated central regions. Remaining regions are likely to see little to no rainfall.

Rainfall totals across many eastern and south-eastern cropping regions over the coming week are forecast to be substantial.

- Falls of 15-50 millimetres are forecast for much of the southeast, including South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales. Falls in Queensland are forecast to be lower, 5-50 millimetres, with lower rainfall in northern regions.
  - If realised, these high expected falls are likely to provide a timely boost to soil moisture levels across south-eastern cropping areas following a period of dry conditions in many regions. These falls are also expected to support the germination and growth of early sown winter crops and encourage further plantings.
  - Across regions of northern New South Wales and south-eastern Queensland that have experiences ongoing rainfall deficiencies, these expected falls will provide a timely boost to soil moisture levels but may not be sufficient to encourage the widespread planting of winter crops.
- Low rainfall totals (0-10 millimetres) are forecast for Western Australia.
  - Ongoing dry conditions across Western Australia has resulted in a drawdown in soil moisture to support plant growth. Timely follow-up rainfall will be needed in the coming week to maintain the early and positive start to the 2026–27 winter cropping season.

**Total forecast rainfall for the period 14 May to 21 May 2026**



### 1.3. National Climate Outlook

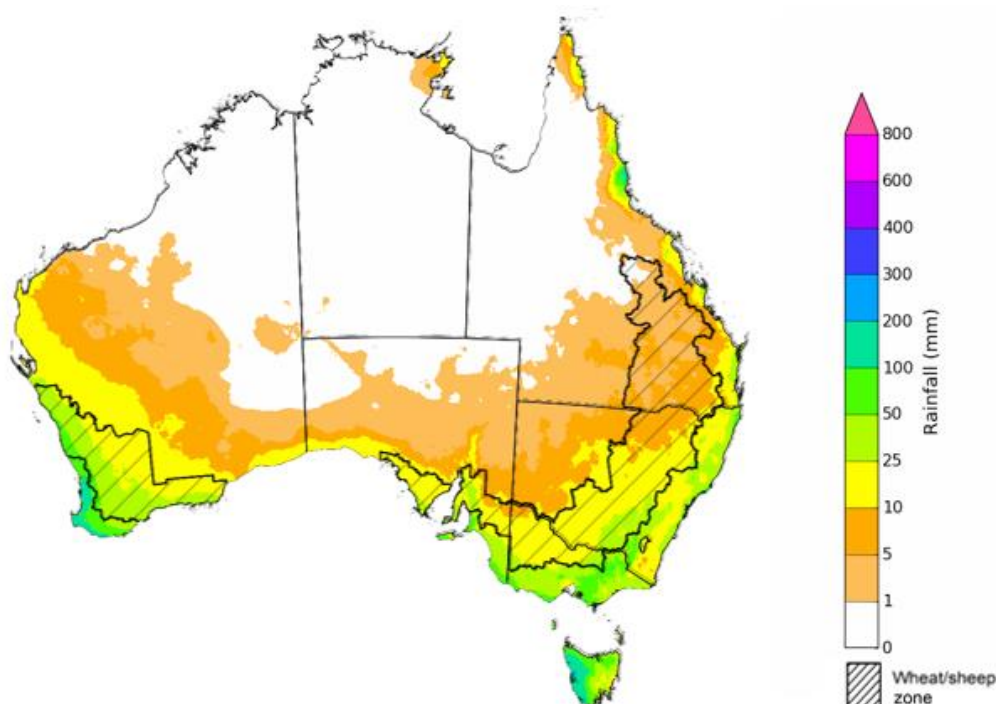
The Bureau of Meteorology has indicated that El Niño conditions are becoming more likely in 2026–27. All models, including the Bureau of Meteorology's, forecast the tropical Pacific to continue warming in the coming months. Neutral El Niño–Southern Oscillation conditions are expected to persist until 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 winter. 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 following a period of elevated values.

The most recent rainfall outlook for June 2026 provided by the Bureau of Meteorology indicates that most of Australia is more likely to see close to median rainfall, with parts of northern Australia more likely to see above median falls, while some southern areas are more likely to see below median falls.

The Bureau of Meteorology's climate model indicates a 75% chance of June rainfall totals between 5-100 millimetres across Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and much of southern Western Australia. In the east, including coastal parts of Queensland, and eastern and southern New South Wales, falls of 5-50 millimetres are expected. 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 southern cropping regions, there is a 75% chance of receiving rainfall totals of between 10-50 millimetres during June 2026. . If these forecast falls are realised across most southern regions, they are likely to provide sufficient moisture to support the germination and growth of winter crops. 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

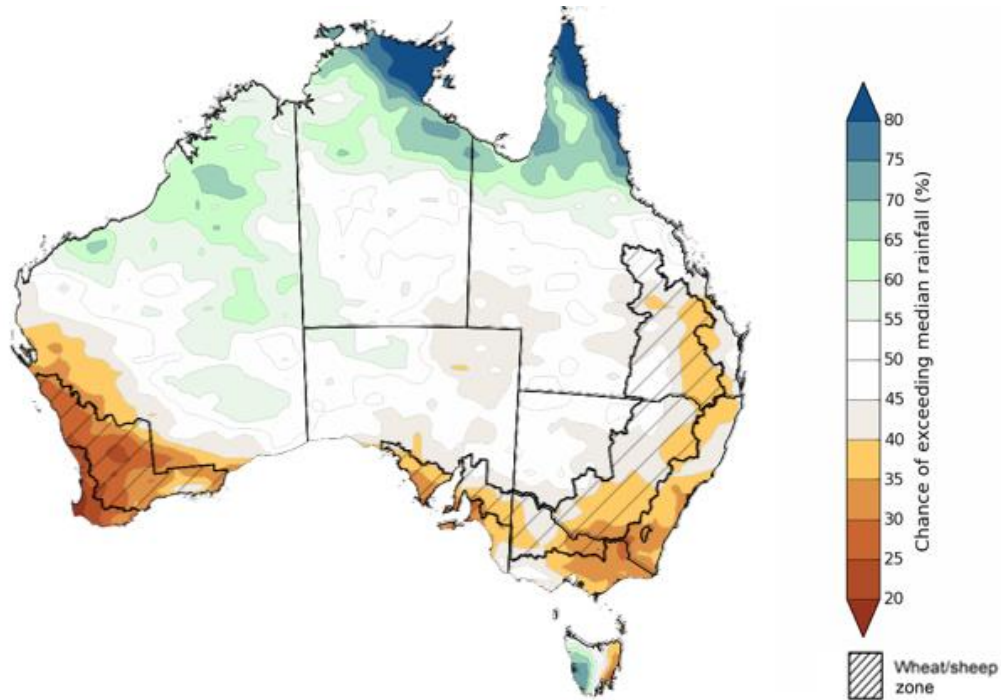
**Rainfall totals that have a 75% chance of occurring in June 2026**



The rainfall outlook for **June 2026 to August 2026** indicates a strong tendency towards **below median rainfall across large areas of southern and eastern Australia**. However, there is an **increased probability of median to above median rainfall in parts of the central and northern Australia**.

Across most cropping regions, the chance of receiving above median rainfall is 20-45%. Meanwhile, most cropping regions across western Queensland and north-western New South Wales have no strong tendency towards either above or below median rainfall.

#### Chance of exceeding the median rainfall June 2026 to August 2026



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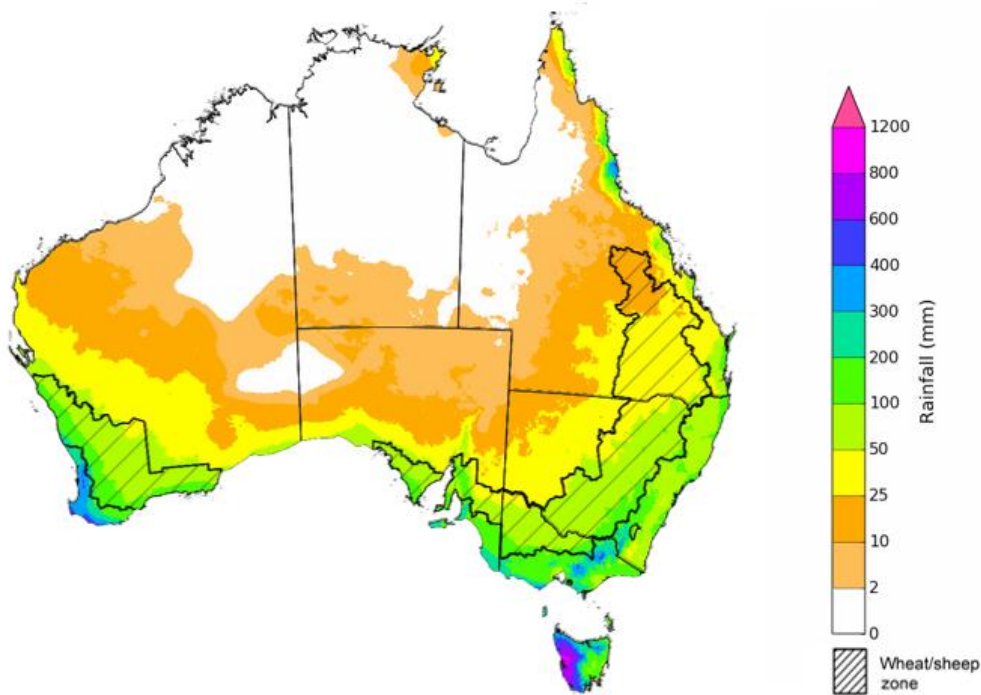
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The rainfall outlook for June 2026 to August 2026 suggests a 75% chance of receiving rainfall totals of between 25-200 millimetres across parts of eastern and southern Australia. Higher falls in excess of 200 millimetres are expected across scattered 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 50-100 millimetres across much of Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales. Cropping regions in Queensland and parts of northern New South Wales are likely to see lower falls of 10-50 millimetres.

If these forecast June through August rainfall totals are realised, these falls are likely to be sufficient to support the establishment and growth of winter crops across most southern growing regions. However, these below average expected falls for north-eastern growing regions represents an ongoing downside production risk for the 2026–27 winter cropping season.

#### Rainfall totals that have a 75% chance of occurring June 2026 to August 2026



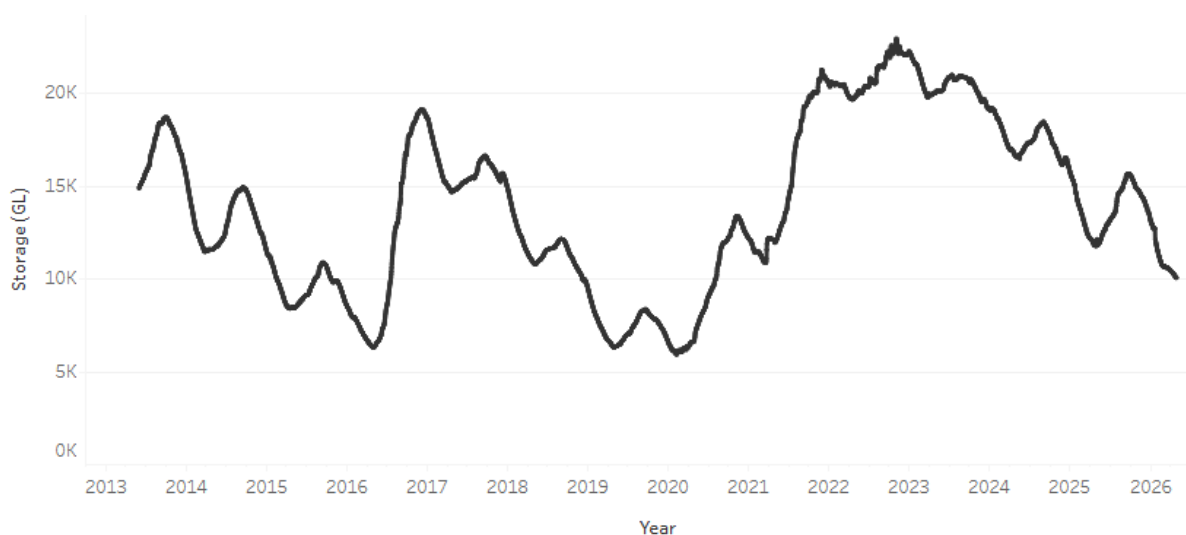
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## 1.4. Water markets – current week

Water storage levels in the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) increased by 19 gigalitres (GL) between 07 May 2026 and 14 May 2026. The current volume of water held in storages is 10,003 GL, equivalent to 45% of total storage capacity. This is 16% or 1,901 GL less than the same time last year. Water storage data is sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM).

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



Allocation prices in the Victorian Murray below the Barmah Choke decreased from \$416/ML on 07 May 2026 to \$390/ML on 14 May 2026. Trade from the Goulburn to the Murray is closed. Trade downstream through the Barmah Choke is closed. Trade from the Murrumbidgee to the Murray is open.

**Water market prices, Southern Murray–Darling Basin**

| Region               | \$/ML |
|----------------------|-------|
| NSW Murray Above     | 325   |
| NSW Murrumbidgee     | 477   |
| Vic Greater Goulburn | 329   |
| Vic Murray Below     | 390   |

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.

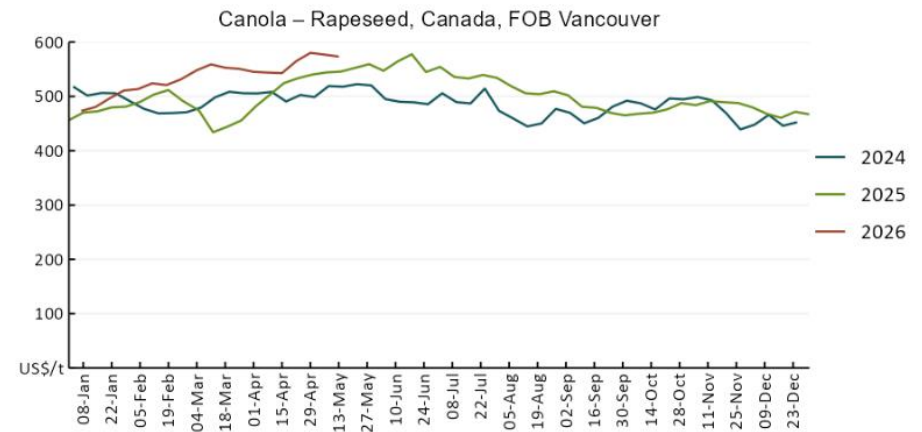
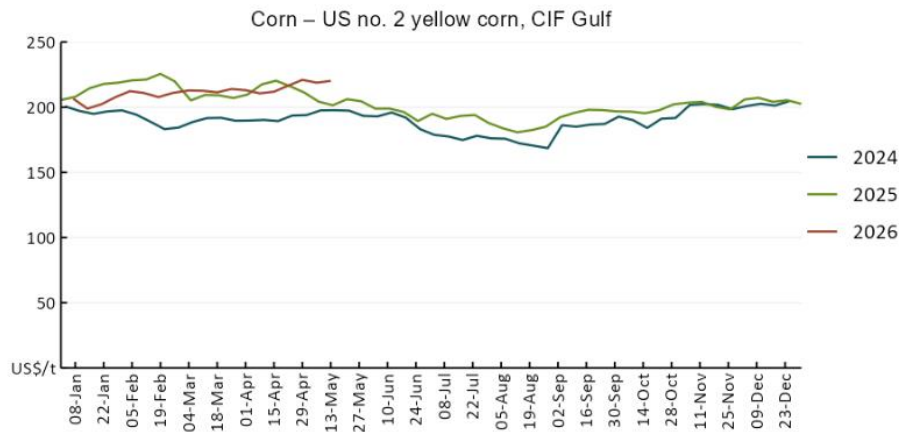
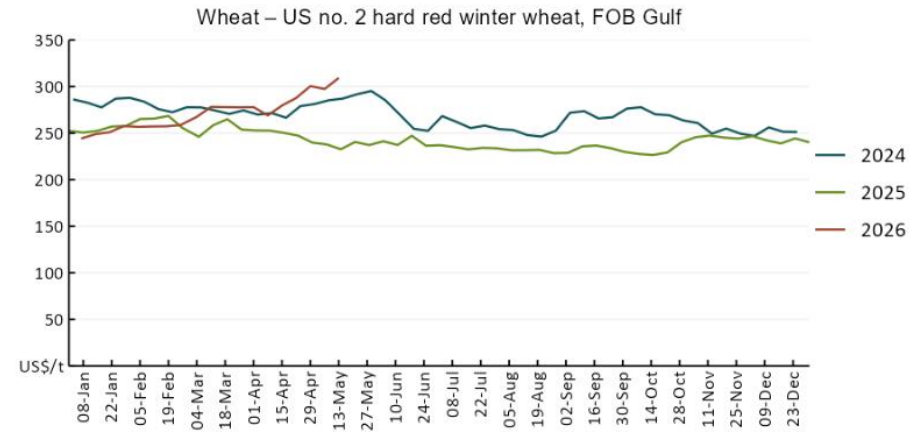
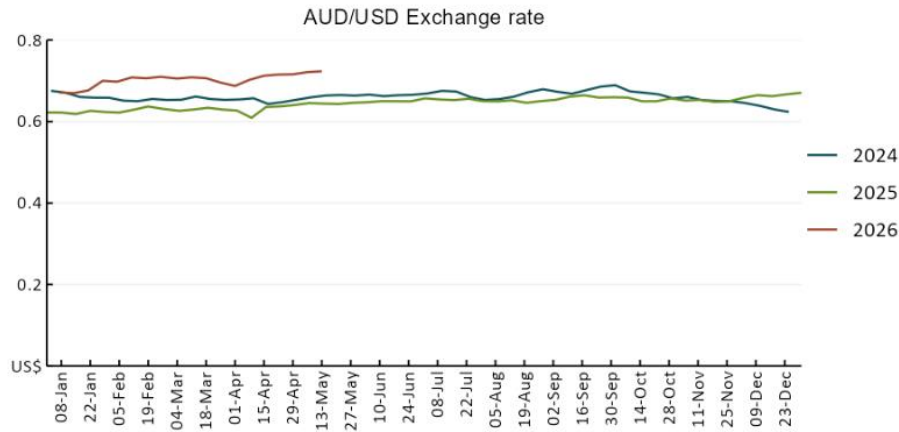
To access the full, interactive, weekly water dashboard, which contains the latest and historical water storage, water market and water allocation information, please visit

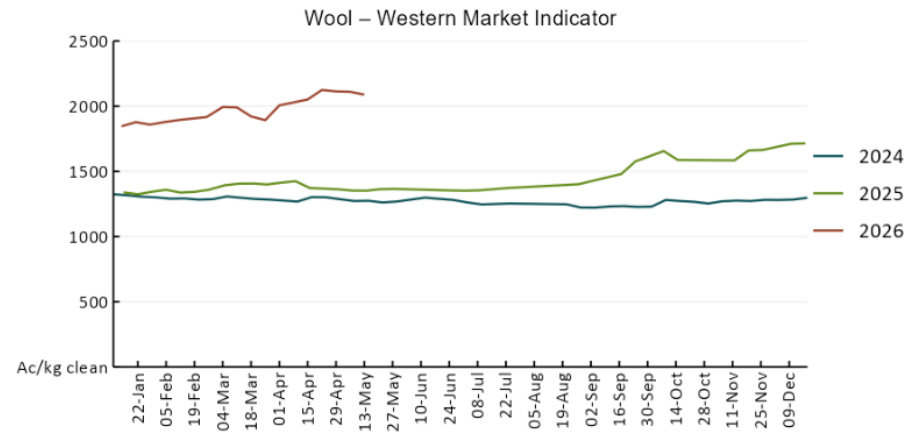
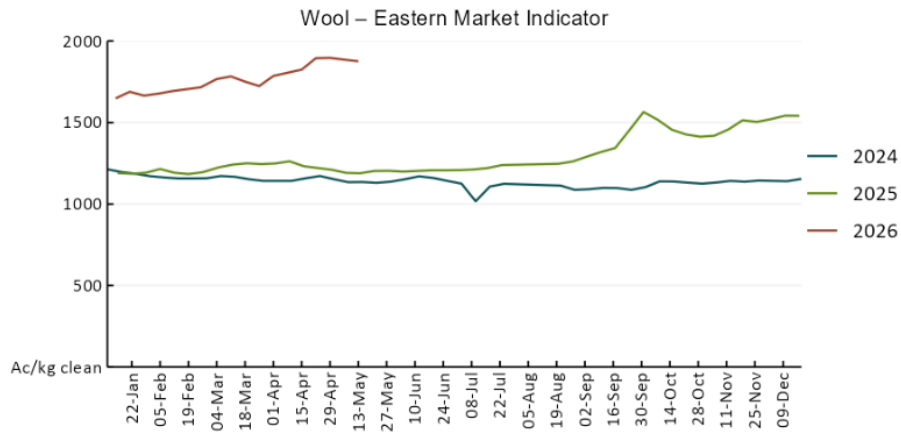
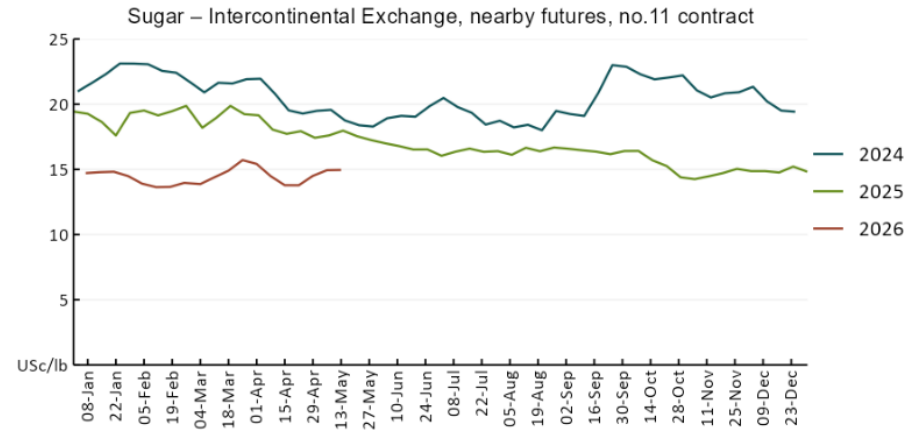
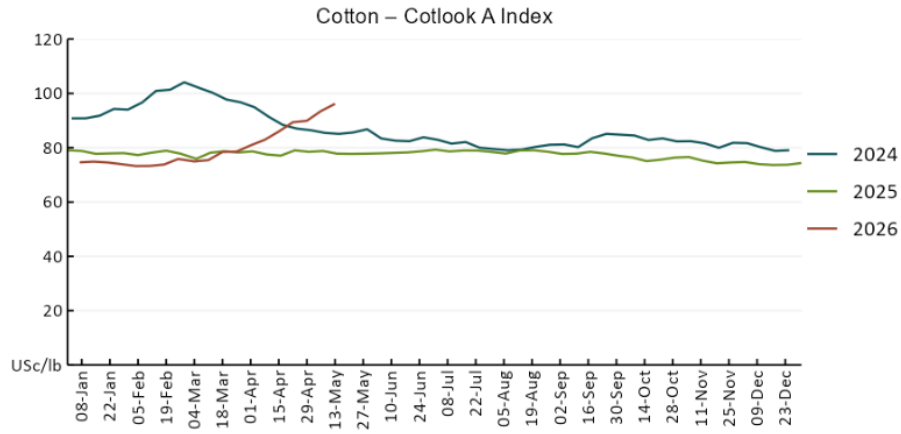
[https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/products/weekly\\_update/weekly-update-260514](https://www.agriculture.gov.au/abares/products/weekly_update/weekly-update-260514)

## 2. Commodities

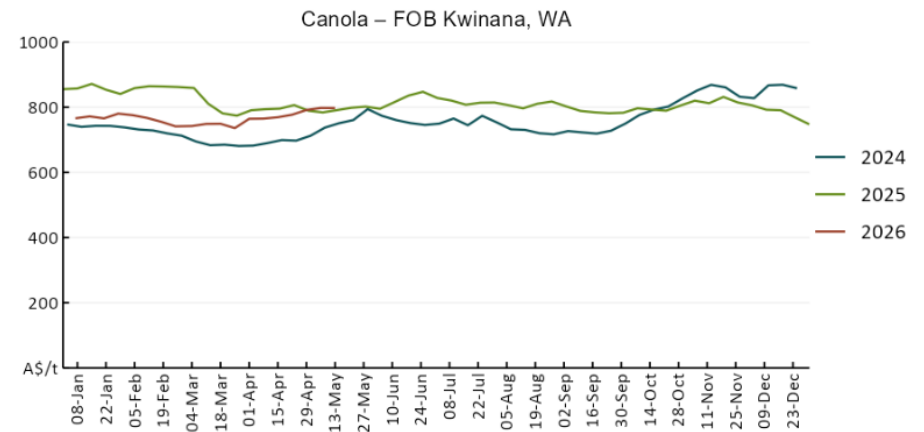
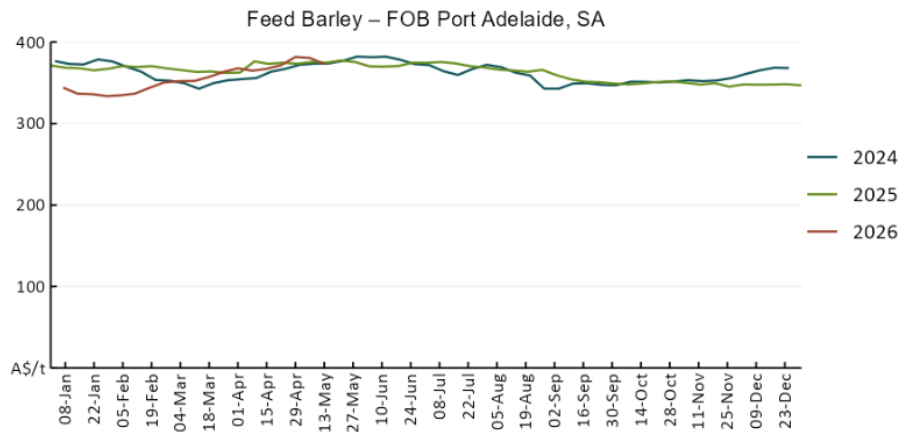
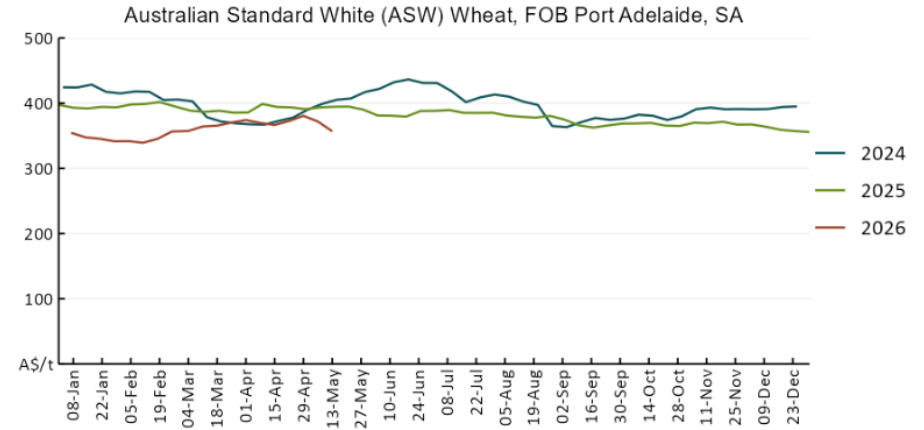
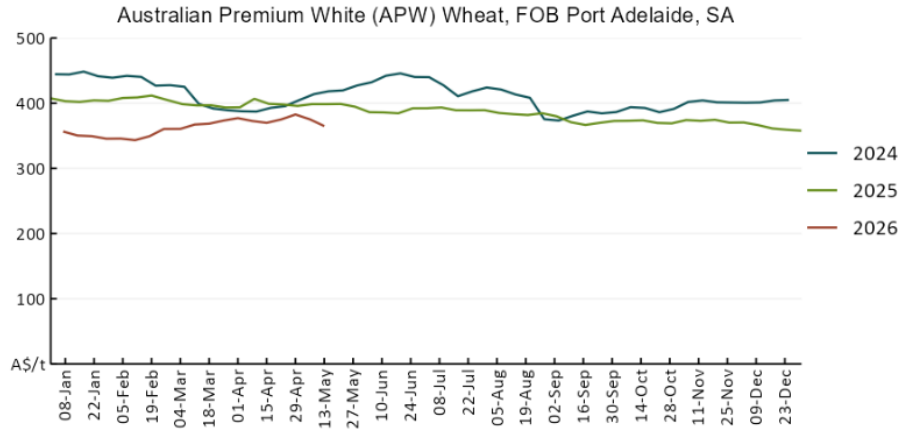
| Indicator   | Week average | Unit        | Latest Price | Previous Week | Weekly change | Price 12 months ago | Annual change |
|---|--------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|
| <b>Selected world indicator prices</b>                            |              |             |              |               |               |                     |               |
| AUD/USD Exchange rate   | 13-May       | A\$/US\$    | 0.72         | 0.72          | 0%            | 0.64                | 12%           |
| Wheat – US no. 2 hard red winter wheat, FOB Gulf                  | 13-May       | US\$/t      | 309          | 297           | 4%            | 237                 | 30%           |
| Corn – US no. 2 yellow corn, FOB Gulf                             | 13-May       | US\$/t      | 220          | 219           | 1%            | 204                 | 8%            |
| Canola – Rapeseed, Canada, FOB Vancouver                          | 13-May       | US\$/t      | 573          | 577           | -1%           | 550                 | 4%            |
| Cotton – Cotlook A Index  | 13-May       | USc/lb      | 96.2         | 93.5          | 3%            | 78.0                | 23%           |
| Sugar – Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no.11 contract | 13-May       | USc/lb      | 15.0         | 14.9          | 0%            | 17.6                | -15%          |
| Wool – Eastern Market Indicator                                   | 13-May       | Ac/kg clean | 1,876        | 1,886         | -1%           | 1,197               | 57%           |
| Wool – Western Market Indicator                                   | 13-May       | Ac/kg clean | 2,089        | 2,111         | -1%           | 1,359               | 54%           |
| <b>Selected Australian grain export prices</b>                    |              |             |              |               |               |                     |               |
| Australian Premium White (APW) Wheat, FOB Port Adelaide, SA       | 13-May       | A\$/t       | 365          | 375           | -3%           | 398                 | -8%           |
| Australian Standard White (ASW) Wheat, FOB Port Adelaide, SA      | 13-May       | A\$/t       | 357          | 372           | -4%           | 393                 | -9%           |
| Feed Barley – FOB Port Adelaide, SA                               | 13-May       | A\$/t       | 373          | 381           | -2%           | 376                 | -1%           |
| Canola – FOB Kwinana, WA  | 13-May       | A\$/t       | 798          | 798           | 0%            | 794                 | 0%            |
| Grain Sorghum – FOB Brisbane, QLD                                 | 13-May       | A\$/t       | 455          | 457           | 0%            | 434                 | 5%            |
| <b>Selected domestic livestock indicator prices</b>               |              |             |              |               |               |                     |               |
| Beef – Eastern Young Cattle Indicator                             | 13-May       | Ac/kg cwt   | 815          | 803           | 2%            | 693                 | 18%           |
| Mutton – Mutton indicator (18–24 kg fat score 2–3), VIC           | 13-May       | Ac/kg cwt   | 778          | 773           | 1%            | 558                 | 39%           |
| Lamb – National Trade Lamb Indicator                              | 13-May       | Ac/kg cwt   | 1,144        | 1,162         | -2%           | 863                 | 32%           |
| Pig – Eastern Seaboard (60.1–75 kg), NSW buyer price              | 15-Apr       | Ac/kg cwt   | 455          | 457           | 0%            | 446                 | 2%            |
| Live cattle – Light steers to Indonesia                           | 29-Apr       | Ac/kg lwt   | 420          | 430           | -2%           | 345                 | 22%           |
| <b>Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices</b>           |              |             |              |               |               |                     |               |
| Dairy – Whole milk powder   | 6-May        | US\$/t      | 3,741        | 3,666         | 2%            | 4,353               | -14%          |
| Dairy – Skim milk powder  | 6-May        | US\$/t      | 3,547        | 3,448         | 3%            | 2,823               | 26%           |
| Dairy – Cheddar cheese  | 6-May        | US\$/t      | 4,611        | 4,798         | -4%           | 5,263               | -12%          |
| Dairy – Anhydrous milk fat  | 6-May        | US\$/t      | 6,461        | 6,537         | -1%           | 7,243               | -11%          |

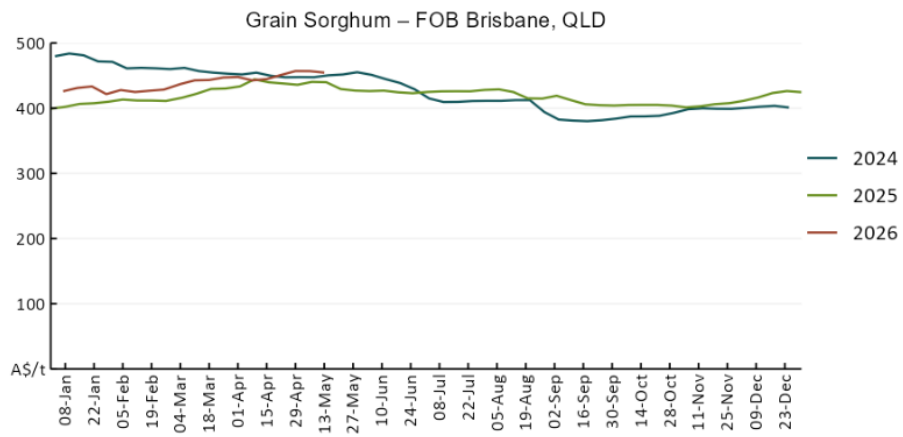
## 2.1. Selected world indicator prices



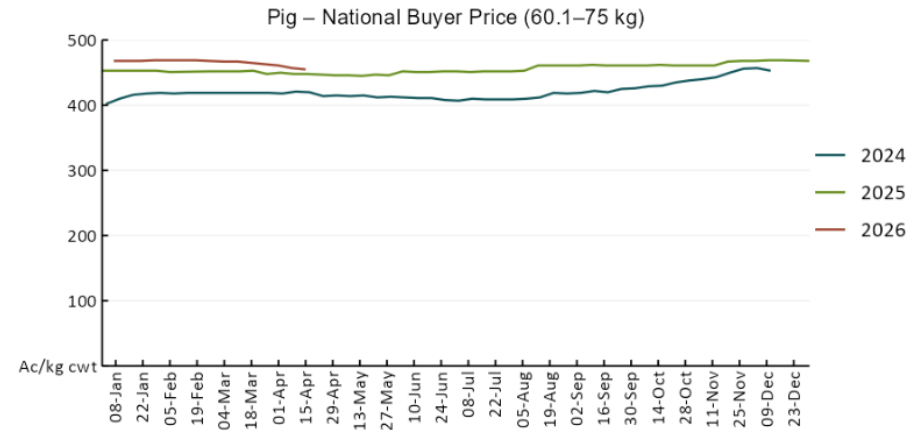
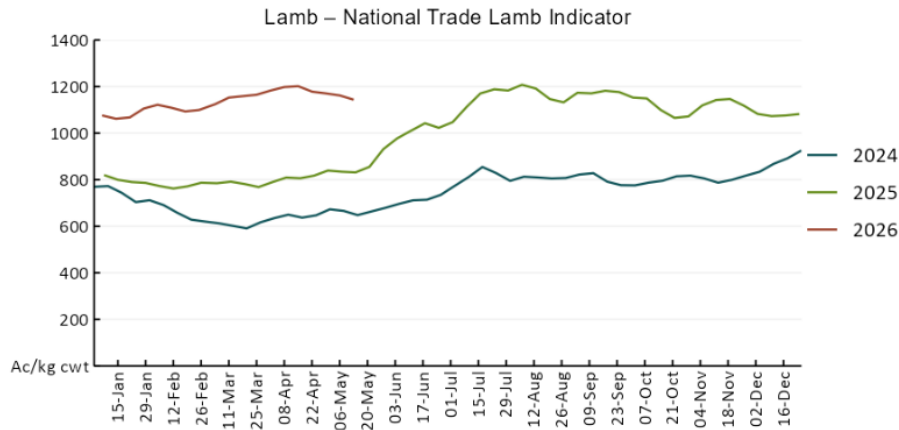
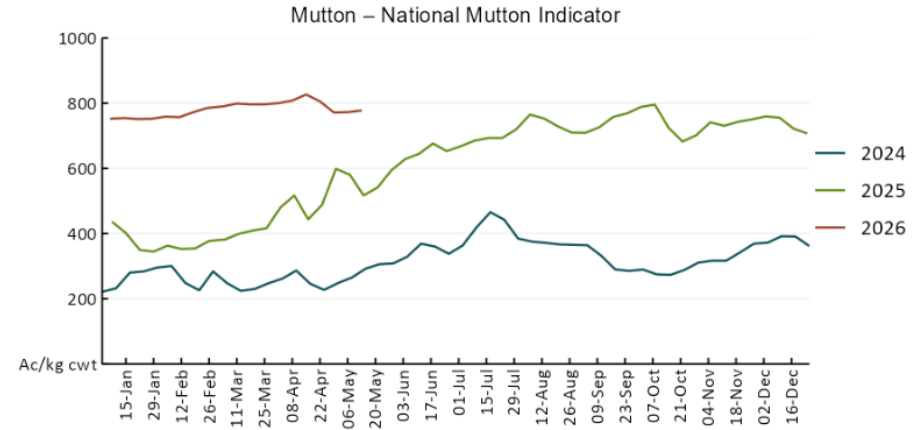
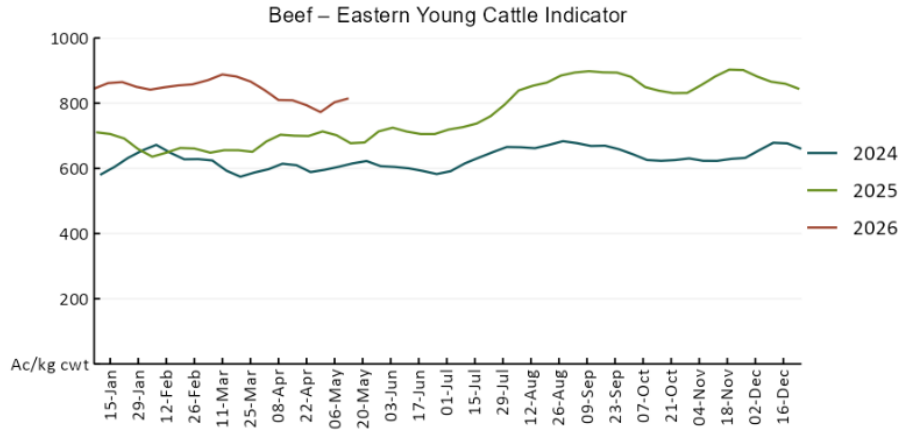


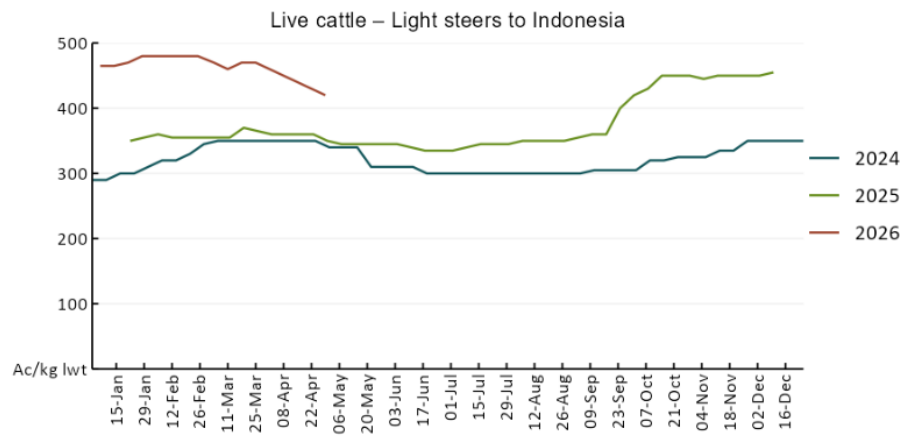
### 3.2 Selected domestic crop indicator prices



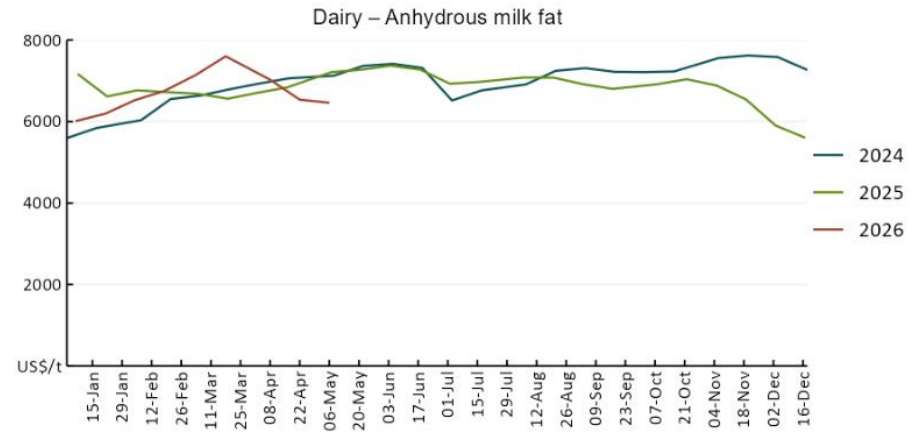
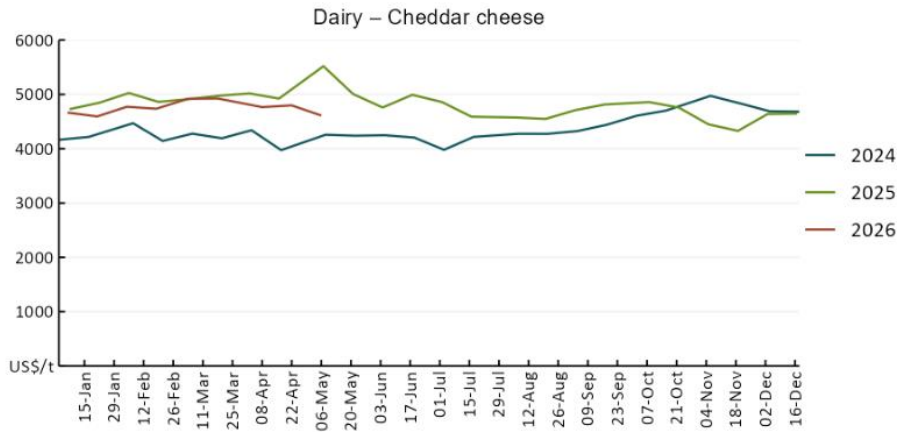
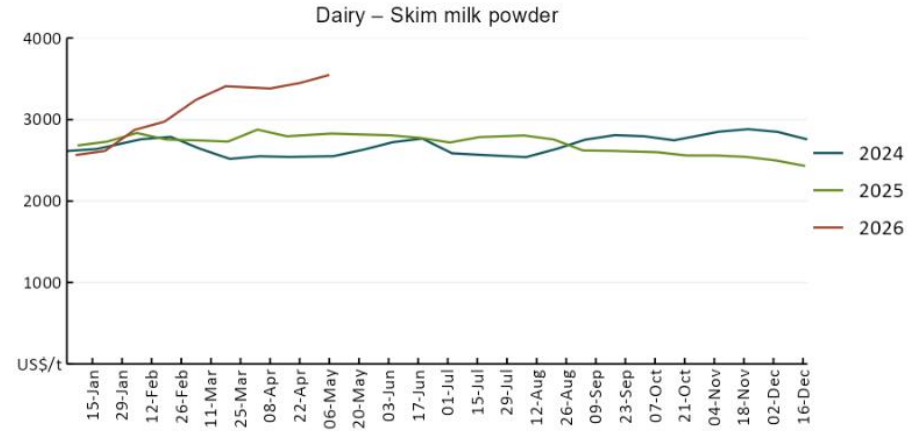
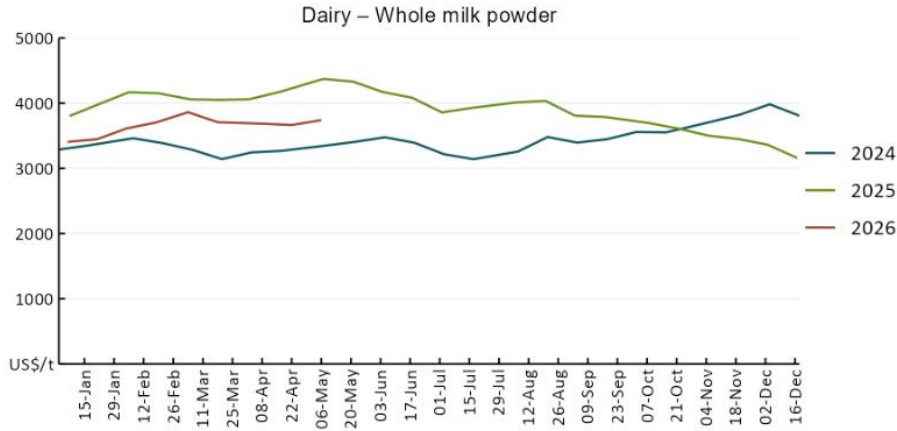


### 3.3 Selected domestic livestock indicator prices

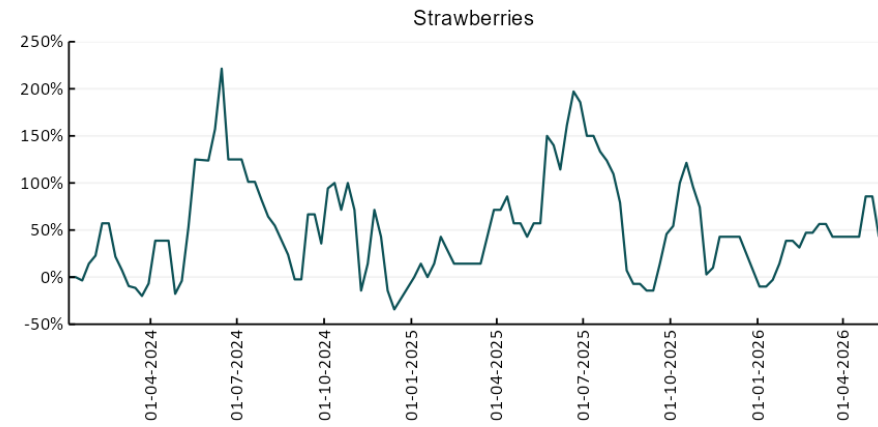
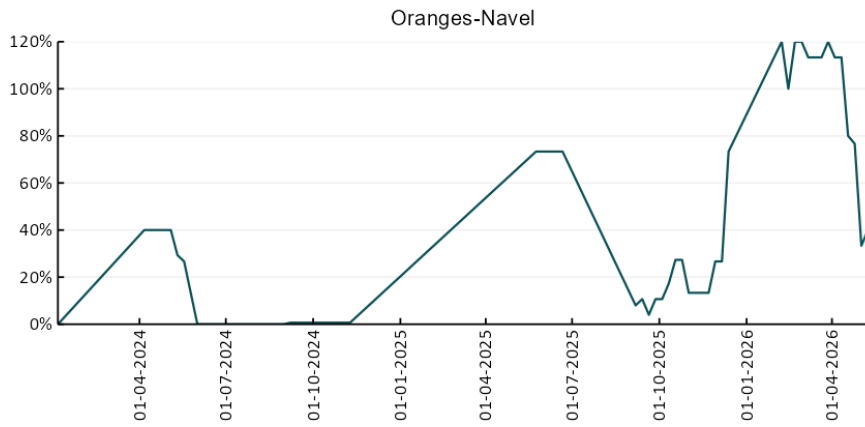
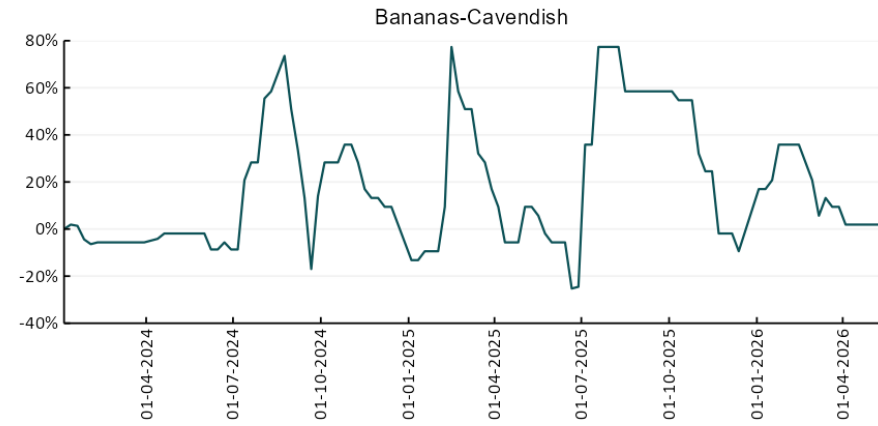
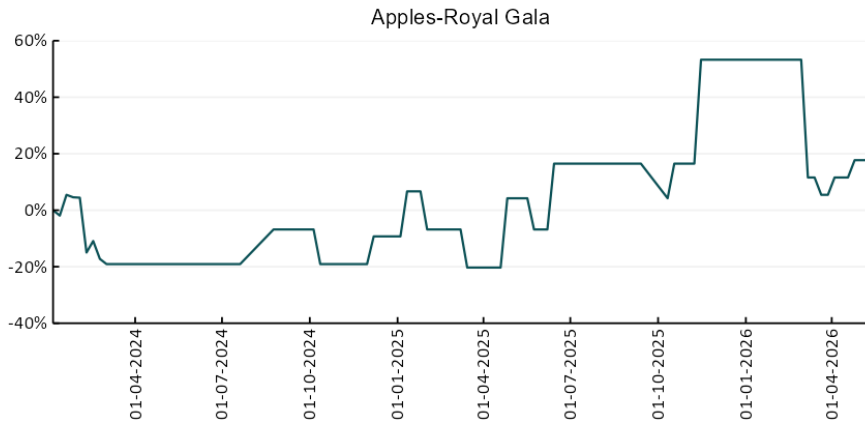


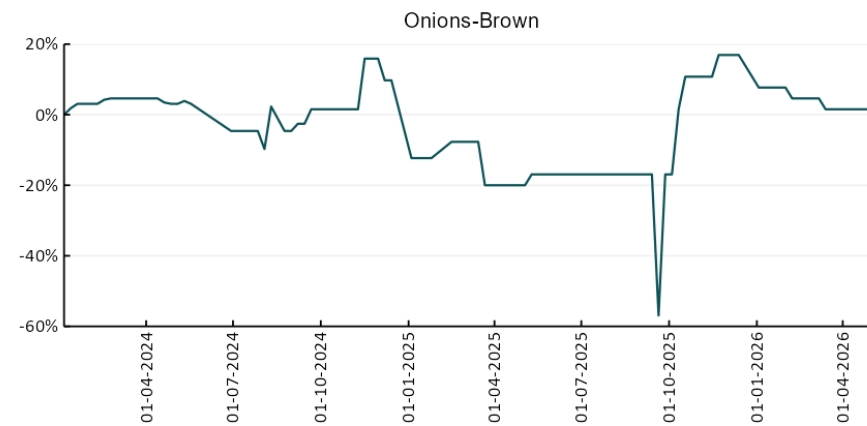
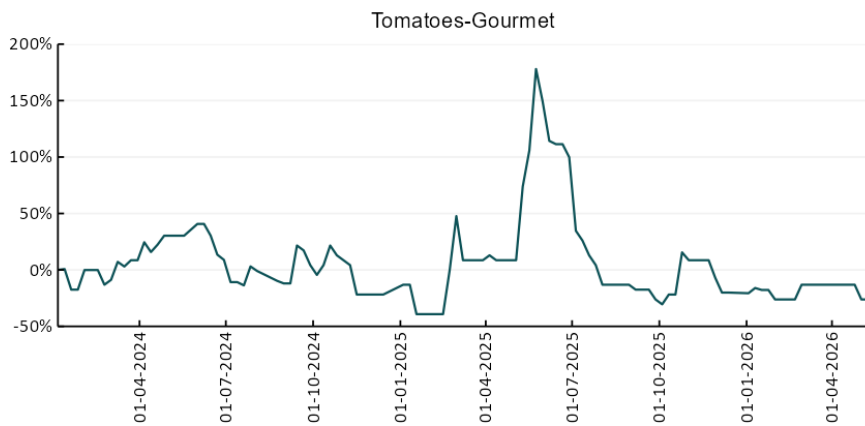
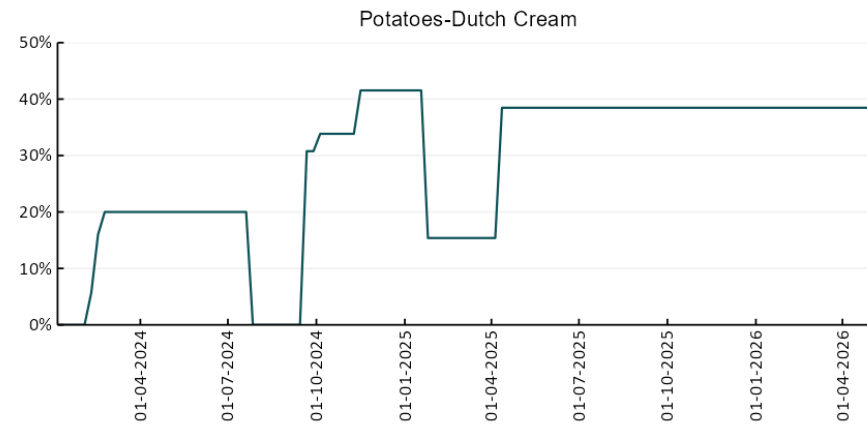
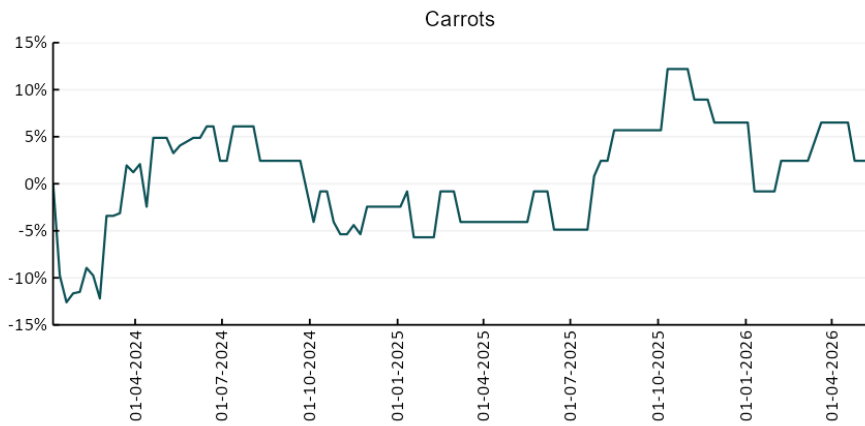


### 3.4 Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices

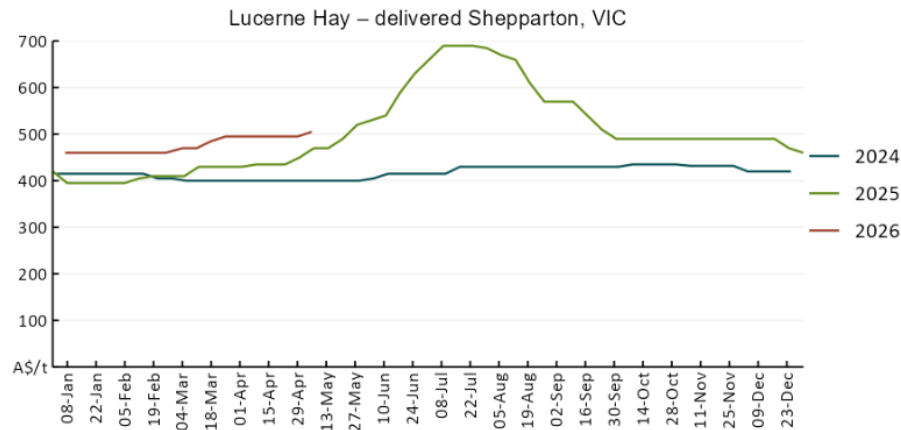
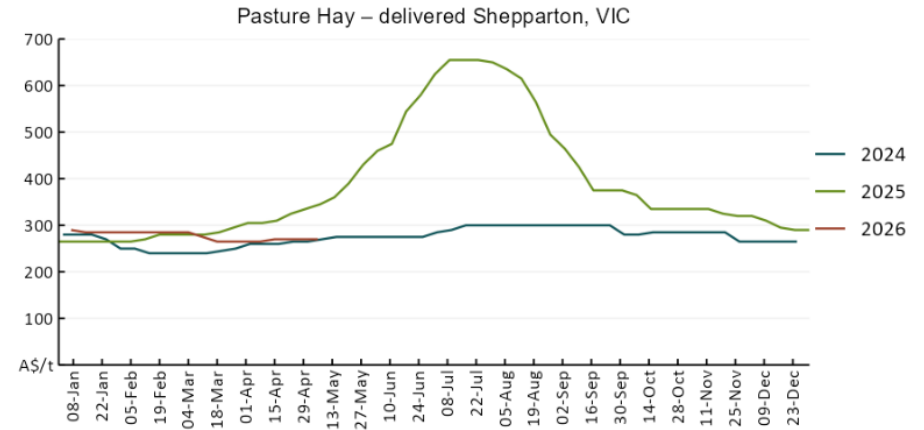
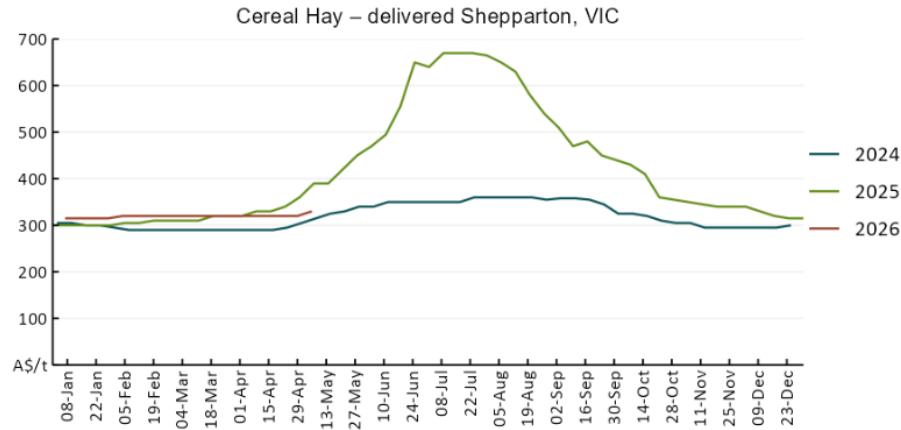


### 3.5 Selected fruit and vegetable prices





### 3.6 Selected domestic fodder indicator prices



## 4. Data attribution

### Climate

Bureau of Meteorology

- Weekly rainfall totals: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/](http://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/isp/watl/rainfall/pme.jsp](http://www.bom.gov.au/isp/watl/rainfall/pme.jsp)
- Seasonal outlook: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary/](http://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/](http://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](http://www.freshstate.com.au)

Pigs

- Australian Pork Limited: [www.australianpork.com.au](http://www.australianpork.com.au)

Dairy

- Global Dairy Trade: [www.globaldairytrade.info/en/product-results/](http://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/](http://www.cotlook.com/)

World sugar

- New York Stock Exchange - Intercontinental Exchange

Wool

- Australian Wool Exchange: [www.awex.com.au/](http://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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