

# Harvest Update January 2012

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# Crop and Pasture Report South Australia



## Crop and Pasture Report - South Australia

This is a bimonthly report prepared by Rural Solutions SA, for the Agribusiness Grains Industry Development Group of Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA).

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### Key links to other information

Dept Environment and Natural Resources - Land condition monitoring project:

[www.environment.sa.gov.au/Knowledge\\_Bank/Science\\_research/Monitoring\\_evaluation\\_analysis/Monitoring/Soil\\_and\\_land\\_condition](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Knowledge_Bank/Science_research/Monitoring_evaluation_analysis/Monitoring/Soil_and_land_condition)

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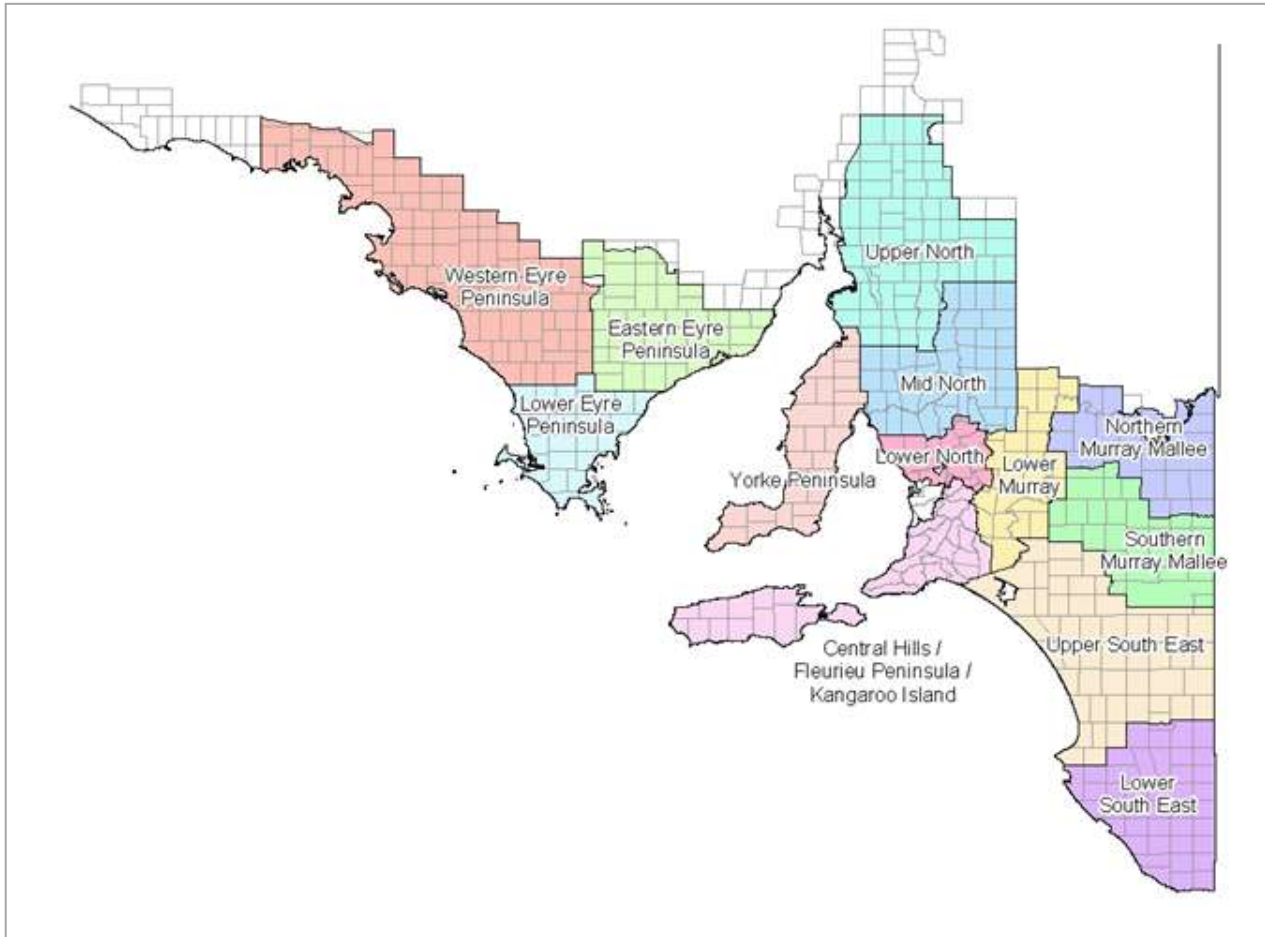
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# 1. CROP REPORTING DISTRICTS

This map shows the reporting districts in South Australia for the Crop and Pasture Report.



## 2. CROP AND PASTURE CONDITIONS

### 2.1. State Summary

#### WEATHER - RAINFALL

South Australian weather and climate data is available from the Bureau of Meteorology website: [www.bom.gov.au/weather/sa/observations](http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/sa/observations)

- Maximum temperatures for November were 1° to 2°C above average across the state with near average temperatures during December 2011.
- High rainfall in the summer and autumn, with late thunder storm activity resulted in the fifth wettest year on record across the State, but the actual growing season rainfall (April to October) was well below average.
- Thunderstorm activity in late November and December 2011, brought strong winds and widespread rain.
- Severe thunderstorms on 17 December 2011, caused flooding and damage to isolated areas across the state.
- November 2011 rainfall was generally average to above average, except for Eyre Peninsula where falls were below average.
- December 2011 rainfall was average to above average depending on thunderstorm activity.

#### CROPS

- Harvest was completed in all but the later districts by the end of December 2011.
- Grain yields have generally been above average; however some districts particularly the Northern Mallee and northern parts of the Upper North only achieved average yields.
- These good yields have been achieved despite well below average growing season rainfall.
- Within districts and even between individual properties, there was considerable yield variation, due mainly to the amount of soil moisture that had been stored from summer and autumn rains.
- Grain quality was generally above average with a high percentage of grain classified into the better quality grades, although there were a few districts with some quality issues
- Quality issues included:
  - Black tipping and weather damage of both wheat and barley in some areas.
  - Pre-harvest sprouting of some varieties in a number of districts, following heavy rainfall events.
  - White grain in both Eyre Peninsula and the Upper North.
  - Mould development on field pea grain following damage from frost and hail.
  - Weather damage of many bean crops, resulting in down-grading and rejection of loads.
- Annual ryegrass populations were high following seed build-up in 2010, reducing crop yields and contaminating grain samples.
- Snail populations have built-up in a number of districts across the state and caused harvesting issues and contaminated grain samples.
- Pulse diseases were generally at low levels, due to low disease pressure and good fungicide management.
- Canola generally performed well across the state with average to above average yields and high oil levels.
- Mice numbers have fallen, however there is concern that they could rapidly build-up again.

#### PASTURES

- The quality of annual pastures has deteriorated, however summer rains have provided some green feed. There is currently adequate feed from stubbles, and livestock across the state are in good condition.

## 2.2. District Reports

### Western Eyre Peninsula

#### WEATHER

- Temperatures have been generally mild to warm with only a few hot days experienced over this period.
- Despite strong winds accompanying thunderstorm activity in November there were few reports of significant damage to standing crops.

#### Rainfall

- Rainfall figures for November and December 2011 were generally below average.
- Most of the November 2011 rain that fell was recorded during a number of widespread thunderstorms which occurred during the last few days of November.
- Thunderstorm activity on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of December also brought rain with falls of 7-10 mm being recorded during each rainfall event.

#### CROPS

- Harvest was well under way by early November and was largely finished in the first week in December.
- Despite the dry conditions throughout September leading to a high degree of variability in yields from different paddocks on each property, most growers reported that across the property their yields have been above the long term average.
- Growers around Haslam, Mt Cooper and Yantabie have reported some of their best yields (4 to 6 t/ha for wheat and 1.9 t/ha for canola).
- Canola yields were very good with yields ranging from 0.8 t/ha to 1.9 t/ha in the more reliable areas.
- Early fungicide applications for leaf and stem rust seemed to have had a dramatic impact on crop yields where disease pressure was high with some growers reporting a 35% yield deficit where they did not spray, and screenings of up to 40%. Powdery mildew also impacted yields in many districts.
- The dry conditions in September 2011 seem to have impacted barley yields and quality to a much greater degree than wheat.
- The majority of the early sown barley was delivered as F2 or F3 due to poor grain size resulting from a dry September.
- Wet conditions in late November 2011 and crop lodging caused difficult conditions for harvesting barley, and some malting varieties were downgraded to feed due to sprouted grain.
- Yield loss due to light frosts experienced in September and October 2011 were more common in the Central Eyre Districts from Kyancutta through to Minnipa than was first thought.
- Snails were at their worst levels ever and caused significant problems at harvest. Conical snails were a particular problem.
- Damp conditions in October and November 2011 saw large numbers of snails move into lodged barley crops, canola (where they moved into the windrows) and peas. Many growers in the Elliston and Streaky Bay districts have bought crushers to enable them to be removed from the grain samples.
- There is likely to be a high degree of stubble burning in 2012, to try and reduce snail numbers.
- Although there was very little sprouted wheat resulting from rainfall in late November 2011, there was a large amount of wheat delivered as AGP due to black fungal staining of the grain.
- Summer weed control began as soon as harvest was complete with damp conditions leading to the germination of high amounts of fleabane, caltrop, heliotrope, melons and skeleton weed.

#### PASTURES

- Feed reserves in pasture paddocks are generally high. November and December 2011 rains have also led to the germination of summer weeds which has increased the amount of green feed available. Stock are in excellent condition.

## Eastern Eyre Peninsula

### WEATHER

- Temperatures have been generally cool to mild with damp mornings
- Only a few hot days were recorded during the period.

### Rainfall

- November rainfall in Eastern Eyre was well below average with most districts only recording 4 to 10 mm.
- Thunderstorm activity around the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2011 brought significant rainfall to the Cleve and Kimba districts bringing their December rainfall figures above average.
- Rainfall for selected sites for December 2011 was: Cleve 46mm (average 23mm), Lock 36 (22) and Kimba 19 (20).

### CROPS

- Although growers in the region were able to begin harvest in late October 2011, damp conditions in the Arno Bay, Pt Neill and Wharminda districts during November and early December caused some difficulties in achieving low enough moisture level for continuous harvesting days.
- By the end of December 2011, harvest across the region was more than 95% complete.
- Despite below average growing season rainfall most growers have reported generally good yields above the long term average.
- The major exceptions being on the heavier soils around Franklin Harbour, Crossville and Kimba where moisture stress in September 2011 lead to poor grain fill.
- Protein levels varied dramatically with rainfall and soil types.
- Many growers in the drier districts have reported delivering significant tonnage of APW and AH quality grain.
- Lower grain prices this season have reduced the gross margins on what has been a high input year due to a high requirement for summer weed control, mice baiting and fungicide applications.
- Pulse grain quality has generally been poor due to moisture stress during September 2011 and fungal infection at grain fill.
- There were reports of some yield impact due to stem rust and powdery mildew around Rudall and Kielpa but wheat yields in these districts were generally good.
- Frost in the Darke Peak, Kielpa and Gum Flat districts resulted in yield decreases of up to 30% on some paddocks.
- White grain disorder resulting from fungal infection was common in areas north of Kimba which lead to quality downgrades at the silos.
- Black fungal staining has also been common in wheat with much of the affected grain being delivered as AGP.
- Rains in late November and December 2011 lead to a rapid germination of summer weeds including fleabane, melons, skeleton weed and heliotrope, which growers will need to control before they set seed, in order to try and reduce the amount of feed for mice over summer.

### PASTURES

- Livestock are in excellent condition and harvested paddocks have high amounts of stubble and summer weeds providing a large amount of balanced feed.
- Perennial pastures have responded well to late rains and contain a high amount of quality feed.

## Lower Eyre Peninsula

### WEATHER

- Temperatures have been generally mild with cool damp evenings.

### Rainfall

- November 2011 rainfall figures for Lower Eyre Peninsula were generally slightly below average (Decile 4 and 5) with much of the rain falling in the last few days of the month.
- Significant thunderstorm activity on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 2011 resulted in average to above average rainfall across the district: Ungarra 40mm (23), Cummins, 27 (20) and Tumby Bay 17 (20).
- There has been little damage reported to standing crops as a result of these rainfall events.

## CROPS

- Generally favourable harvest conditions saw over 90% of the crop area in the region harvested by the end of December 2011.
- Growers in the areas south of Wanilla are waiting for some warmer weather to bring down moisture levels to complete harvest. There have been a number of reports of growers drying grain on farm.
- Although yields have been highly variable from paddock to paddock due to the dry conditions experienced in September 2011, most growers are reporting that on average across the property their crop yields have been above average.
- The impact of the dry period during September 2011 has been greater on barley yields than wheat.
- Canola yields have generally been good with many growers reporting yields in excess of 2 t/ha with high oil content.
- Wheat quality has been variable with growers in the higher rainfall regions reporting that grain protein levels have been lower than normal with much of the wheat being delivered as ASW.
- In the lower rainfall parts of the district, growers have reported that much of their wheat is making APW and AH quality.
- Snails have caused significant issues for grain quality, with many growers sourcing crushers to remove the snails, and there is likely to be increased burning of stubble next year to try and reduce numbers.
- There have been very few reports of shot grain resulting from the rainfall during harvest.
- The benefits of early fungicide application have been evident this season with good control of rusts and mildew minimising yield loss in the region.
- Peas have had significant issues with grain quality due to fungal disease. Growers have had high infection levels along spray lines, and in many instances have chosen not to reap these areas.
- Summer weeds have germinated with late rains, and it will be important for growers to control these before they set seed.

## PASTURES

- Pastures contain a high level of quality feed and stock are in excellent condition.
- Perennial pastures have responded well to rain providing quality green feed.

## Yorke Peninsula

### WEATHER

- Temperatures on Yorke Peninsula over the November- December 2011 harvest period were near average.

### Rainfall

- Rainfall for the growing season was generally below average across the region grading to well below average on Southern Yorke Peninsula.
- Rainfall associated with thunderstorms occurred on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of December. The majority of harvest had been completed prior to these events occurring.

### CROPS

- Harvest was completed across the district by the end of December 2011. Most of the harvest was completed during favourable harvesting conditions in November and early December.
- Yields are generally reported as being above average, particularly in the better farming regions.
- Yields of crops closer to the coastal areas were around average but more significantly affected by the 6 week dry period at the end of September 2011.
- The presence of substantial subsoil moisture leading into the 2011 season is seen as the primary driver of above average yields in a growing season which ended up with below average rainfall.
- The better and deeper soils were particularly responsive, and farmers have recognised the value of summer weed control and are becoming more proactive in this area.
- Wheat yields were above average with good quality, high protein grain resulted in significant quantities being classified into the H2 or H1 grades.
- The wheat variety Mace performed exceptionally well.
- A small amount of sprouting occurred after the December 2011 rain events.
- Barley yields were slightly above average.
- Most malting barley varieties made malt grades, although there was some downgrading due to black point and cleaving.

- Much of the feed barley achieved F1 grading, although a significant amount of the barley variety Fleet in the north of the region, slipped into a lower feed grade due to low test weight.
- Lentil yields ranged from above average in the better areas, to below average in the more northern areas, reflecting the timing of the late spring rains in allowing pod set and fill.
- Quality was satisfactory although more susceptible varieties showed *Ascochyta* and weather staining. Many lentils have been stored on farm rather than delivered.
- Canola yields have been excellent with good oil levels.
- Chickpea yields have also been above average with good grain size. Chickpea prices have held up well in 2011 and there may be an increased interest in this crop on Yorke Peninsula in 2012 at the expense of lentils and peas.
- Field pea yields have been good but with ongoing snail problems at harvest.
- The small area of faba beans on Yorke Peninsula yielded very well with very good prices being obtained.
- Snails have again presented an ongoing issue particularly in canola and field pea crops at harvest. The problem is manageable with appropriate techniques.
- Mice are present in small numbers throughout the district.

### **PASTURES**

- Livestock are in good condition with adequate dry feed available from stubble.

## **Lower North**

### **WEATHER**

- November 2011 temperatures were slightly above average and December temperatures were near average.
- Thunderstorms brought rain to parts of the district, but falls were relatively light.

### **Rainfall**

- Rainfall for November 2011 was above average across the district: Mallala 28mm (17mm) and Kapunda 40mm (26mm).
- December 2011 rainfall varied from average at Roseworthy 25mm (26 mm) to above average at Kapunda 43mm (27mm).

### **CROPS**

- Harvest was all but complete by the end of December 2011.
- Yields across the district were generally above average, except for some areas which missed critical rainfall events or where summer weed control was poor.
- Grain protein levels in wheat and barley were good.
- Black tipping of wheat was an issue in the higher rainfall areas, with Scout, Gladius and Yitpi the worst affected. Significant tonnages were downgraded to GP and Feed.
- Durum yielded very well with good premiums over bread wheat.
- Yitpi had low levels of stem rust, but most growers managed the disease well with minimal yield losses.
- Limited segregations for some varieties (barley, lentils) made delivery difficult.
- Most growers were able to achieve good control of ryegrass, despite high numbers.
- Many canola crops in the lower rainfall areas were successfully direct headed, with minimal losses.
- Canola yields were above average with good oil content, but yields were disappointing relative to the yield of wheat.
- Snail numbers were managed throughout the year with no major problems at harvest.
- Some beans were severely weather damaged and not deliverable.
- Pea yields were generally good, despite frost and hail damage; however some grain was affected by mould and was not deliverable.
- Lentil crops yielded well with no major disease issues.
- There are strong markets for wheat and barley straw from both export and local intensive livestock industries.

### **PASTURES**

- Livestock have been turned onto stubble and are in good condition with adequate feed supply.

## Mid North

### WEATHER

- Conditions during November 2011 were mild to warm, with temperatures slightly above average.
- December 2011 temperatures were near average.

### Rainfall

- Thunderstorms brought heavy rain to parts of the district in both late November and mid December 2011.
- November 2011 rainfall varied from: average at Balaklava 19mm (22mm) to above average; Snowtown 55 (23), Burra 45 (25) and Mintaro 54 (31).
- December 2011 rainfall was well above average: Balaklava 30 (14); Snowtown 37, Burra 64 (17) and Mintaro 71 (23).

### CROPS

- Harvest was almost completed by the end of December 2011.
- Yields were generally above average, although there was a high degree of variability, due to a combination of stored soil moisture, nutrition, weed competition and time of sowing.
- The dry September in 2011 affected some early sown crops.
- High ryegrass populations caused yield losses where there was poor weed control in 2010.
- Durum crops yielded well, with good premiums above bread wheat, but achieving quality standards remains an issue for some growers.
- Fungal staining on wheat resulted in downgrading of some loads.
- Wheat grain proteins were lower than normal with a higher percentage of ASW.
- Canola yields in the early areas were severely affected by the dry conditions in September 2011.
- Canola yields in the higher rainfall areas were generally above average, although some crops were damaged by wind and hail after windrowing.
- Yields of pulses were variable, with early sown crops yielding well, but later sown crops generally poor.
- Disease levels in pulses were generally low, due to improved fungicide management.
- Many bean crops were weather damaged causing staining and field fungi to develop, and significant tonnages were either downgraded or rejected.
- Pea pods that had been frosted or hail damaged developed mould, resulting in downgrading or rejection of loads. Mould appeared worse in later harvested crops and along spray wheel tracks, and some growers decided not to harvest these areas.
- Lentil crops yielded well, with some minor staining and down-grading.
- Most grain has been delivered into the silos system with lower levels stored on-farm compared to last season.
- Thunderstorms in November and December 2011 have germinated cereals and other summer weeds, and growers have already commenced spraying.

### PASTURES

- Livestock have been turned onto stubble with adequate feed supplies.

## Upper North

### WEATHER

- Temperatures for November and December 2011 were average to below average, with many fine days, although some days were reasonably windy.
- Extremely strong winds were experienced across the region on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2011, with wind gusts up to 87 km/hr recorded at Pt Augusta

### Rainfall

- A significant thunderstorm on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2011 caused localised flooding and considerable wind and water damage to farm infrastructure across the region.
- Monthly rainfall totals for November 2011 were average to above average as a result of thunderstorms.
- November 2011 totals (in mm) for selected locations with monthly averages in brackets: Appila 36(28), Hawker 30(23), Jamestown 50(34), Melrose 30(37), Orroroo 39(26), Pt Pirie 27(24), Yongala 49(28).

- Total rainfall at selected sites for December 2011: Appila 23(26), Hawker 52(22), Jamestown 42(27), Melrose 57(28), Orroroo 78(23), Pt Pirie 50(23), Yongala 46(24).

## **CROPS**

- Harvest was complete by early December 2011 in the western part of the region, near Pt Pirie, while growers around Jamestown only started harvesting in late November 2011.
- Most growers in the northern and eastern parts of the region finished harvest in mid-late December 2011.
- Grain yields and quality have been variable across the district, with reports of some cereal crops yielding well above average, while others were significantly below average.
- Most wheat crops achieved H1-APW, although some with lower protein only made ASW.
- A number of crops right throughout the region had shot grain from rains and humid conditions in late November - early December 2011.
- Crops sown onto 2010 fallow, and those that had summer weeds controlled, showed superior growth and yield, due to the extra stored soil moisture.
- Some pulse crops around Appila and Booleroo Centre, were low yielding due to frost damage in September 2011.
- White grain disorder has been found in the region again this season, stretching from Quorn to Appila.
- Annual ryegrass levels have increased in many crops, with large seed build-up which will cause problems in future years.
- Snails and locusts have become a nuisance for many growers this season, particularly as a contaminant in grain. Snail numbers have been much higher than experienced in recent years. Locusts occurred mainly around Peterborough in November- December 2011, but moved toward Jamestown in mid December.
- Summer weeds have started to germinate, with mainly heliotrope and star thistles in paddocks, although fleabane and caltrop have now also germinated.

## **PASTURES**

- Some hay in the region (particularly around Laura and Gladstone) was damaged due to untimely rain in November 2011, while it was lying in paddocks. Some windrows were blown about by strong winds also.
- A number of paddocks in the region, already have low surface cover levels, due to below average pasture production this season. Many growers commented their pastures simply did not perform or get-away this season.
- Livestock are in reasonable condition around the district although lice remain a problem for some. Sales at Jamestown sheep markets in November and December 2011 have been very good.

## **Central Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula, Kangaroo Island**

### **WEATHER**

- Daily maximum temperatures were slightly above average for Kingscote in November and average in December 2011. Daily maximum temperatures were average in both November and December 2011 for Strathalbyn.

### **Rainfall**

- November 2011 rainfall was average at Kingscote 20mm and below average at Strathalbyn 15mm.
- December 2011 rainfall total was for Kingscote 52mm (average 16mm) and Strathalbyn 31 (22)

## **CROPS**

### **Kangaroo Island:**

- Harvest is progressing well with about 50% complete by end of December. The wheat harvest only commenced in mid December 2011.
- Yields – canola average (1.8t/ha with oil at 45-46%), beans (2.5t/ha), soft wheat (4.2t/ha)
- There are no issues with screenings, and protein levels in biscuit wheat are average to above average.
- There was no sign of damage to crops from the rainfall event on the 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2011 (with Kingscote receiving 24 mm and Parndana 41mm), but the rainfall on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2011 has caused some damage.
- There are some issues with snails in canola (especially from the Hd MacGillivray). A third canola grade has been created as the snails are too small to clean out of the canola.
- There are no grain delivery issues, with KI Pure Grain able to open other segregations as required.

- There are currently no issues with summer weeds but that will be dependent on any follow up rains.

### **Central Hills/Fleurieu:**

- Harvest was all but completed by the end of December 2011.
- Grain yields have been variable with a late frost in September 2011 impacting yields. Grain protein levels are generally lower, but in some areas protein levels are good. Overall the yields will be average to above average.
- Snails are a problem in many areas with some grain being rejected.
- There has been a high level of black tipping in barley, especially in early sown crops.
- The rain has had limited impact on grain quality, although the lower temperatures have slowed up harvest.
- Skeleton weed is a problem in the sandier areas and more weeds are likely to germinate following the rain in mid December 2011.

### **PASTURES**

- Pasture feed has dried off on KI, except for some areas on the far western end in low lying damp areas. The December 2011 rainfall has provided an excellent boost to kikuyu and other summer active perennial pastures.
- Summer fodder crops are looking above average and responding well to the late rain.
- Livestock are generally in good condition with hand feeding commencing in some areas, particularly the lower rainfall eastern end.
- Livestock are in good condition throughout the whole region.

## **Northern Murray Mallee**

### **WEATHER**

- November and December temperatures were close to average.
- Cooler weather conditions through the ripening months enabled the crops to fill grain.

### **Rainfall**

- Loxton received higher than average rainfall, with 36 mm and 47mm of rain for November and December 2011, mainly attributed to major storm events.

### **CROPS**

- Harvest finished in early to mid December 2011, for the vast majority of growers, and only the larger operators and some of the later Mallee districts were still harvesting at the end of December.
- Wheat yields were average to above average, ranging from 1.2 to 2 t/ha; and barley 0.2 t/ha above wheat.
- Generally grain quality was better than 2010, with low grain protein being the major cause of downgrading this season.
- Low proteins were probably due to low residual soil nitrogen levels and few opportunities to apply nitrogen fertiliser throughout the growing season.
- Grain screening levels were low and test weight figures acceptable to good.
- Large isolated thunderstorms through November 2011 (where some farms received up to 75 mm), resulted in shot grain in some areas in the Northern Mallee. This was quantitatively determined this year by the Falling Number method.
- Rain events delayed harvest on a number of occasions through November and December 2011
- Summer weed spraying started mid to late November 2011, controlling some early weed germinations of innocent weed, melons, heliotrope and caltrop.
- There were reports of small infestations of plague locust; nevertheless the population has largely collapsed.
- There are isolated reports of slightly elevated mice numbers, but generally populations are low.
- Mice numbers may rise following harvest due to better feed supplies available.
- A slightly increased number of smaller Raptor birds evident around the Mallee may indicate the presence of mice.
- Rabbits are becoming more evident throughout the Mallee districts, and significant crop damage was evident on canola and lupins around Alawoona in early 2011.

### **PASTURES**

- Growers will shift stock on to clean harvested stubble as soon as possible.

## Southern Murray Mallee

### WEATHER

- Warm to hot day temperatures occurred in November and December 2011 with mild nights.

### Rainfall

- Rain throughout November and December 2011 interrupted harvest activities, however drying winds helped farmers resume harvesting without too much delay.
- Significant variation in falls for November occurred, with some parts of the district receiving double the amount of rainfall and a longer harvest delay.
- Rainfall for December 2011 was well above average with areas receiving decile 9 or 10 rainfall totals.
- Some parts of the district (particularly between Lameroo and Pinnaroo) have recorded well above average rainfall totals for the year, however most fell outside the growing season.

### CROPS

- The dry September 2011 conditions hastened crop development this year, and harvest began on average 2 weeks earlier.
- Most growers completed harvest before the end of 2011.
- Canola has been the standout crop for many growers, with slightly above average yields, good oil content, combined with very good prices.
- Most farmers were able to harvest cereals, without too much downgrading as a result of the weather, and have reported mixed results in terms of yield and quality with an overall average result.
- Protein was on the low side for wheat, but generally good for most. There were minimal reports of sprouting.
- Malting barley has been disappointing in terms of poor varietal performance, with reports of poor head retention and significant frost damage, in varieties such as Buloke and Commander.
- Frost was a bigger issue than first anticipated, with farmers reporting significant yield losses of up to 80% in some individual paddocks, and an estimated loss of up to 25% across the greater district. Losses were most likely caused by dry September conditions and frosts in October.
- Mice and other pests have not been an issue, although there have been sightings of post harvest mouse activity in paddocks.
- Summer weeds are growing well, and are quite advanced as a result of good November and December 2011 rainfall. Some summer spraying has begun.

### PASTURES

- Livestock are grazing good crop stubbles and are keeping good condition.
- Some supplementary feeding is taking place.
- Summer weeds are providing green pick, in paddocks that have not been sprayed yet.

## Lower Murray

### WEATHER

- Mild November and December 2011 conditions, with rainfall below average, have occurred in the majority of the region
- Temperatures in the region have been average.
- Heavy downpours and thunder storms that affected other areas of the Mallee failed to make a large impact on the Lower Murray Mallee

### Rainfall

- November and December 2011 rainfall was average.

### CROPS

- Early November 2011 winds played havoc with canola windrows.
- Yields varied greatly between the northern and southern parts of the Lower Murray Mallee.
- North of Cambrai, average wheat yields were just below 2t/ha, with high protein resulting in most grain being classed H1 or H2.

- North of Cambrai, barley is yielding an average of 1.7t/ha, with half getting malt and half going to feed due to high protein content.
- South of Cambrai, wheat is yielding an average of 3.5t/ha again in the H1 & H2 classification, whilst barley is averaging 2.8t/ha, with most malting varieties receiving malt classification.
- Canola has yielded an average of 0.7t/ha
- There are no major reports of sprouting in the area, however some grain has been downgraded due to weather staining.
- Skeleton weed is an issue in cropped paddocks.
- There are no major hold ups with grain storage and handling
- Late October and early November 2011 saw locust damage in some crops around the Sedan/Blackhill area, impacting on potential yield.
- Adult locusts caused damage in some areas where they had not been controlled during the earlier nymphal stages.
- Snails are the only main pest of issue, causing contamination in canola windrows and grain samples.

### **PASTURES**

- Summer feed is running low and stubbles will need to be utilised to carry over stock.

## **Upper South East**

### **WEATHER**

- Temperatures for November and December 2011 were mild.

### **Rainfall**

- Monthly rainfall totals for November and December 2011 were below average for most of the district.

### **CROPS**

- Harvest was completed by the majority of producers before Christmas 2011, with minimal weather delays.
- Two significant rain events in late November and mid December 2011 had little impact on grain quality. Yields have been average across most crop species.
- Late sown oats and barley were 25% lower yielding, compared to earlier sown crops.
- Canola has yielded above average, with the new hybrid varieties yielding 20% above traditional varieties. Overall the quality of all grain has been excellent, although there were isolated incidences of black fungal stain in wheat, with reports of some loads being rejected at the silos.
- There were isolated cases of staining in beans which were downgraded from F1 to F2.
- There have been major issues with the summer weeds, particularly flax leaf fleabane. Chemical applications started late December 2011.
- Skeleton weed has become a problem in some areas, and sprayed to prevent seed set.
- Another significant rain event is likely to result in other summer weed issues including melons, caltrop and potato weed.
- Desiccation of many pea crops before harvest, was carried out due to milk thistle infestation.
- Significant amounts of grain, and in particular malt barley, is being warehoused on farm.
- Producers are being advised to be vigilant on stem rust in oats, which was a significant issue in 2011, particularly if a green bridge occurs across summer to host the fungus. Better fungicide management will be required to target the potential issues arising in 2012 if a green bridge occurs.
- Red legged earth mite has been tested in the Upper South East for pesticide resistance, and none has been found.
- Numerous growers have reported difficulty threshing Scout wheat, particularly when conditions are mild, and header speed is high. However the benefits of these crops far outweigh any difficulties with harvesting the crop.

### **PASTURES**

- Native budworm has been reported in large numbers in lucerne, but beneficial insects are also in large numbers. Many producers are opting for an integrated pest management approach to control native budworm outbreaks.

- Grasshoppers have been reported in large numbers, in small bands across the Upper South East region, and are being controlled through insecticide use, including aerial spraying of tree and scrub areas, which are acting as breeding grounds.
- Livestock are still holding well in condition score, but due to a dry spring, the dry pasture reserves have been significantly reduced, and many producers are reporting that stubbles are being grazed quicker than normal, raising concerns of a feed gap in the next few months. Hay is still readily available at below average prices. Lucerne hay yields have been average.
- Due to the low price available for lucerne seed, many producers are opting to finish lambs on their lucerne, instead of harvesting for seed.

## Lower South East

### WEATHER

- Temperatures for November and December 2011 were mild.

### Rainfall

- Monthly rainfall totals for November 2011 far exceeded the average from previous years, making it a wetter than normal November.
- December 2011 rainfall was significantly below average for most areas.

### CROPS

- Harvest has been completed by the majority of producers around the Naracoorte area.
- Further south, around Millicent, most crops have been harvested, expect for barley and wheat, with many producers finishing their barley and starting on wheat.
- Harvest commenced earlier than usual, and will finish early, with minimal interruptions to harvest due to weather events.
- Significant rainfall events were patchy across the Lower South East, and had minimal impact on grain quality.
- Overall yields have been average across crop species.
- Some wheat and bean crops have yielded above average in the district.
- Some canola has yielded below average due to water logging.
- Initial indications of oil content in canola are good, with readings around the 49% oil content.
- Reports of some canola loads being rejected due to snail contamination have occurred.
- The majority of harvested grain is sitting in on-farm storage at this stage.

### PASTURES

- There is a high demand for good quality hay from dairy producers in the Lower South East (LSE) and Victoria.
- High amounts of poorer quality hay are available at cheaper prices in the district.
- There have been problems with high levels of fog grass, present in hay cut this year, decreasing the overall quality of many hay crops.
- Pastures have now mostly dried off after the high temperatures experienced at the end of December 2011 and start of January 2012, but excellent reserves of high quality dry feed still remain.
- Livestock are still in excellent condition and are holding their condition scores in the district.

### 3. CROP PRODUCTION ESTIMATES

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONS SOUTH AUSTRALIA - FIELD CROP PRODUCTION ESTIMATES Pg 1									
January 2012									
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CROP	Western Eyre Peninsula	Lower Eyre Peninsula	Eastern Eyre Peninsula	Yorke Peninsula	Upper North	Mid North	Lower North	Subtotal	
<b>WHEAT</b>	470,000	135,000	375,000	165,000	250,000	223,000	44,000	1,662,000	<i>ha</i>
	658,000	432,000	562,000	495,000	422,000	580,000	132,000	3,281,000	<i>t</i>
<b>DURUM</b>	0	0	0	36,000	13,000	13,000	6,000	68,000	<i>ha</i>
	0	0	0	110,000	35,000	37,000	23,000	205,000	<i>t</i>
<b>BARLEY</b>	105,000	86,000	105,000	187,000	117,000	110,000	35,000	745,000	<i>ha</i>
	146,000	258,000	162,000	590,000	210,000	286,000	110,000	1,762,000	<i>t</i>
<b>OATS</b>	15,000	3,200	5,000	5,000	9,000	8,000	2,000	47,200	<i>ha</i>
	15,000	6,400	5,000	12,500	11,000	17,000	4,500	71,400	<i>t</i>
<b>RYE</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<i>ha</i>
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<i>t</i>
<b>TRITICALE</b>	1,800	900	4,500	2,000	2,800	4,000	1,000	17,000	<i>ha</i>
	2,200	2,500	6,300	6,000	5,000	10,000	3,000	35,000	<i>t</i>
<b>PEAS</b>	6,000	6,500	5,500	22,000	28,000	25,000	8,000	101,000	<i>ha</i>
	6,000	8,000	4,500	36,000	34,000	32,000	13,000	133,500	<i>t</i>
<b>LUPINS</b>	1,200	22,000	5,000	1,500	3,000	3,000	900	36,600	<i>ha</i>
	1,200	26,000	5,000	2,200	4,000	4,200	1,100	43,700	<i>t</i>
<b>BEANS</b>	0	6,600	200	12,000	7,000	14,000	5,500	45,300	<i>ha</i>
	0	8,000	150	26,000	9,000	24,000	9,000	76,150	<i>t</i>
<b>CHICKPEAS</b>	0	200	200	5,000	2,400	4,000	200	12,000	<i>ha</i>
	0	300	150	10,000	3,200	5,200	250	19,100	<i>t</i>
<b>LENTILS</b>	0	2,000	0	78,000	4,700	12,000	6,000	102,700	<i>ha</i>
	0	3,000	0	140,000	6,300	19,000	8,500	176,800	<i>t</i>
<b>VETCH</b>	200	1,000	500	2,000	5,000	2,600	300	11,600	<i>ha</i>
	150	800	400	2,000	3,500	2,600	300	9,750	<i>t</i>
<b>CANOLA</b>	6,000	58,000	9,000	23,000	19,000	44,000	11,000	170,000	<i>ha</i>
	7,200	104,000	10,500	46,000	30,000	66,000	17,000	280,700	<i>t</i>
<b>HAY</b>	5,500	4,500	5,500	20,000	18,000	21,000	7,000	81,500	<i>ha</i>
<b>(not included in total)</b>	11,000	16,000	14,000	100,000	68,000	85,000	28,000	322,000	<i>t</i>
<b>TOTAL ha</b>	<b>605,200</b>	<b>321,400</b>	<b>509,900</b>	<b>538,500</b>	<b>460,900</b>	<b>462,600</b>	<b>119,900</b>	<b>3,018,400</b>	<i>ha</i>
<b>TOTAL t</b>	<b>835,750</b>	<b>849,000</b>	<b>756,000</b>	<b>1,475,700</b>	<b>773,000</b>	<b>1,083,000</b>	<b>321,650</b>	<b>6,094,100</b>	<i>t</i>

## PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND REGIONS SOUTH AUSTRALIA - FIELD CROP PRODUCTION ESTIMATES Pg 2

January 2012

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CROP	Kangaroo	Central Hills	Lower	Nth Murray	Sth Murray	Upper	Lower	TOTALS
	Island	& Fleurieu	Murray	Mallee	Mallee	South East	South East	
WHEAT	5,500	6,600	66,000	200,000	131,000	72,000	25,000	2,168,100 <i>ha</i>
	13,800	14,500	100,000	180,000	180,000	170,000	85,000	4,024,300 <i>t</i>
DURUM	0	300	800	500	0	4,800	0	74,400 <i>ha</i>
	0	600	1,000	350	0	12,000	0	218,950 <i>t</i>
BARLEY	2,700	8,500	55,000	55,000	115,000	85,000	17,500	1,083,700 <i>ha</i>
	6,800	20,000	82,000	50,000	150,000	195,000	56,000	2,321,800 <i>t</i>
OATS	3,300	1,800	3,000	3,000	4,000	9,500	4,000	75,800 <i>ha</i>
	8,000	4,500	3,600	2,400	6,000	14,000	9,000	118,900 <i>t</i>
RYE	0	0	1,500	4,000	3,000	1,000	0	9,500 <i>ha</i>
	0	0	1,400	2,200	3,500	100	0	7,200 <i>t</i>
TRITICALE	600	2,100	10,000	18,000	22,500	8,000	2,000	80,200 <i>ha</i>
	1,500	4,500	14,000	13,000	31,000	12,000	5,500	116,500 <i>t</i>
PEAS	400	1,500	1,500	0	1,500	3,500	400	109,800 <i>ha</i>
	600	2,600	1,000	0	1,400	4,500	800	144,400 <i>t</i>
LUPINS	1,500	1,300	1,000	1,500	5,000	15,000	3,000	64,900 <i>ha</i>
	2,400	2,400	700	750	4,000	20,000	5,000	78,950 <i>t</i>
BEANS	200	400	100	0	1,200	12,000	13,000	72,200 <i>ha</i>
	300	800	70	0	900	17,000	26,000	121,220 <i>t</i>
CHICKPEAS	0	0	0	0	0	200	200	12,400 <i>ha</i>
	0	0	0	0	0	250	300	19,650 <i>t</i>
LENTILS	0	0	0	0	200	3,000	200	106,100 <i>ha</i>
	0	0	0	0	150	4,000	350	181,300 <i>t</i>
VETCH	0	0	100	0	1,000	400	0	13,100 <i>ha</i>
	0	0	70	0	900	400	0	11,120 <i>t</i>
CANOLA	4,800	2,000	4,000	25,000	8,500	33,000	12,000	259,300 <i>ha</i>
	8,500	3,400	2,800	15,000	8,500	50,000	22,000	390,900 <i>t</i>
HAY (not included in total)	6,500	23,000	6,000	2,500	5,000	47,000	40,000	211,500 <i>ha</i>
	32,000	103,000	21,000	4,400	20,000	180,000	160,000	842,400 <i>t</i>
TOTAL ha	19,000	24,500	143,000	307,000	292,900	247,400	77,300	4,129,500 <i>ha</i>
TOTAL t	41,900	53,300	206,640	263,700	386,350	499,250	209,950	7,755,190 <i>t</i>

## South Australian Field Crops

Area sown for grain, grain production, five year average and current year estimates

Crop	Unit	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	5yr Av	2011/12
Wheat	Area (ha)	2,035,781	2,101,227	2,043,000	2,111,100	2,237,100	2,105,600	2,168,100
	Prod (t)	1,481,974	2,250,970	2,347,000	4,032,500	5,818,500	3,186,200	4,024,300
Durum	Area (ha)	50,250	54,750	59,100	60,000	69,800	58,800	74,400
	Prod (t)	25,700	95,400	88,700	157,200	240,600	121,500	218,950
Barley	Area (ha)	1,154,060	1,225,163	1,210,500	1,152,300	965,200	1,141,400	1,083,700
	Prod (t)	1,029,030	1,776,660	1,795,000	2,544,100	2,839,100	1,996,800	2,321,800
Oats	Area (ha)	82,383	85,659	72,100	79,700	75,300	79,000	75,800
	Prod (t)	44,362	95,457	80,200	136,600	152,300	101,800	118,900
Rye	Area (ha)	8,600	9,000	11,000	9,400	9,500	9,500	9,500
	Prod (t)	2,700	4,800	7,300	8,200	11,600	6,900	7,200
Triticale	Area (ha)	89,880	93,967	85,700	85,900	85,700	88,200	80,200
	Prod (t)	53,379	97,649	86,600	117,700	167,100	104,500	116,500
Peas	Area (ha)	145,190	146,874	128,500	127,700	126,300	134,900	109,800
	Prod (t)	91,084	152,909	129,100	181,150	238,500	158,500	144,400
Lupins	Area (ha)	84,792	83,372	74,000	66,500	64,900	74,700	64,900
	Prod (t)	46,795	77,898	69,600	97,200	120,100	82,300	78,950
Beans	Area (ha)	73,607	70,877	72,400	71,200	71,500	71,900	72,200
	Prod (t)	39,398	105,494	82,880	144,350	168,600	108,100	121,220
Chickpeas	Area (ha)	4,640	5,993	11,550	13,200	10,700	9,200	12,400
	Prod (t)	2,173	5,075	9,200	17,150	16,000	9,900	19,650
Lentils	Area (ha)	57,620	54,603	46,500	52,100	97,700	61,700	106,100
	Prod (t)	23,456	55,952	36,870	89,450	174,350	76,000	181,300
Vetch	Area (ha)	16,431	15,756	15,900	12,900	12,800	14,800	13,100
	Prod (t)	3,639	8,629	4,980	10,650	12,900	8,200	11,120
Canola	Area (ha)	157,672	163,351	178,200	182,700	196,500	175,700	259,300
	Prod (t)	72,938	152,989	192,600	297,100	381,700	219,500	390,900
Hay (not included in total)	Area (ha)	170,000	220,000	288,000	274,100	244,200	239,300	211,500
	Prod (t)	250,000	520,000	831,000	1,004,000	1,066,000	734,200	842,400
<b>TOTAL</b>	Area (ha)	3,960,900	4,110,600	4,008,500	4,024,700	4,023,000	4,025,500	4,129,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	Prod (t)	2,916,600	4,879,900	4,930,000	7,833,400	10,341,400	6,180,300	7,755,200

### Notes:

Current year estimates assume average rainfall and temperature conditions for the remainder of the growing season. Grain estimates are for total grain production and include grain delivered for immediate sale and warehousing plus grain retained on farm for seed, feed and future sale.

Hay estimates are for total hay production and include all pasture, cereal and other crops cut for hay, both dryland and irrigated.

The estimates are based on information provided by Rural Solutions SA District Reporters from a variety of sources, and are updated throughout the season as conditions change and further information becomes available. They are intended to provide an indication of crop potential current at the time of preparation of the report.

The estimates are updated using ABS census data as available.

Prepared 9 January 2012