



South Australian Crop and Pasture Report

2023-24 Crop Establishment

July 2023



Government
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Department of Primary
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Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

Information current as of 14 July 2023
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Key link to Weather information

[Bureau of Meteorology - Weather and rainfall observations](#)

Notes on the calculation of crop estimates

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 to PIRSA 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 at the time the report is prepared.

The estimates are updated using ABS data as available.

State Crops and Pastures: 2023-24 Crop Establishment

Summary

Average rainfall has been received in many areas of South Australia during April, May and June, enabling a strong start to the cropping season. Seeding is now completed, and crops and pastures are progressing well. However, the rainfall outlook for late winter and spring (Figure 2) remains a concern for growers.

Whilst there is no substantial change to the crop mix predicted for 2023-24 season, there continues to be a gradual reduction in barley area sown, which is mainly being replaced by wheat. There is also a slight increase expected in lentil area across the state as more growers explore this crop as a rotation option.

With crops now established, grain production for 2023-24 is estimated to be 8.8 million tonnes, based on the core assumption that crop yields will be close to the 10-year average. Good subsoil moisture levels are helping to offset the concern over the forecast for a drier late winter and spring associated with an El Nino Alert. Warm conditions in late May and early June have accelerated crop development, heightening frost risk for early sown crops in some districts.

Sown crop area and production for previous six seasons

Seasons	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24 <i>estimated</i>
Area sown (ha)	3,572,000	3,898,000	4,003,000	3,942,000	3,942,000	3,977,000
Production (t)	5,795,000	6,467,000	9,135,000	8,445,000	12,788,000	8,813,000
Farm gate value	\$1.7 billion	\$2 billion	\$2.5 billion	\$3.3 billion	\$4.6 billion	

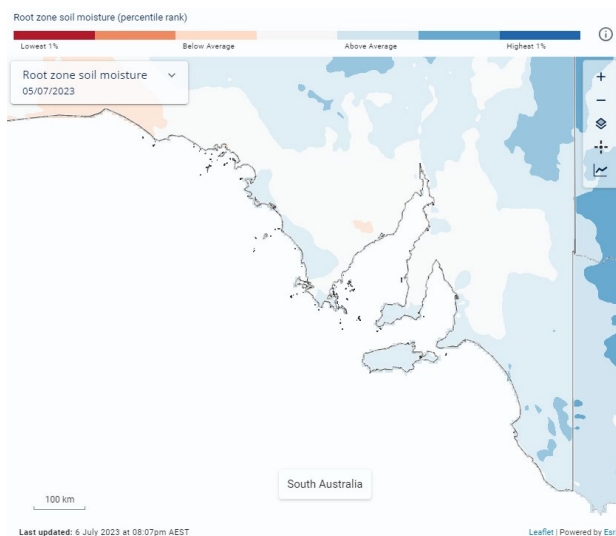


Figure 1: Root zone soil moisture, 5th July 2023.

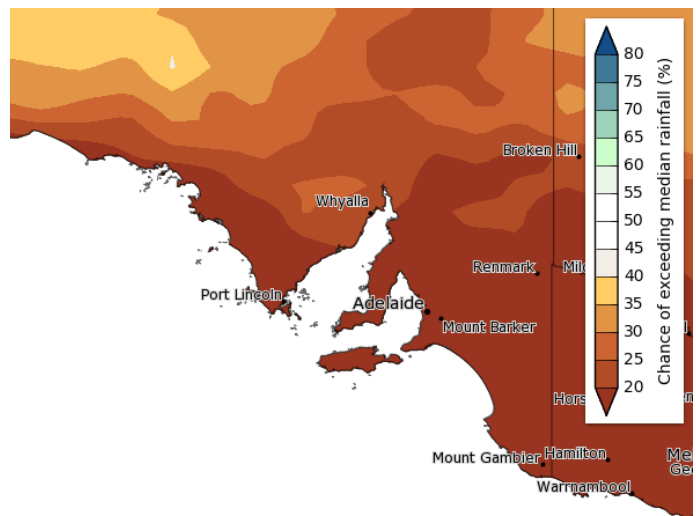


Figure 2: Chance of exceeding median rainfall (%), August to October 2023

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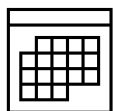
Season 2023-24

Weather



Average to above average rains have been received in many areas of South Australia during May and June, enabling crop establishment and strong early pasture growth. Warm temperatures in May and early June have accelerated development of early sown crops.

Season outlook



The Bureau of Meteorology has issued an El Nino ALERT for the coming season. This outlook is matched by the forecast low to very-low chance of exceeding median rainfall during the winter and early spring months for the South Australian agricultural area.

Subsoil moisture



Rootzone moisture remains adequate for most districts, due to May and June rainfall maintaining moisture levels as crops established. Carryover moisture from the wet spring in 2022 provides a level of confidence for achieving successful crops in many districts despite the forecast for drier conditions. Some areas in the South East and Kangaroo Island are likely to experience crop damage from waterlogging if rain continues into July.

Crop mix



No substantial change in crop mix is expected from the previous report.

Cropping progress



Seeding has occurred over a wide window this season, with several districts experiencing a dry period during May that slowed progress before conditions got wet during June. Early sown crops are developing rapidly with warm conditions in late May and early June, increasing concerns over the potential for frost damage in spring. Spraying programs have been delayed by numerous rainy days; however, delays are not critical yet. Tight urea supplies are concerning growers and may restrict preferred nutrition programs in the coming months.

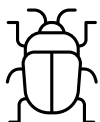
Pastures and livestock condition



Autumn pasture growth has been strong, and most areas have good feed levels heading into the cooler winter months. Stock are in good condition. Concerns over beef and lamb price outlooks are influencing forward planning for livestock operations with scaling back of livestock enterprises a likely outcome.

Challenges and opportunities

Pests and diseases



Slugs have been a significant problem in some districts and despite strong baiting programs have caused establishment issues in canola. Early reports of wheat powdery mildew in some areas have growers on alert, but no stripe rust has been reported. Mice populations remain at low-moderate levels but have not caused widespread damage at this point.



Regional issues and adverse events

Strong winds and patchy crop establishment have led to small areas of wind erosion on fragile soil types in the Murray Plains and Mallee.

Crop Estimates

TABLE 1 CROP ESTIMATES BY DISTRICT

		Western Eyre Peninsula	Lower Eyre Peninsula	Eastern Eyre Peninsula	Yorke Peninsula	Upper North	Mid North	Lower North	Kangaroo Island
Wheat	ha	450,000	145,200	370,000	170,000	245,000	248,000	73,200	5,400
	t	765,000	525,000	740,000	620,000	505,000	725,000	255,000	15,000
Durum	ha	0	0	0	13,600	6,000	5,000	4,200	0
	t	0	0	0	42,000	14,000	13,500	12,600	0
Barley	ha	75,000	66,700	74,000	159,000	90,000	90,000	20,600	2,200
	t	135,000	245,000	148,000	590,000	195,000	275,000	72,000	7,000
Oats	ha	14,100	3,200	4,600	4,200	5,300	4,400	2,300	1,600
	t	18,000	8,000	7,000	11,500	9,000	11,000	6,000	4,200
Rye	ha	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	t	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Triticale	ha	400	500	500	1,000	1,200	1,700	400	100
	t	560	1,500	800	3,000	2,400	4,800	1,200	300
Peas	ha	2,800	2,000	4,200	10,000	10,000	13,900	6,000	400
	t	2,800	3,000	5,000	16,500	12,200	20,000	10,500	600
Lupins	ha	1,500	10,500	4,800	1,000	2,900	1,800	500	1,000
	t	1,400	19,000	5,000	1,700	3,400	2,400	900	1,500
Beans	ha	400	7,700	400	11,000	12,200	12,900	3,100	3,400
	t	600	19,000	400	22,000	17,000	22,000	6,000	6,900
Chickpeas	ha	0	400	200	4,000	2,500	2,300	400	0
	t	0	650	200	6,000	2,900	2,700	520	0
Lentils	ha	2,000	7,000	2,200	133,000	12,500	20,000	6,800	0
	t	2,500	15,500	3,100	252,500	17,000	28,000	11,500	0
Vetch	ha	2,400	2,400	2,000	2,600	5,600	4,200	300	0
	t	1,320	2,000	2,000	2,600	2,400	2,600	300	0
Canola	ha	5,100	80,000	9,000	14,500	28,300	25,400	4,600	4,200
	t	6,300	170,000	9,500	26,000	40,000	39,000	8,000	9,400
Hay (not in total)	ha	5,500	6,400	10,100	13,700	22,000	38,000	10,000	7,600
	t	14,000	29,000	27,000	61,700	78,000	155,000	40,000	31,000
Total	ha	553,700	325,600	471,900	523,900	421,500	429,600	122,400	18,300
	t	933,480	1,008,650	921,000	1,593,800	820,300	1,146,000	384,520	44,900

TABLE 1 CROP ESTIMATES BY DISTRICT (CONT)

		Central Hills & Fleurieu	Lower Murray	Nth Murray Mallee	Sth Murray Mallee	Upper South East	Lower South East	State Total
Wheat	<i>ha</i>	8,000	62,500	220,000	130,000	81,000	25,000	2,233,300
	<i>t</i>	22,500	100,000	270,000	230,000	209,000	101,000	5,082,500
Durum	<i>ha</i>	300	500	0	0	7,300	0	36,900
	<i>t</i>	700	625	0	0	16,500	0	99,925
Barley	<i>ha</i>	7,000	55,000	60,000	94,000	39,000	7,000	839,500
	<i>t</i>	20,000	95,000	79,000	179,000	102,000	29,000	2,171,000
Oats	<i>ha</i>	1,500	3,000	2,200	3,500	21,200	4,700	75,800
	<i>t</i>	3,600	4,250	2,400	5,500	50,000	15,700	156,150
Rye	<i>ha</i>	0	1,500	3,500	2,400	1,600	0	9,000
	<i>t</i>	0	1,700	3,300	3,000	1,900	0	9,900
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	500	2,600	1,500	6,200	1,000	500	18,100
	<i>t</i>	1,300	3,600	1,700	9,300	1,900	1,800	34,160
Peas	<i>ha</i>	1,000	4,000	2,000	3,600	2,900	400	63,200
	<i>t</i>	1,700	4,400	1,200	3,200	3,900	900	85,900
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	1,600	2,000	3,000	10,100	11,000	2,700	54,400
	<i>t</i>	2,600	2,000	1,900	11,500	14,000	4,800	72,100
Beans	<i>ha</i>	1,000	1,100	0	1,200	35,000	14,500	103,900
	<i>t</i>	2,200	1,200	0	1,200	68,000	40,000	206,500
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	200	3,000	14,500	10,500	600	200	38,800
	<i>t</i>	200	3,000	15,300	13,900	700	300	46,370
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	200	4,000	4,300	6,300	2,900	200	201,400
	<i>t</i>	300	4,000	3,000	7,000	4,000	400	348,800
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	100	4,000	6,700	5,300	1,200	0	36,800
	<i>t</i>	200	3,800	4,200	4,400	1,300	0	27,120
Canola	<i>ha</i>	8,000	6,000	7,800	13,200	38,000	22,000	266,100
	<i>t</i>	13,800	6,000	4,700	14,600	67,000	58,000	472,300
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	24,000	7,200	5,000	13,800	28,000	27,000	218,300
	<i>t</i>	105,000	25,000	9,200	48,000	123,000	132,000	877,900
Total	<i>ha</i>	29,400	149,200	325,500	286,300	242,700	77,200	3,977,200
	<i>t</i>	69,100	229,575	386,700	482,600	540,200	251,900	8,812,725

TABLE 2 CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	5-year average	2023/24
Wheat	ha	2,000,400	2,112,100	2,201,600	2,195,400	2,185,955	2,139,100	2,233,300
	t	3,156,000	3,251,500	4,923,000	4,705,500	7,330,250	4,673,300	5,082,500
Durum	ha	42,000	42,900	37,800	35,800	37,200	39,100	36,900
	t	75,220	82,560	114,870	108,350	142,200	104,600	99,925
Barley	ha	818,600	990,000	953,500	917,400	858,600	907,600	839,500
	t	1,725,800	2,091,000	2,560,000	2,151,700	3,080,500	2,321,800	2,171,000
Oats	ha	74,700	72,800	77,700	75,300	75,700	75,200	75,800
	t	121,500	120,450	173,700	162,400	230,950	161,800	156,150
Rye	ha	5,300	5,700	8,600	6,600	9,100	7,100	9,000
	t	3,150	4,250	11,100	4,600	16,250	7,900	9,900
Triticale	ha	29,400	32,300	28,800	21,400	18,300	26,000	18,100
	t	33,470	42,250	70,750	30,150	49,600	45,200	34,160
Peas	ha	65,700	65,300	70,000	66,800	69,700	67,500	63,200
	t	53,620	70,100	113,700	92,500	137,550	93,500	85,900
Lupins	ha	61,000	51,100	50,600	45,900	54,200	52,600	54,400
	t	59,950	53,800	75,650	63,400	124,650	75,500	72,100
Beans	ha	63,100	98,400	100,600	107,300	102,100	94,300	103,900
	t	79,730	156,650	212,700	247,280	318,800	203,000	206,500
Chickpeas	ha	33,600	22,200	29,500	13,500	43,500	28,500	38,800
	t	23,870	17,000	44,050	15,450	81,650	36,400	46,370
Lentils	ha	149,800	164,300	186,700	197,200	191,600	177,900	201,400
	t	177,870	220,400	345,950	339,180	527,250	322,100	348,800
Vetch	ha	28,400	34,000	36,400	34,400	37,900	34,200	36,800
	t	5,810	9,420	27,750	15,050	63,950	24,400	27,120
Canola	ha	200,100	206,600	220,800	224,700	258,400	222,100	266,100
	t	278,900	347,400	461,800	509,750	684,000	456,400	472,300
Hay (not in total)	ha	436,000	320,600	263,500	220,800	210,600	290,300	218,300
	t	1,297,000	1,258,900	1,195,000	852,000	989,950	1,118,600	877,900
Total	ha	3,572,100	3,897,700	4,002,600	3,941,700	3,942,255	3,871,200	3,977,200
	t	5,794,890	6,466,780	9,135,020	8,445,310	12,787,600	8,525,900	8,812,725