



Crop and Pasture Report South Australia

2019–20 Spring Crop Performance

November 2019



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State Summary

Weather

Rainfall

- September rainfall was average to below average in almost all cropping districts, with the exception being Central Eyre Peninsula, receiving very much above average September rainfall.
- A significant area in the Upper North, and a small pocket of the Mid North and the Lower Eyre Peninsula, received very much below average September rainfall.
- October rainfall was below average to very much below average in almost all cropping districts, with the exception being small areas of Lower Yorke Peninsula and the South East receiving average October rainfall.
- In the Pastoral Zone, September rainfall was below average to very much below average in vast areas of the North West, North East and Flinders, with a small pocket of the North East recording its lowest September rainfall on record. An area north of Lake Eyre received above average rainfall and some areas received average rainfall.
- October rainfall was below average to very much below average across most of the Pastoral Zone, with some areas recording their lowest October rainfall on record. Only small areas in the Pastoral Zone recorded average rainfall.
- Growing season rainfall (April-October) has been highly variable across the State, with some areas receiving very much below average rainfall.
- Some parts of the State are experiencing their third successive year of very much below average growing season rainfall while much of the State it is in their second year.
- Only areas of Lower and Western Eyre Peninsula, the South East and Southern Yorke Peninsula have had average growing season rainfall.

Temperature

- Mean maximum temperatures for September were average in the Southern Murray Mallee and South East and above average to very much above average in the rest of the State.
- Maximum temperatures for October were above average to very much above average across the State, with an area west of Ceduna recording its highest mean October temperature on record.
- Mean minimum temperatures for September varied from very much below average in the South East to above average in the North West Pastoral Zone. Numerous frosts were recorded in the eastern part of the State during September.
- October minimum temperatures were average to below average in the South East, the eastern part of the Mallee and western Kangaroo Island, and above average to very much above average in the remainder of the State.

Crops

- The estimated total SA crop production has remained unchanged at 6.25 million tonnes from 3.85 million hectares, well below the current ten-year average of 8 million tonnes but slightly higher than last year's 5.8 million tonnes.
- Although crop yields declined given seasonal conditions in many areas of the State, high yield potential remained in several districts.
- The areas where average to above average production is expected include the Lower Eyre Peninsula, parts of Western Eyre Peninsula, Southern Yorke Peninsula, Upper South East, Lower South East and Kangaroo Island.

- Harvest commenced in late September in the Upper North with several other districts starting in early to mid-October.
- Harvest has started at least two weeks earlier than usual due to seasonal conditions hastening the maturity of most crops.
- Widespread frosts in early and late September caused significant crop damage to isolated areas in most districts, with the worst affected areas cut for hay. In some districts there was insufficient bulk to make hay and these crops have been left to harvest what grain remained.
- Frost damage has caused significant losses to grain production, although the area of frosted crop across the State was less than in 2018.
- Bean crops were affected by hot windy conditions in September and early October. Yields on Lower Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island and the South East will be average to above average but in all other districts they will be well below average.
- Lentil yields in most districts are below average due to frost damage, warm dry conditions halting crop development, and strong, hot winds causing pod losses in ripe crops.
- Leaf diseases caused minimal yield loss, due to the warm, dry spring conditions.
- Native budworm larvae were reported in high numbers in canola and pulse crops in most districts with treatments applied to reduce damage.
- Armyworms were present in isolated areas in the Mid and Lower North with some crops requiring treatment to reduce damage.
- Other pests and insects have been in low numbers with only isolated reports of damage.
- Frost damage and increased demand for hay has resulted in a greater area than normal being cut for hay. However, hay yields in most districts have been below average. Hay quality has generally been good, although there are reports of some poorer quality in stem frosted cereals.

Pastures

- Dry spring conditions limited pasture growth in most areas of the State and above average September and October temperatures caused pastures to dry off earlier than normal.
- In the South East, pasture availability has been good, although quality is starting to decline as pastures mature.
- An increasing number of farmers are planning to containment-feed livestock over summer, once pastures and stubbles have been grazed.
- Livestock producers are calculating livestock feed requirements for the summer and autumn period to ensure they have enough feed to maintain core breeding livestock.
- Most farmers have been able to cut or buy sufficient hay to feed livestock over summer.
- Spray topping of pastures has been difficult, due to the rapid development and maturity of weeds, resulting in poor weed seed control in many situations.
- Farmers in many districts have sold excess stock and will only maintain breeding stock over summer.

Pastoral Zone

- The extended period of dry conditions across most of the pastoral zone has resulted in continued de-stocking, with most of the area east of the Flinders Ranges being totally de-stocked.
- In other areas pastoralists have sold wether lambs and many have also sold ewe lambs and some breeding ewes. Many pastoralists have had very few lambs to sell, due to low lambing percentages.

- Some pastoralists have bought hay to supplementary-feed ewes over summer and maintain them in reasonable condition for mating. The availability of frosted hay at a lower price this year has made it more economical to feed to breeding stock.
- Most producers have sold all or a large percentage of their cattle. Very few remain apart from an area in the Far North East.
- Goat numbers and their condition have declined significantly with the drought.

Key links to other information

[Department for Environment and Water – Soil and Land Condition monitoring](#)

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

Notes on the calculation of crop estimates

Crop estimates for the current year 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 dry-land 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 at the time the report is prepared.

The estimates are updated using ABS census data and other sources as available.

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	<i>ha</i>	425 000	144 000	376 000	163 000	238 000	241 000	63 500	3 600
	<i>t</i>	531 000	510 500	413 500	424 000	321 000	505 500	152 000	13 000
Durum	<i>ha</i>	0	0	0	16 500	7 000	6 700	4 300	0
	<i>t</i>	0	0	0	36 300	11 000	12 000	8 500	0
Barley	<i>ha</i>	94 500	73 000	76 500	167 000	96 500	97 000	21 500	1 600
	<i>t</i>	160 000	275 500	84 500	450 000	164 000	222 500	57 000	4 300
Oats	<i>ha</i>	16 000	3 300	4 600	3 500	4 800	4 200	2 800	3 300
	<i>t</i>	16 000	8 500	4 600	7 000	5 200	6 800	5 300	8 600
Rye	<i>ha</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	<i>t</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	400	500	500	1 000	1 200	1 700	400	0
	<i>t</i>	400	1 500	500	2 100	1 700	3 200	950	0
Peas	<i>ha</i>	3 000	3 400	3 500	11 000	12 000	14 500	6 100	400
	<i>t</i>	3 000	5 500	3 100	12 200	10 700	17 300	9 200	500
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	1 500	18 000	5 000	1 000	3 600	1 800	500	1 000
	<i>t</i>	1 350	27 000	4 500	800	3 200	1 800	650	1 600
Beans	<i>ha</i>	400	13 000	400	9 700	11 200	11 500	2 500	3 000
	<i>t</i>	600	26 000	320	13 500	12 500	14 000	3 000	4 500
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	0	400	200	8 800	4 600	2 500	700	0
	<i>t</i>	0	550	100	8 800	4 100	3 000	450	0
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	1 000	9 500	2 000	104 000	6 600	11 000	3 600	0
	<i>t</i>	1 000	16 500	1 900	135 000	6 000	11 000	4 700	0
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	2 400	2 000	2 000	2 000	5 600	5 500	300	0
	<i>t</i>	950	1 500	900	800	1 100	2 800	150	0
Canola	<i>ha</i>	4 500	70 000	8 000	16 300	16 200	21 500	2 200	4 300
	<i>t</i>	5 900	147 500	7 200	22 900	19 500	25 700	2 650	10 300
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	5 000	7 300	13 000	28 500	28 500	51 000	21 200	8 500
	<i>t</i>	10 500	33 000	28 500	100 000	86 000	168 000	76 500	37 000
Total	<i>ha</i>	548 700	337 100	478 700	503 800	407 300	418 900	108 400	17 200
	<i>t</i>	720 200	1 020 550	521 120	1 113 400	560 000	825 600	244 550	42 800

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>	3 600	59 000	243 000	100 500	69 000	23 000	2 152 200
	<i>t</i>	8 300	41 000	96 000	116 000	173 000	83 000	3 387 800
Durum	<i>ha</i>	300	1 000	300	1 000	8 500	0	45 600
	<i>t</i>	500	500	60	700	18 000	0	87 560
Barley	<i>ha</i>	10 000	76 000	79 000	120 000	34 000	5 500	952 100
	<i>t</i>	25 500	68 200	31 500	156 000	88 000	20 000	1 807 000
Oats	<i>ha</i>	1 600	2 000	2 200	3 000	18 500	5 200	75 000
	<i>t</i>	3 400	1 000	650	2 700	40 500	15 500	125 750
Rye	<i>ha</i>	0	1 000	2 000	1 500	1 200	0	5 700
	<i>t</i>	0	700	600	1 200	1 350	0	3 850
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	500	8 000	1 500	15 000	1 000	500	32 200
	<i>t</i>	1 100	6 500	450	15 000	2 000	1 800	37 200
Peas	<i>ha</i>	1 300	1 000	3 600	1 000	2 400	400	63 600
	<i>t</i>	1 800	300	550	500	3 500	900	69 050
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	1 600	1 000	3 600	1 500	12 000	3 000	55 100
	<i>t</i>	2 000	400	750	1 100	15 800	5 000	65 950
Beans	<i>ha</i>	300	500	0	800	27 500	12 000	92 800
	<i>t</i>	500	250	0	400	50 000	29 500	155 070
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	200	1 000	1 500	1 500	600	200	22 200
	<i>t</i>	200	500	300	900	750	250	19 900
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	300	1 500	900	1 500	1 400	200	143 500
	<i>t</i>	400	750	150	900	1 850	320	180 470
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	0	3 500	6 500	3 000	1 200	0	34 000
	<i>t</i>	0	700	1 300	1 500	950	0	12 650
Canola	<i>ha</i>	3 700	1 500	4 500	2 000	15 200	12 500	182 400
	<i>t</i>	4 800	600	900	1 000	28 900	27 500	305 350
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	24 000	10 000	3 600	40 000	50 000	30 000	320 600
	<i>t</i>	88 000	25 000	1 400	160 000	250 000	150 000	1 213 900
Total	<i>ha</i>	23 400	157 000	348 600	252 300	192 500	62 500	3 856 400
	<i>t</i>	48 500	121 400	133 210	297 900	424 600	183 770	6 257 600

TABLE 2 CURRENT CROP ESTIMATES AGAINST FIVE YEAR AVERAGE

		2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	5 year ave	2019/20
Wheat	<i>ha</i>	2 236 000	2 200 000	2 237 700	2 024 100	2 000 400	2 139 600	2 152 200
	<i>t</i>	4 672 000	4 315 500	6 460 500	4 122 500	3 156 000	4 545 300	3 387 800
Durum	<i>ha</i>	51 300	49 500	55 200	55 700	42 000	50 700	45 600
	<i>t</i>	118 250	86 750	209 700	139 400	75 220	125 900	87 560
Barley	<i>ha</i>	804 000	839 300	799 300	714 600	818 600	795 200	952 100
	<i>t</i>	1 922 000	1 978 000	2 774 800	1 640 700	1 725 800	2 008 300	1 807 000
Oats	<i>ha</i>	73 300	70 300	94 600	77 000	75 700	78 200	75 000
	<i>t</i>	120 700	103 000	258 700	149 300	121 500	150 600	125 750
Rye	<i>ha</i>	9 000	7 500	10 500	6 500	5 300	7 800	5 700
	<i>t</i>	9 300	6 200	15 700	5 100	3 150	7 900	3 850
Triticale	<i>ha</i>	27 100	21 800	21 500	19 900	29 400	23 900	32 200
	<i>t</i>	44 300	32 700	58 130	35 050	33 500	40 700	37 200
Peas	<i>ha</i>	98 000	102 600	97 300	90 200	65 700	90 800	63 600
	<i>t</i>	114 600	103 600	176 100	113 750	53 600	112 300	69 050
Lupins	<i>ha</i>	64 700	76 700	76 800	62 800	61 000	68 400	55 100
	<i>t</i>	72 250	63 850	134 800	53 400	59 950	76 900	65 950
Beans	<i>ha</i>	65 600	68 600	75 500	67 400	63 100	68 000	92 800
	<i>t</i>	93 900	77 300	166 530	101 660	79 680	103 800	155 070
Chickpeas	<i>ha</i>	19 700	20 500	20 500	29 700	33 600	24 800	22 200
	<i>t</i>	20 250	19 240	34 360	33 580	23 870	26 300	19 900
Lentils	<i>ha</i>	106 200	123 700	169 600	184 700	149 800	146 800	143 500
	<i>t</i>	152 350	120 080	447 680	260 200	177 870	231 600	180 470
Vetch	<i>ha</i>	23 200	29 600	32 200	32 400	28 400	29 200	34 000
	<i>t</i>	13 150	11 900	34 800	15 350	5 760	16 200	12 650
Canola	<i>ha</i>	321 200	210 500	203 000	200 200	200 100	227 000	182 400
	<i>t</i>	313 800	293 300	372 900	261 400	278 900	304 100	305 350
Hay (not in total)	<i>ha</i>	211 500	282 700	258 800	202 900	370 000	265 200	320 600
	<i>t</i>	763 000	1 094 800	1 454 300	948 600	1 104 000	1 072 900	1 213 900
Total	<i>ha</i>	3 899 300	3 820 600	3 893 700	3 565 200	3 572 100	3 750 200	3 856 400
	<i>t</i>	7 666 900	7 211 400	11 144 700	6 931 400	5 794 900	7 749 900	6 257 600

District Reports

Western Eyre Peninsula

Weather

- Widespread rainfall late in September resulted in average rain across the district except well above average in the Minnipa, Wudinna and Warramboo districts. October rainfall was below average to very much below average.
- Mean maximum temperatures for September and October were above average to very much above average with some districts observing their hottest October day on record.
- Dry conditions and cold nights resulted in a number of heavy frosts in early September.
- Strong winds were recorded in late October.

Crops

- Harvest commenced slightly earlier than normal in mid-October on early sown crops.
- Frosts in early September damaged crops with the worst affected areas cut for hay.
- Rains in late September were too late to benefit crops on heavier soils but likely to have helped fill grain on lighter soil types in central Eyre districts.
- Rains also caused regrowth of some crops, particularly barley, and rapid germination of summer weeds, delaying harvest in some districts. Most farmers expect to finish harvest by mid-December.
- Early sown crops on better soil types in the coastal districts from Haslam to Elliston are producing well above average yields. Later sown crops in these areas are likely to yield less.
- Dry conditions throughout the season resulted in very poor growth of crops between Ceduna and Penong with some crops in these districts unlikely to produce enough yield to warrant reaping.
- Inland districts are expected to yield slightly below average to average depending on rainfall. Cereal yields range from 0.8 up to 1.5 t/ha.
- Canola yields are over 2 t/ha around Mt Cooper and 1.2 to 1.5 t/ha near Wudinna.
- Many pea crops around Wudinna were affected by frost and cut for hay. Pea crops unaffected by frost have yielded close to the long-term average.
- Malting barley grain protein levels have generally been too high for malt grade, but grain quality has been good with high test weights and low screening percentages.
- Crop pest and disease problems have been minor, except for some high numbers of native budworm larvae in canola and pulse crops which required control.

Pastures

- Medic pastures in the coastal districts from Streaky Bay to Elliston had sufficient growth for farmers to cut hay and most livestock producers in inland districts south of Wirrulla cut cereal crops to replenish on farm supplies. Parts of many cereal crops suspected of being frost-damaged were also cut for hay.
- Many farmers have moved stock into containment feeding areas until stubbles become available for grazing.
- Crop stubbles will not provide sufficient feed over summer and most farmers have replenished hay and grain supplies to feed to stock.

Lower Eyre Peninsula

Weather

- September rainfall varied from below average in the south to above average in the Kapinnie, Cummins, Ungarra and Tumbby Bay areas. October rainfall was below average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Frosts occurred in early September and a number of hot, windy days were experienced across the region, including the hottest October day on record for Port Lincoln (41°C) on October 24.

Crops

- Frost damage was reported in some crops, including in some lower frost risk areas. Paddocks where most of the crop was frosted were cut for hay, but most paddocks had less than 5% of the crop frosted.
- Rainfall in late September helped fill grain on all but the earliest crops with crop yields above average, except around Port Neill and through to Butler, where patchy rainfall at the start of the season resulted in variable yield prospects. Waterlogging did not occur in crops this year.
- Above average temperatures towards the end of October matured crops quickly.
- Windrowing of canola began in mid-October with earlier crops harvested in the last week of October. Yields are expected to be average to above average ranging from 1.6 t/ha up to 2.5 t/ha in higher rainfall areas, except Butler to Port Neill area yielding as low as 0.6 t/ha. Oil content is above 45%.
- Harvesting of some early sown cereal crops began in the last week of October. The few reaped barley crops have generally produced yields from 2.0 t/ha up to 4.0 t/ha.
- Grain protein is high across the district. Dry conditions at grain fill has produced high screenings in some of the earlier harvested barley crops. Black tipping of grain has also affected grain quality. Later maturing crops are likely to be less affected.
- Late rains caused some regrowth of pulse and barley crops that will delay harvest.
- Pulse crops have podded well and have above average yield potential in most districts. Pea crops yielded 1.5 to 1.8 t/ha near Tumbby Bay and beans are expected to yield better than 1.6 t/ha.
- A late flight of native budworm moths caused high larvae numbers in pulse and canola crops in early October. These were controlled with a single treatment in most crops.
- Other pest numbers were generally low and dry conditions reduced disease concerns.
- The area cut for hay this season was above average. Livestock producers were able to make hay from surplus biomass on paddocks sown to cereal or vetch for grazing. Good demand and prices for hay caused some growers to cut parts of cereal crops, particularly weedy areas.

Pastures

- Livestock are in excellent condition.
- Pastures grew well after September rain, producing feed that will provide grazing until stubbles become available.
- Cereal paddocks cut for hay in mid-September regrew rapidly and will provide feed and surface cover on these paddocks over summer.

Eastern Eyre Peninsula

Weather

- Rainfall for September was average in the east and above average in the west. Widespread rain of 10 to 15 mm fell on September 20 to 21. October rainfall was very much below average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October. Some hot windy days with temperatures above 30°C occurred in mid-September and October and some locations observed their hottest October day on record on October 5.
- Cold nights in early September combined with dry conditions resulted in moderate to severe frosts.

Crops

- Strong winds and warm temperatures caused rapid senescence of crops.
- The winds also continued to cause wind erosion on bare areas near Arno Bay and Cowell.
- Harvest began around Kimba in early October with most farmers in other districts beginning to reap early crops by the end of the month.
- Significant frost damage occurred near Kimba, Lock and Tuckey and many farmers cut affected crops for hay. Light frosts were also reported near Kielpa, Darke Peak and Mangalo with only minimal damage.
- Late September rainfall was generally too late to benefit crop yields but caused regrowth on some later sown barley crops resulting in uneven ripening across paddocks.
- Grain yields in the north of the district are very poor with cereals yielding 0.1 to 0.2 t/ha and pulses yielding 0.2 to 0.3 t/ha. Many paddocks in these districts were deemed too poor to reap.
- In other parts of the district, yield estimates vary from 0.3 to 2 t/ha, depending on soil type, time of sowing, frost damage and where rain fell.
- Early harvested crops have high grain protein and high screenings due to the very dry finish to the season.
- Late September rainfall may have helped to fill grain on lighter soils in the Cleve Hills, Darke Peak, Kielpa and Wharminda districts.
- Crops on the heavier soils from Tuckey to Cleve were too far advanced to benefit from the late rain and some crops around Arno Bay and Cowell will not be reaped.
- Canola and pulse crops in the Cleve Hills will yield close to average but pulse crops on the heavier flats west of Cleve were affected by moisture stress and will yield well below average.
- There has been a low incidence of crop disease, due to a combination of the dry conditions and the application of preventative treatments on susceptible varieties.

Pastures

- Rain in late September produced regrowth on vetch pastures. Most paddocks were sprayed to halt grass seed set.
- Crop stubbles will not provide much grazing for stock over summer and most producers are planning to supplementary-feed livestock in containment areas.
- Where possible, farmers with livestock have cut some hay to replenish supplies. Where dry conditions have resulted in poor growth, producers have bought hay to provide feed for stock over summer and autumn.
- Many farmers in the Cleve Hills are carting water to supply livestock as there has not been enough run-off to fill dams this season.

Upper North

Weather

- September rainfall was below average to very much below average and October rainfall was very much below average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Strong hot winds blew in mid-September and October.
- Numerous frosts occurred in early September and into October.

Crops

- Harvest commenced in the Port Germein area in late September and progressed rapidly in the western part of the district with some producers completing harvest in late October and early November.
- Cereal grain yields in the western part of the district have been average to above average, despite the dry finish to the season, with extremely good water use efficiency.
- Cereal grain quality in the western part of the district was better than expected with very little down-grading.
- Pulse crop yields in the western part of the district have varied from average to well below average.
- Harvest in other areas of the district started in mid to late October.
- In the eastern part of the district early indications are that grain yields will be below average to well below average.
- Farmers are reporting high water use efficiency and good grain quality.
- Canola crops have been windrowed and pulse crops desiccated in preparation for harvest.
- Frost damage occurred in isolated areas across the district mainly in flats and gullies. Where there was sufficient bulk, crops were cut for hay. Although the area cut was similar to 2018, the frost damage was not as severe.
- The area of cereal crops cut for hay has increased in the southern part of the district due to frost damage and likely better returns for hay. In the northern part of the district the area of hay has been reduced because of poor growth.
- Hay yields have been below average, however quality has been excellent.
- Crop diseases and pests have been minor. High numbers of native budworm in canola were sprayed.

Pastures

- Most pastures have been heavily grazed and there are some extremely bare paddocks in the northern part of the district.
- There will be limited dry feed available over summer from pastures and stubbles, although quality should be good.
- Farmers with livestock have cut additional crop for hay or have bought hay to replenish reserves.
- Most producers are planning to maintain breeding livestock with an increasing number likely to feed stock in containment areas once pastures and stubbles have been grazed.

Mid North

Weather

- Rainfall was below average for September and very much below average for October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Frosts occurred in late September and mid-October.
- Strong winds occurred in mid-September and early October.

Crops

- Harvest of barley, peas and some canola commenced in late October.
- Frosts in late September damaged cereals, canola and lentil crops and frost-prone flats and gullies were cut for hay. Large areas of crop around Balaklava and Port Wakefield were cut but only parts of paddocks were cut in other areas of the district.
- Frost in mid-October damaged pods in canola, lupin and pea crops.
- Most hay was baled by the end of October with yields below average and of variable quality. Some early cut hay, affected by stem frost was of poor quality but most, later cut hay was good quality and most export hay has been classified as Grade 1 or 2.
- Many lentil crops suffered some frost damage, with a few badly damaged crops cut for hay.
- Leaf diseases have only had a minor impact on yield. Septoria tritici persisted in many wheat crops but dry spring conditions halted its progression.
- Native budworm larvae were above threshold numbers for economic control in many canola crops and required treatment.
- Armyworms were in higher numbers than normal in cereal crops. Damaging numbers were mainly in successive cereal crops and required treatment.
- Aphid numbers in canola crops were not high enough to warrant control.
- Bean crops were affected by warm windy conditions in September and October, reducing their yield potential to well below average. Chickpea crops had moderate levels of ascochyta but podded well with average to above average yield prospects.

Pastures

- Pasture growth was very poor in spring and has dried off.
- There has been no run-off into catchments and producers are relying on bore or metered water.
- Many farmers are planning to feed and mate their breeding stock in containment areas to reduce paddock feed demand and maintain soil cover.
- Hay paddocks and crop stubbles are being grazed as they become available. Most are of below average quantities but of high quality.
- Most livestock producers have been able to cut their own or buy hay.

Lower North

Weather

- September rainfall was average in the south and below average in the north. October rainfall was below average in the west to very much below average in the east.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures for September were below average in the north to average in the south of the district with several frosts, particularly in the north.

Crops

- Crops matured rapidly during the warm dry conditions in October, with harvest of lentils, peas and barley commencing in late October.
- Wheat yields are likely to be 30% below average with harvest commencing in early November.
- Early maturing barley crops are yielding 30% below average with a high percentage making malt quality.
- Frost in late September damaged pea, wheat and isolated lentil crops. Approximately 5% of wheat, barley and pea crops were cut for hay, due to frost damage.
- Pea crops not affected by frost yielded close to average but frosted crops yielded poorly with 80% loss.
- Strong hot winds caused pod losses on ripe lentil crops, but the extent and severity of losses is unknown. Yields are likely to be about 60% of average.
- Bean crops have well below average yield potential.
- Chickpeas performed poorly and have well below average yield prospects. Farmers are likely to reduce chickpea area in 2020.
- Canola yields will be well below average.
- Armyworms caused isolated damage to cereal crops and some crops were treated to reduce damage.
- The area cut for hay increased due to moisture stress and frost damage. Hay yields were slightly below average and quality was good.

Pastures

- Pastures have dried off with minimal growth. The amount of brome grass has increased in many pastures.
- Spray topping and crop topping were difficult this year due to the rapid maturity of grasses, resulting in poor seed set control.
- Livestock are grazing hay and crop stubbles as they become available.
- On-farm hay reserves are excellent and prices have fallen to more normal values.
- A few farmers who have been continuous croppers are considering adding livestock enterprises to their business because of dry seasons and frost damage over the last few seasons.

Yorke Peninsula

Weather

- Rainfall in September was average. October rainfall ranged from average on Southern Yorke Peninsula to very much below average in most of Central and Northern Yorke Peninsula.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Frosts occurred in late September and mid-October. Strong winds blew in mid-September, early October and late October.

Crops

- Crops on shallow soils started showing signs of moisture stress in early September especially in the coastal regions. Above average temperatures during October further reduced yield potential.
- Strong winds in late October caused pod shatter yield losses of between 10 and 30% in lentil crops that were close or ready to harvest and some ripe barley heads were also lost.
- Lentil and barley harvest commenced in the last two weeks of October, slightly earlier than usual due to the warm weather in October rapidly ripening crops.
- Frost damage has been more severe and more widespread than 2018.
- Up to 3% of the cereal area and a small area of lentils was cut for hay due to frost damage, but less hay was cut this year, as it is less economical than in 2018 due to lower hay prices.
- Cereal yields are expected to be 20-30% below average. Barley is expected to be less affected by the dry conditions compared to wheat.
- Yield of all pulses will be 30-50% below average. Coastal areas are likely to have suffered the worst from the dry spring, particularly the eastern side of Yorke Peninsula. Frost also reduced yield potential with up to 60% yield loss in the most severely affected crops.
- Canola yields are expected to be average to below average with some frost damage.
- Oaten hay crops yielded well below average however with the dry season and good conditions for curing, quality has been excellent.
- Barley quality has been variable, with many growers achieving malt barley classifications and others being downgraded for low test weights and higher screening percentages.
- Disease in cereal crops has been low, with little to no effect on yield, due to dry spring conditions.
- Barley crops around Minlaton were affected by a new strain of the net form of net blotch which has had some effect on yield but will have a greater influence on crop choice in 2020.
- Disease in pulse crops has been relatively minor. Ascochyta infection was present in lentil crops early in the season but the dry conditions prevented it developing. Botrytis grey mould was absent in lentil crops.
- Multiple flights of native budworm occurred during spring and most pulse crops treated at least twice to control the larvae, and once for Etiella moth in lentils.

Pastures

- There have been low amounts of pasture feed available for most of the season, and very few medic pastures were cut for hay this year.
- Livestock are in good condition due to the high quality of the limited pasture growth.
- Some farmers have started feeding hay to livestock on Northern Yorke Peninsula.
- Careful grazing management of stubbles will be required over summer to ensure sufficient cover remains to protect soils. Feed throughout the summer will be scarce without summer rain.

Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu & Kangaroo Island

Weather

- Rainfall was average to below average for September and below average to very much below average for October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average to above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures for September were below average on Kangaroo Island and average on Central Hills and Fleurieu Peninsula.

Crops

Central Hills/Fleurieu Peninsula

- Harvest commenced mid-November.
- Grain yields will be highly variable across the region reflecting time of sowing and inconsistent rainfall over winter and spring.
- Very few diseases and pests were present, with minimal effect on crop yields.
- Hay yields are below average and quality is variable depending on seasonal rainfall events.

Kangaroo Island

- Crops are now maturing with cereals starting to ripen; canola and beans are at pod filling.
- Harvest commenced late November, slightly earlier than usual.
- Yields are average to above average for cereals, above average for canola and average for beans.
- Disease and pest numbers and effects are average with aphid numbers above average.
- Hay yields and quality varies depending on timing of cuts and rainfall events.

Pastures

Central Hills/Fleurieu Peninsula

- Pasture quantity and quality available for livestock is highly variable. Many pastures have poorer quality composition after three years of below average winter and spring rainfall.
- Dry feed availability over summer will vary but most areas will be below average.
- The area cut for pasture hay increased to replenish depleted reserves. Excess hay is available for sale.
- Livestock numbers are well below average but stock condition is good. Stock will continue to be sold before they lose condition. Producers are unlikely to hold onto saleable stock unless they are offered good forward contracts.

Kangaroo Island

- Pasture quantity is average and quality is declining due to weather events and stage of maturity.
- There should be average quantities of dry feed available over summer.
- An increased area of pasture has been cut for hay to replenish depleted on-farm reserves, and there has also been an increase in cereals cut for hay due to frost damage.
- Livestock numbers are below average due to early de-stocking. Condition and health is good due to the 30-50mm rain late September, which boosted pasture growth.
- Lack of stock water will be a key issue for many producers, especially eastern Kangaroo Island, and the north and south coasts, which rely on surface run-off into dams.

Lower Murray

Weather

- September rainfall was average to below average. Rainfall for October was very much below average in the north and below average in the south.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Several frosts occurred in early September.
- Strong northerly winds occurred on numerous days throughout the period.

Crops

- Some farmers in the northern part of the district are experiencing their third year of very dry conditions and will have complete crop failure.
- Areas of erosion are persisting as dry conditions and damaging winds have prevented crop establishment and growth for the second year in a row.
- The dry spring following a dry autumn and winter will result in well below average yields.
- Crops matured very quickly after hot, dry and windy days in October.
- Crops are better in the southern part of the district but still below average.
- Frost damage has affected yields, with some normally frost-free areas experiencing yield loss from frost.
- The incidence of pest and disease has been very low.
- Hay making was complete in the southern part of the district by the end of October with below average yields of good quality hay.
- In the northern part of the district very little hay was cut as there was not enough growth.

Pastures

- Pastures in the northern part of the district have dried off with little bulk and farmers are considering what additional fodder they will need to maintain livestock through the summer.
- Pastures in the southern areas have more growth but are still below average and are drying off quickly.
- Livestock are in reasonable condition as feed this year has been of good quality even though it had little bulk.
- Irrigated river flats have produced variable growth. Some have been sown to summer species.
- In some areas, high water prices have made irrigating too expensive, and producers will purchase fodder instead.

Northern Murray Mallee

Weather

- September rainfall was average in the west to below average in the east. Rainfall for October was very much below average.
- Mean maximum temperatures were above average for September and very much above average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were below average for September with numerous frosts.
- Strong winds occurred on numerous days.

Crops

- Most crops across the district ripened quickly in the second and third weeks of October.
- A few rains in September of between 5 to 10 mm were critical to producing some yield for many crops across the district, given lack of stored soil moisture to support crops through spring.
- Moisture has been the key limiting factor for all crops.
- Most of the heavier soils, shallow stoney soils and deep sands will produce very little crop this season.
- While there has been some crop cut for hay due to frost, growth has generally been too poor to be worth cutting.
- Many late sown crops will not be harvested and on heavier soils, will be used for grazing.
- Harvest started on some pulse and barley crops, with low yields being reported.
- Overall crop yields are difficult to estimate as only the better parts of many crops will be reaped. Cereal crops might average 0.4 to 0.7 t/ha across the district, while the few pulse crops harvested this year might average between 0.2 to 0.4 t/ha.
- The few canola crops that have been planted this year could yield between 0.1 and 0.3 t/ha.
- Most crops have few weeds, except a number of dry sown crops are infested with grass weeds.
- There have been no major insect or disease concerns across the district.
- Soils throughout the district will continue to be extremely vulnerable to wind erosion, due to grazing pressure and the lack of vegetative cover over the last three extremely dry seasons.

Pastures

- Farmers continue to reduce livestock numbers to their main breeding stock or less, in preparation for another summer and autumn of little paddock feed.
- Most farmers are continuing to feed hay and grain to livestock but some might not be able to afford this much longer.
- Many failed crops will be used for grazing over the coming months, however, this presents a significant threat of wind erosion on sandy rises.
- An increasing number of farmers are confinement-feeding stock but more farmers will need to establish confinement areas over summer.

Southern Murray Mallee

Weather

- September rainfall was average across most of the district and below to very much below average in October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for September and very much above average for October, with numerous days of strong winds.
- Mean minimum temperatures were average to below average in September with several frosts in late September and early October.

Crops

- By the end of October most cereal crops were still several weeks from harvest.
- The grain yield potential of many crops has been reduced with most farmers reporting a significant amount of frost damage. Some severely damaged crops were cut for hay.
- Crops that avoided frost damage will have average to above average yields but most crops in the district will have some degree of frost damage with some crops a total loss.
- The area of pulse and canola crops is well below average. Harvest commenced early November. Grain yields of most of these crops will be well below average, due to frost and the dry finish to the season.
- An increased area of export hay has been cut and baled with some excellent hay yields of good quality and plenty of premium grades being delivered to hay processors.
- Some hay has already been trucked to NSW and Queensland.
- There have been very few reports of pests and diseases throughout September and October.

Pastures

- Livestock are in good condition. As pastures dry off, farmers will be calculating feed requirements for the summer and autumn period to ensure they have sufficient reserves to maintain livestock.
- Most sown cereal pastures have been spray-topped and are being grazed.
- Most lambs have been sold with those remaining being grown to market weights in feedlots.
- Producers will start moving sheep into containment areas in the next few months as there is not enough paddock feed to carry sheep over the summer.
- Livestock producers have replenished hay reserves.
- Lucerne and veldt grass pastures are dry with limited fresh growth.

Upper South East

Weather

- Rainfall was average for September and below average in most of the district in October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for September and above average to very much above average in October.
- Mean minimum temperatures for September were below average to very much below average with numerous frosts. Mean minimum temperatures for October were average to below average with several frosts early in the month.

Crops

- Canola windrowing commenced in early November. Yield estimates are average to below average. Most canola crops have 5 to 10% frost damage with up to 30% in isolated instances.
- Wheat yields are average to above average, with harvest commencing in mid to late November.
- Frost reports indicate about a third of wheat crops affected, but only 5 to 15% of plants damaged. Plants growing on lighter soils were most severely affected, with some producers cutting areas within paddocks for hay.
- Barley crops have average to above average yield potential and harvest commenced mid-November. Frost damage reported in barley with 5 to 10% of some paddocks affected.
- Overall, beans will yield around average, but with poor pod set in some crops.
- Some lentil crops have been cut for hay as a result of medic plant contamination. Seasonal conditions have favoured clover and medic growth.
- A reduced area of lentils and chickpeas sown this year due to their higher risk and their stubbles being of less value for livestock than beans and lupins.
- Cutting and baling of hay crops commenced early November. Hay crops will yield well above average. Hay quality is affected by rain damage where hay remained wet in cool conditions.
- Native budworm larvae present in pulse crops were treated. They were also present in canola crops but under the threshold for economic control.
- Aphid levels are slightly higher than normal but under the control threshold in most instances. Some lucerne and cereal crops have been damaged.
- Hot, windy conditions in late October affected most crops but yield losses are likely to be less than 5%.
- Disease levels have been the lowest reported in many years across all crops.

Pastures

- Pasture growth and availability has been good but pasture quality is starting to decline as pastures mature.
- Pasture production on lighter soils has been lower and producers with higher stocking rates have little surplus pasture.
- On most properties an increased area has been cut for hay to replenish depleted hay reserves.
- There has been increased nitrogen fertiliser and gibberellic acid applications on pastures to stimulate additional growth, to alleviate early season pasture shortages by producing more feed for livestock given higher stock prices.
- Overall, livestock are in excellent condition.
- There is an increased risk of grass seeds infecting and damaging lambs this season.

Lower South East

Weather

- Rainfall was average for September and average to very much below average for October.
- Mean maximum temperatures were average for September and above average to very much above average for October.
- Mean minimum temperatures were very much below average for September and average to below average for October.

Crops

- Canola crops are at full to late flower and harvest is expected to commence in mid to late December.
- Wheat crops are at booting to flowering growth stage, with long season wheats developing slowly, due to low soil temperatures.
- Although some crops had begun to show signs of moisture stress with warm temperatures in mid-October, rainfall in the last two weeks of October has increased yield potential of many crops.
- Some crops in the mid-south east have suffered yield loss, particularly earlier maturing varieties on shallow soils with below average yield potential.
- Ryegrass has been a problem in some wheat crops and these crops have been cut for hay to reduce seed set.
- Beans are half to full flower with podding commenced at the base of some plants.
- Yield potential is estimated to be close to average for all crops.
- There have been higher rates of nitrogen fertiliser applications to maximise yields driven by high grain and hay prices.
- Overall disease levels have been low due to a combination of low temperatures and less moisture.
- There are reports of isolated frost damage in some crops but the extent of the damage will not be known until crops are harvested.

Pastures

- Red legged earth mite are present but at low levels.
- Livestock are in very good condition.
- There are reports of low lamb weights as a result of cooler than normal conditions.
- Pasture growth and availability is generally good.
- There has been increased use of nitrogen and gibberellic acid to increase pasture growth driven by high livestock prices.
- Silage and hay have been cut with yields expected to be well above average. Hay quality may be below average, due to weather damage from numerous rainfall events and later than ideal cutting.

