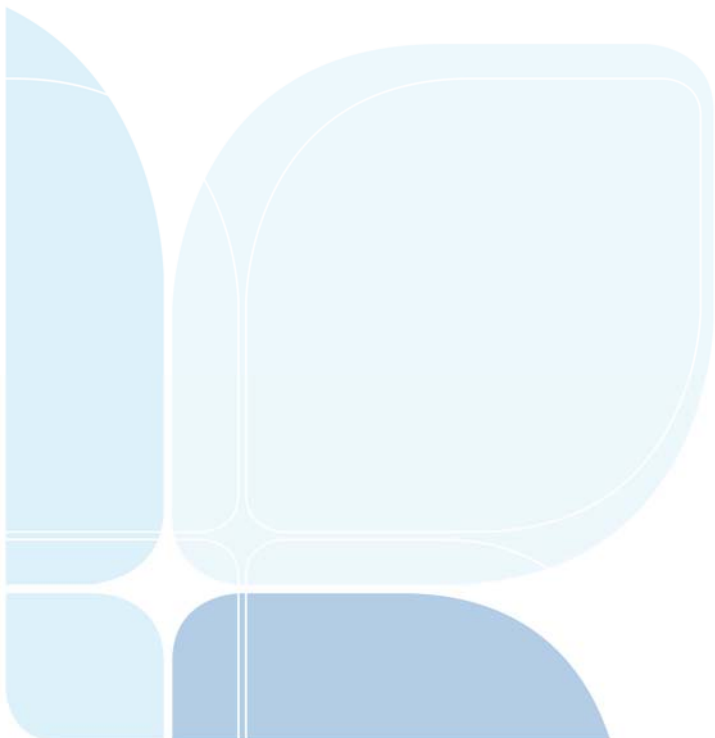




Local Land  
Services

# On-ground Seasonal Conditions Report

June 2016



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**More information**

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing July 2016. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Local Land Services or the user's independent adviser.

## Executive Summary

**Regional Property Overview** - Four regions reported no change from last month, including Greater Sydney, Hunter, Murray, Northern Tablelands and Western. Central Tablelands, Central West, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, Riverina and South East have reported an improvement in conditions from last month. See the table below for an overview of the regional seasonal conditions elements.

**Regional Infrastructure Overview** - Four regions reported no change from last month, including Murray, North Coast, North West and Western. Central Tablelands, Central West, Greater Sydney, Hunter, Riverina and South East have reported an improvement in infrastructure conditions from last month. Western has started reporting infrastructure condition this month. Northern Tablelands didn't report on infrastructure.

**Regional Water Overview** – Hunter reported no change from last month. Ten regions have reported an improvement in water conditions from last month Central Tablelands, Central West, Greater Sydney, Murray, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, North West, Riverina, South East and Western.

**Regional Agronomics Overview** – Five regions reported no change from last month, including Greater Sydney, Murray, Northern Tablelands, Riverina and Western. Six regions including Central Tablelands, Central West, Hunter, North Coast, North West and South East have reported an improvement in agronomic conditions from last month.

**Regional Livestock Overview** - Eight regions reported no change from last month, including Central Tablelands, Greater Sydney, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, Riverina, South East and Western. Northern Tablelands have reported a decline in conditions from last month. Central West and North West have reported an improvement in livestock conditions from last month.

Condition Score	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Reasonable	Below Requirements	Poor
<b>Average Regional Property Score</b>		Riverina	Central Tablelands, Central West, Greater Sydney, Murray, North Coast, North West and South East	Hunter and Western	Northern Tablelands	
<b>Regional Infrastructure Score</b>	South East	Central Tablelands, Central West, Greater Sydney, Murray, North Coast and Riverina	Hunter and Western	North West		
<b>Regional Water Score</b>	South East	Central Tablelands, Central West, Greater Sydney, Murray and Riverina	North Coast and Western	Hunter, Northern Tablelands and North West		
<b>Regional Agronomics Score</b>			Central West, Greater Sydney, Murray, North Coast, North West and Riverina	Central Tablelands, Hunter and South East	Western	Northern Tablelands
<b>Regional Livestock Score</b>			Central West, Greater Sydney, Murray, North Coast, North West, Riverina and South East	Central Tablelands, Hunter and Western		Northern Tablelands

**LGA Scores – Extremely Poor, Extreme or Extremely Critical** - There are no LGAs within this scale.

**LGA Scores – Excellent or Very Good** - The following LGAs: Corowa and Jerilderie.

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## 1. Introduction

The NSW Government is contributing to national drought reform by replacing the system of State drought declarations with Regional Seasonal Conditions Reports. On a routine monthly basis Local Land Services (LLS) cropping and livestock experts gather, from farmers and other experts, information on conditions existing in their regions which is combined into state-wide LLS Seasonal Conditions. The reports provide valuable information on rainfall, water storage, crops, livestock and other issues to help farmers make informed decisions. The LLS reports complement State and regional Monthly Seasonal Conditions reports developed by NSW Department of Primary Industries (DPI) which draw information from Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO and relevant modelling data. The Regional Assistance Advisory Committee assesses Seasonal Conditions Reports and provides ongoing recommendations on potential farm business, farm family and community support and observations to the Minister. The NSW Seasonal Conditions Report can be viewed on the NSW DPI website.

The seasonal conditions reporting scale that has been adopted by the Local Land Services seasonal condition reporting team is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Seasonal Conditions Reporting Scale**

Scale	Regional description	Regional description of seasonal conditions	Water (quantity, quality and infrastructure) description	Agronomic conditions (winter or summer crops, native and/or improved pasture) description	Livestock conditions/ carrying capacity description
Level 1	Excellent	Previous 12 months above average seasonal conditions	Water security established on the property for a 12 month period exceeding demands and without any further infrastructure improvements.	2 <sup>nd</sup> year of above average pasture conditions, silage and hay production exceeds normal requirements.	Past 12 months, livestock in excellent conditions, highly productive, stocking rates above expectations.
Level 2	Very Good	Previous 6 months above average seasonal conditions	Water supply meets demands and has improved by infrastructure improvements.	Cropping and pasture highly successful, good storage observed on farm.	Carrying maximum and above capacity. Highly productive.
Level 3	Good	The current season is average	Water supply meets demands.	Crops and pasture growth meeting demands plus silage and hay storage observed on farm.	Average carrying capacity.
Level 4	Reasonable	The current season is below average	Water has not been replenished during the period.	Some crop failure. Pasture below expectations.	Slower stock growth rates. Supplementary feeding of breeding stock.
Level 5	Below Requirements	The current season has failed	Water levels depleting from last period.	Failed crops and pasture growth, stores used.	Supplementary feeding required to maintain condition of stock for market weights.
Level 6	Poor	The past 6 months have been below average	Water supply continues to worsen.	Livestock supplementary feeding occurring, local storage being used.	Supplementary feeding necessary to maintain breeding stock, stock losing condition.
Level 7	Very Poor	Consecutive failed seasons	No surface water in many paddocks.	Supplementary feeding required and sourced of farm, silage and storage hay used.	High volume feeding occurring to maintain breeding stock. Early weaning. Herd and flock culling occurring.

Scale	Regional description	Regional description of seasonal conditions	Water (quantity, quality and infrastructure) description	Agronomic conditions (winter or summer crops, native and/or improved pasture) description	Livestock conditions/ carrying capacity description
Level 8	Extremely Poor	NSW DPI trigger event (1 in 5 years 20 <sup>th</sup> percentile for rain, pasture, soil moisture) expected to be flagged	No surface water in many paddocks. Water poor quality.	Crops and pasture do not support livestock production. All feed being imported. Paddock sacrificing evident. Maintenance of ground cover a priority issue.	Supplementary feeding all livestock. <sup>1</sup>
Level 9	Extreme	NSW DPI trigger event 3 consecutive months	Surface water does not support livestock.	Sparse ground cover. Bare ground evident.	Livestock on properties at level 9 seasonal conditions carry a high probability of welfare concerns.
Level 10	Extremely Critical	12 months of failed seasons	No surface water supplies.	No improved pastures, native pasture depleted. Bare ground.	

<sup>1</sup> Please see the following guide for more information - A national guide to describing and managing beef cattle in low body condition - Meat & Livestock Australia Limited website <http://www.mla.com.au/News-and-resources/Publication-details?pubid=6198>

## 2. Data Analysis

An overview of the seasonal conditions for last two months before this reporting period is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Seasonal Condition Report Overview**

Details	April 2016	May 2016
<b>State Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six regions reported no change from last month, including Central West, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, Northern Tablelands and North West.</li> <li>Central Tablelands, Greater Sydney, Riverina and South East have reported a decline in conditions from last month.</li> <li>Western has reported an improvement in conditions from last month. See the table below for an overview of the regional seasonal conditions elements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six regions reported no change from last month, including Greater Sydney, Hunter, Northern Tablelands, North West, South East and Western.</li> <li>North Coast has reported a decline in conditions from last month.</li> <li>Central Tablelands, Central West, Murray and Riverina have reported an improvement in conditions from last month</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Ranking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good - Greater Sydney, North Coast</li> <li>Reasonable - Hunter, Murray, North West and Western</li> <li>Below Requirements - Central Tablelands, Riverina and South East</li> <li>Poor - Central West and Northern Tablelands</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good - Greater Sydney, Murray and Riverina</li> <li>Reasonable - Central Tablelands, Central West, Hunter, North Coast, North West, South East and Western</li> <li>Poor - Northern Tablelands</li> </ul>
<b>LGA Scores – Extremely Poor, Extreme or Extremely Critical</b>	There are no LGAs within this scale.	There are no LGAs within this scale.
<b>LGA Scores – Excellent or Very Good</b>	The following LGAs: Dungog, Kempsey, Kyogle, Richmond Valley Council, Narrandera and Bombala.	The following LGAs: Corowa, Urana, Murray, Kyogle, Richmond Valley Council, Narrandera, Jerilderie, Hay and Bombala.

## 2.1 Number of Properties Surveyed

The number of properties surveyed for seasonal condition reporting from each of the 11 regions are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Surveyed Property Numbers**

Region	Number of properties surveyed		
	April	May	June
Central Tablelands	40	40	40
Central West	35	30	42
Greater Sydney	13	9	11
Hunter	18	15	16
Murray	54	44	45
North Coast	44	45	47
Northern Tablelands	33	35	33
North West	33	36	33
Riverina	22	16	24
South East	44	47	49
Western	29	33	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>358</b>



## 2.2 Average Regional Property Scores

The average regional property score and the local government areas whose average property scores were either above or below the average for each of the 11 regions are identified in Table 4 for this reporting period and the two months prior.

**Table 4: Average Regional Property Score and Local Government Areas (LGAs)**

Region	April			May			June		
	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)
<b>Central Tablelands</b>	<b>Below Requirements</b>	Bathurst and Blayney – <b>Good</b> Cowra, Lithgow and Mid Western - <b>Reasonable</b>	Cabonne, Oberon and Orange - <b>Poor</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Bathurst, Blayney and Cowra - <b>Good</b>	Lithgow – <b>Below Requirements</b> Cabonne, Oberon and Orange - <b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	Cowra – <b>Very Good</b>	Cabonne, Lithgow, Oberon and Orange - <b>Reasonable</b>
<b>Central West</b>	<b>Poor</b>	Narromine – <b>Good</b> Warren – <b>Below Requirements</b>	Warrumbungles – <b>Very Poor</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Bogan and Lachlan - <b>Good</b>	Forbes – <b>Below Requirements</b> Gilgandra and Coonamble – <b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	Narromine, Forbes, Weddin and Lachlan – <b>Very Good</b>	-
<b>Greater Sydney</b>	<b>Good</b>	-	-	<b>Good</b>	-	-	<b>Good</b>	-	-
<b>Hunter</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Dungog – <b>Very Good</b> Singleton, Gloucester, Maitland and Cessnock - <b>Good</b>	Upper Hunter – <b>Below Requirements</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Great Lakes - <b>Good</b>	Gloucester and Maitland – <b>Below Requirements</b> Cessnock - <b>Poor</b> Upper Hunter,	<b>Reasonable</b>	Gloucester and Greater Taree - <b>Good</b>	Upper Hunter, Dungog and Cessnock – <b>Below Requirements</b>
<b>Murray</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Urana, Murray and Wakool - <b>Good</b>	Tumbarumba, Albury, Berrigan and Conargo - <b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	Corowa, Urana and Murray – <b>Very Good</b>	Berrigan – <b>Reasonable</b> Conargo and Wakool – <b>Below Requirements</b>	<b>Good</b>	Corowa – <b>Excellent</b> Urana, Murray and Wakool – <b>Very Good</b>	Albury – <b>Below Requirements</b>

Region	April			May			June		
	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)
<b>North Coast</b>	<b>Good</b>	Kempsey, Kyogle and Richmond Valley Council – <b>Very Good</b>	Port Macquarie Hastings and Clarence Valley Council - <b>Reasonable</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Kyogle and Richmond Valley Council – <b>Very Good</b> Tweed Shire, Ballina, Lismore and Byron - <b>Good</b>	Port Macquarie Hastings and Coffs Harbour – <b>Below Requirements</b>	<b>Good</b>	Kyogle and Richmond Valley Council – <b>Very Good</b>	Nambucca and Coffs Harbour - <b>Reasonable</b>
<b>Northern Tablelands</b>	<b>Poor</b>	-	-	<b>Poor</b>	-	Uralla – <b>Very Poor</b>	<b>Below Requirements</b>	-	Armidale Dumaresq, Tenterfield and Inverell - <b>Poor</b>
<b>North West</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	-	Narrabri, Gunnedah and Tamworth – <b>Below Requirements</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Moree Plains - <b>Good</b>	Narrabri – <b>Below Requirements</b> Gunnedah - <b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	Tamworth – <b>Very Good</b>	Gwydir, Narrabri, Gunnedah and Liverpool Plains - <b>Reasonable</b>
<b>Riverina</b>	<b>Below Requirements</b>	Narrandera – <b>Very Good</b> Gundagai - <b>Good</b> Young and Temora - <b>Reasonable</b>	Wagga and Jerilderie - <b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	Narrandera, Jerilderie and Hay – <b>Very Good</b>	-	<b>Very Good</b>	Jerilderie - <b>Excellent</b>	Tumut, Harden, Wagga, Lockhart and Carathool - <b>Good</b>
<b>South East</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Bombala – <b>Excellent</b> Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee, Bega and Snowy River - <b>Good</b>	Boorowa, Eurobodalla, – <b>Below Requirements</b> Pallerang - <b>Poor</b>	<b>Reasonable</b>	Bombala – <b>Very Good</b> Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee, Upper Lachlan and Bega - <b>Good</b>	Boorowa – <b>Below Requirements</b> Pallerang and Eurobodalla – <b>Poor</b>	<b>Good</b>	Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee and Bombala – <b>Very Good</b>	Boorowa and Eurobodalla - <b>Reasonable</b> Pallerang – <b>Below Requirements</b>

Region	April			May			June		
	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Above Average (LGAs)	Below Average (LGA's)
Western	Reasonable	Balranald, Central Darling and Cobar - <b>Good</b>	Brewarrina – <b>Below Requirements</b> Bourke - <b>Poor</b>	Reasonable	Central Darling and Wentworth - <b>Good</b>	Bourke, Brewarrina and Unincorporated – <b>Below Requirements</b> Cobar - <b>Poor</b>	Reasonable	Brewarrina – <b>Good</b>	-

### 3. Average Regional Property Score

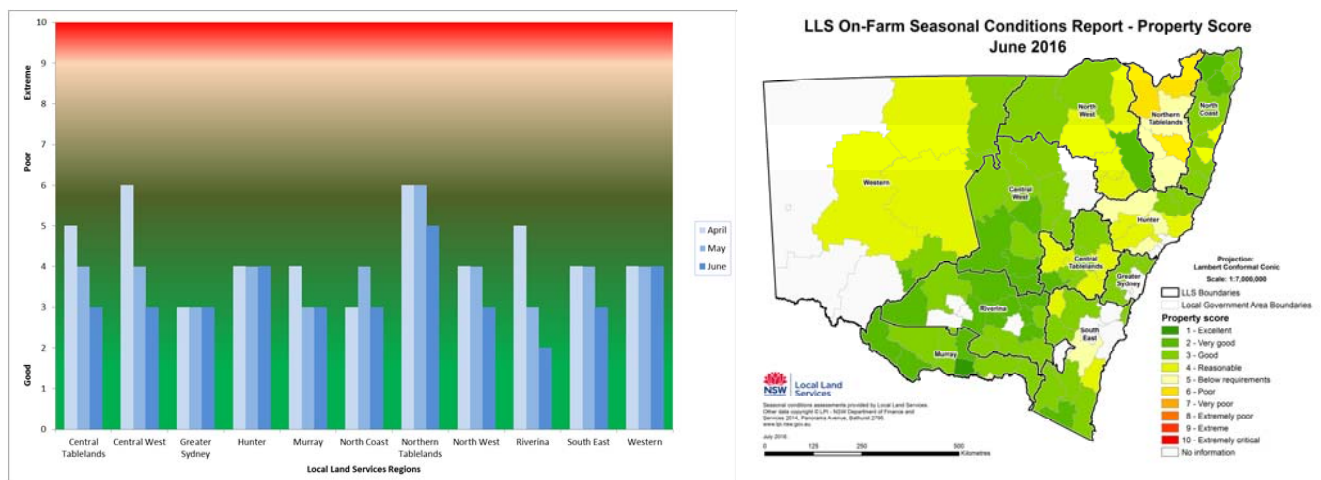
The average regional property score for the 11 regions for the past three months is shown in Table 5. This score includes an average score of the water, agronomic and livestock categories across the regions local government areas.

**Table 5: The average regional property score**

Region	Average scores for regions		
	April	May	June
Central Tablelands	Below Requirements	Reasonable	Good
Central West	Poor	Reasonable	Good
Greater Sydney	Good	Good	Good
Hunter	Reasonable	Reasonable	Reasonable
Murray	Reasonable	Good	Good
North Coast	Good	Reasonable	Good
Northern Tablelands	Poor	Poor	Below Requirements
North West	Reasonable	Reasonable	Good
Riverina	Below Requirements	Good	Very Good
South East	Reasonable	Reasonable	Good
Western	Reasonable	Reasonable	Reasonable

The average regional property score for the 11 regions for the past three months is also shown graphically in Figure 1. Along with the graphically representation in Figure 1 is the geographical representation of the average regional property score across local government areas.

**Figure 1: Graphical and geographical representation of the average regional property score**



## 4. Average Regional Score for Infrastructure

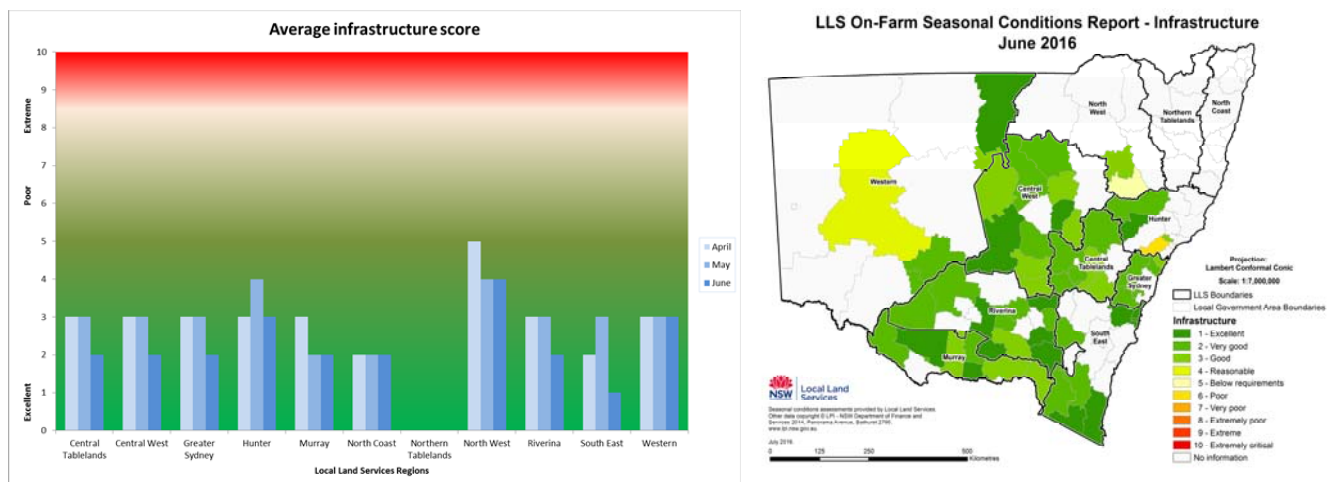
The average regional infrastructure score for the 11 regions for the past three months is shown in Table 6. This score is for the condition of regional infrastructure including bores, tanks, troughs and piping. The infrastructure score is used to capture information for the Regional Assistance Advisory Committee (RAAC) to use for the emergency water infrastructure grants in 2014. It is important to note Northern Tablelands do not measure/score the water infrastructure in the region.

**Table 6: The average regional infrastructure score**

Region	Average scores for regions		
	April	May	June
Central Tablelands	Good	Good	Very Good
Central West	Good	Good	Very Good
Greater Sydney	Good	Good	Very Good
Hunter	Good	Reasonable	Good
Murray	Good	Very Good	Very Good
North Coast	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Northern Tablelands	-	-	-
North West	Below Requirements	Reasonable	Reasonable
Riverina	Good	Good	Very Good
South East	Very Good	Good	Excellent
Western	Good	Good	Good

The average regional infrastructure score for the 11 regions for the past three months is also shown graphically in Figure 2. Along with the graphical representation in Figure 2 is the geographical representation of the average regional infrastructure score across local government areas.

**Figure 2: Graphical and geographical representation of the average regional infrastructure score**



## 5. Average Regional Water Score

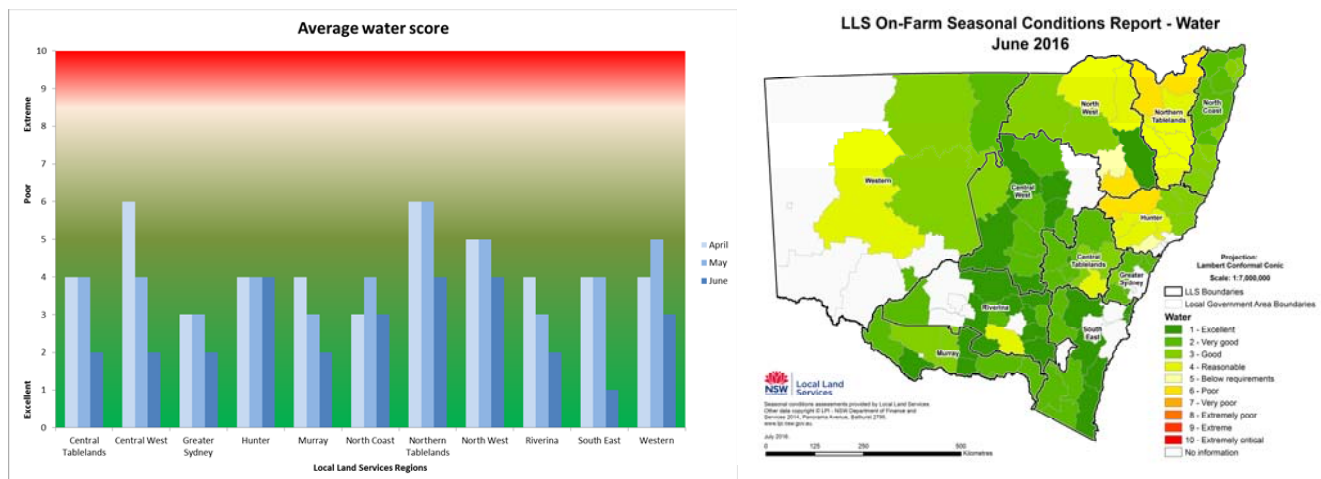
The average regional water score for the 11 regions for the past three months is shown in Table 7. This score is for the condition of regional water including surface water, dams and stock accessed rivers, creeks and springs.

**Table 7: The average regional water score**

Region	Average scores for regions		
	April	May	June
Central Tablelands	Reasonable	Reasonable	Very Good
Central West	Poor	Reasonable	Very Good
Greater Sydney	Good	Good	Very Good
Hunter	Reasonable	Reasonable	Reasonable
Murray	Reasonable	Good	Very Good
North Coast	Good	Reasonable	Good
Northern Tablelands	Poor	Poor	Reasonable
North West	Below Requirements	Below Requirements	Reasonable
Riverina	Reasonable	Good	Very Good
South East	Reasonable	Reasonable	Excellent
Western	Reasonable	Below Requirements	Good

The average regional water score for the 11 regions for the past three months is also shown graphically in Figure 3. Along with the graphically representation in Figure 3 is the geographical representation of the average regional water score across local government areas.

**Figure 3: Graphical and geographical representation of the average regional water score**



## 6. Average Regional Agronomics Score

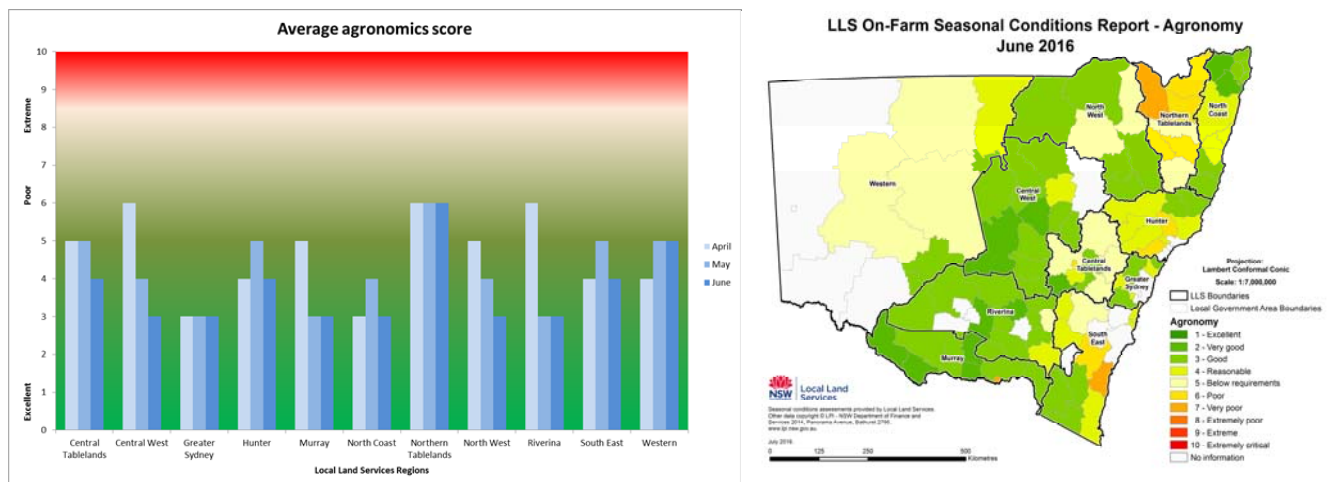
The average regional agronomics score for the 11 regions for the past three months is shown in Table 8. This score is for the condition of regional agronomics including native pastures, improved pastures and cropping.

**Table 8: The average agronomics score**

Region	Average scores for regions		
	April	May	June
Central Tablelands	Below Requirements	Below Requirements	Reasonable
Central West	Poor	Reasonable	Good
Greater Sydney	Good	Good	Good
Hunter	Reasonable	Below Requirements	Reasonable
Murray	Below Requirements	Good	Good
North Coast	Good	Reasonable	Good
Northern Tablelands	Poor	Poor	Below Requirements
North West	Below Requirements	Reasonable	Good
Riverina	Poor	Good	Good
South East	Reasonable	Below Requirements	Reasonable
Western	Reasonable	Below Requirements	Below Requirements

The average regional agronomics score for the 11 regions for the past three months is also shown graphically in Figure 4. Along with the graphical representation in Figure 4 is the geographical representation of the average regional agronomic score across local government areas.

**Figure 4: Graphical and geographical representation of the average regional agronomics score**



## 7. Average Regional Livestock Score

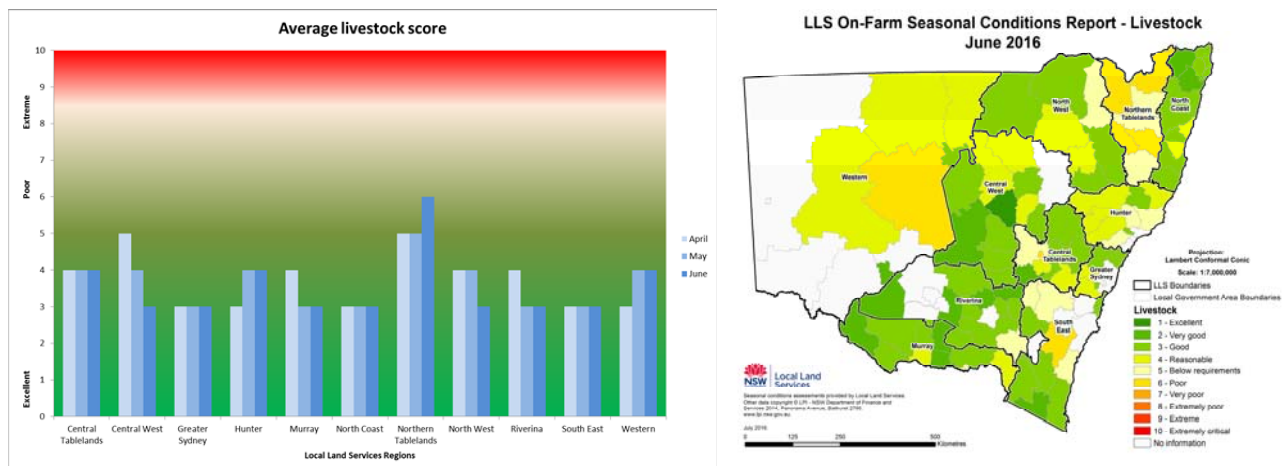
The average regional livestock score for the 11 regions for the past three months is shown in Table 9. This score is for the condition of regional livestock including beef, sheep and other.

**Table 9: The average livestock score**

Region	Average scores for regions		
	April	May	June
Central Tablelands	Reasonable	Reasonable	Reasonable
Central West	Below Requirements	Reasonable	Good
Greater Sydney	Good	Good	Good
Hunter	Good	Reasonable	Reasonable
Murray	Reasonable	Good	Good
North Coast	Good	Good	Good
Northern Tablelands	Below Requirements	Below Requirements	Poor
North West	Reasonable	Reasonable	Good
Riverina	Reasonable	Good	Good
South East	Good	Good	Good
Western	Good	Reasonable	Reasonable

The average regional livestock score for the 11 regions for the past three months is also shown graphically in Figure 5. Along with the graphical representation in Figure 5 is the geographical representation of the average regional livestock score across local government areas.

**Figure 5: Graphical and geographical representation of the average regional livestock score**





## 8. Regional Comments on Seasonal Conditions

The 11 regional seasonal condition comments for the last three months are shown in Table 10.

**Table 10: Regional commentary on seasonal conditions**

Region	April	May	June
<b>Central Tablelands</b>	<p>Little or no rainfall fell across most of the region up until the end of April when widespread rains provided relief for most except for those in the Eastern areas. April's late rainfall followed on from a dry end to March and has unfortunately meant that for many, the rains have come too late to make a significant difference to pastures. The drier conditions have also meant that despite the recent rains, little or no run-off has occurred into dams.</p> <p>Pastures have continued to deteriorate over the month and supplementary feeding has become the norm as landholders try to maintain stock condition. For some with cereal crops in the ground recent conditions have been more positive and crops are improving.</p> <p>Livestock numbers have been reduced by many landholders to ease pressure on pastures and to limit the costs involved with supplementary feeding. As a result some landholders are running below average stocking rates but generally maintaining good livestock condition for remaining stock.</p>	<p>Good widespread rain fell across the region during May except for in the Eastern areas closer to the Mountains. This has helped improve water storage's and creek flows slightly for some, whilst for other producers primarily in the Western and Northern sections of the region water remains a concern with dams drying up, and landholders having to rely on other infrastructure to meet water needs.</p> <p>Pastures have generally improved slightly over the month as soil moisture levels improve although the onset of colder weather and heavy frosts towards the end of the month has started to limit or stop much new growth occurring. Most producers have been supplementary feeding livestock already, with others due to begin soon.</p> <p>For some of those that have already begun feeding, on farm supplementary supplies are being used up rapidly, resulting in the selling of excess livestock to ensure the maintenance of existing stock.</p>	<p>Excellent rainfall across the region during June has helped to dramatically improve water storage's in farm dams and creeks in all areas.</p> <p>Cold weather and very heavy frosts during the month have continued to limit pasture growth, although a green tinge has started to appear. Overall, pastures have picked up slightly due to the recent rains, whilst crops are generally growing well. Recent snowfall events across the high country in the east have had an effect on pasture levels, but the improved soil moisture levels in the ground are leading towards a good spring if conditions continue.</p> <p>Supplementary feeding is still widespread and will further increase during the remainder of the winter months. As a result many stock are reliant on this feeding to maintain condition, and there has been evidence of livestock slipping back in condition where regular feeding is not occurring.</p>
<b>Central West</b>	<p>Conditions still deteriorating in most areas in the Central West with little to no rain reported for April. Many landholders are taking a risk on dry sowing in the hope of coming rain in May. Most producers have little to no ground cover in all areas across the Central West, feed quality is very low quality and becoming scarce. Stock are holding condition though this is due to supplementary feeding. Many stock producers are handfeeding and if no substantial rain in the near future this will continue into the foreseeable future as if conditions turn cold pasture growth will be minimal. Water levels are reported to be low in most areas with most producers requiring good rain to top up groundwater supplies. Cotton harvest is nearly finished in the cotton growing areas both in the South and the North.</p>	<p>Many areas in the central West are still struggling with little to no groundwater and minimal pasture. Sowing has being completed in most areas a lot of crops were dry sown or sown into low soil moisture profiles.</p> <p>Some areas are supplementary feeding lactating or pregnant stock due to slow pasture growth and/ or low quality feed. Ground water very low in most areas even with rainfall need substantial follow up rain for runoff so groundwater storage's can fill. Follow up rain is needed to continue pasture growth.</p>	<p>Overall CW has received the best start to winter in a number of years. Most of the region has received 100 to 180 mm, spread over 8 to 14 days in June.</p> <p>Water storage has reached near capacity in most areas.</p> <p>There has been some minor flooding on some of the creeks and rivers in the region which has resulted in loss of cereal crop and pasture. Local inundation is also having an effect on crops as the root system remains waterlogged. Long term affect of this will depend on the weather in the next few weeks, but raining here again so not drying out in a hurry.</p> <p>With the onset of colder weather pasture growth has been limited in most areas, but has improved. Hand</p>

Region	April	May	June
			<p>feeding is continuing due to the high water content of pastures at the moment, and higher energy requirements of stock due to the cold. However some producers are struggling to gain access to paddocks to deliver feed due to the wet ground. Overall the condition of stock would be average. With the lush conditions some livestock issues have arisen such as bloat, increased worm burdens, calcium and magnesium deficiencies in stock grazing cereal crops and foot abscess, particularly in pregnant ewes. Footrot is another problem that producers need to be aware of given the ideal conditions that will be present as we move towards spring.</p> <p>Whilst there are some negative impacts currently, some quite substantial in individual cases, the outlook is reasonably positive for the months ahead.</p>
<b>Greater Sydney</b>	<p>Most of the pasture land has been started to drying out. It will be difficult winter months for farmer if there will no rain in next few weeks. Water level in dam and reservoir are down up to medium full still enough water for next couple of months. Farmers are expecting rain in next month or so and recovery of soil condition/moisture. Cattle and lamb health condition still good but need forage to improve this condition. Overall condition of the region is in boarder line of average to below average.</p>	<p>Greater Sydney for the month of May was unusually warm and dry. Well above average temperatures and low levels of rainfall have allowed the pasture quality within the region to remain dry. Despite such climatic conditions, most of the reservoirs and dams remain half full or above. In the upper part of the region, pasture quality and growth is poor. Dam water supplies within this area are well below half full. Producers have stated that it is the driest they have seen their properties to date. Overall, the condition of livestock across the region appears good.</p>	<p>Greater Sydney for the month of June received widespread rainfall across the region. Totals in most areas were between 209mm - 327mm, due to the east coast low rain/storm event which saw widespread flooding and erosion of waterways, reservoirs and dams. Producers in areas such as Llandilo, Menangle, Elderslie, Camden and Picton also reported loss of pasture, livestock, topsoil and crops. Although water supplies are full or above in most areas, pasture quality has reduced as the cold weather and frosty mornings start to set in. Subsoil moisture levels also are very high, due to the large amount of rainfall received this month. Livestock condition appears above average throughout the region, with some producers supplementary feeding their livestock in order to maintain and increase their weight due to poor pasture quality.</p>
<b>Hunter</b>	<p>Rain is generally needed across the Hunter region to boost winter feed and crops and fill water courses and dams. Again the district is represented by extremes. North-east of Scone and north-west of Gloucester have consistently missed scattered showers and many livestock producers are feeding supplements and full rations. Creeks and dams are very poor</p>	<p>May 2016 is widely reported across the Hunter region to have capped of one of the lowest autumn rainfall periods since 1969. Many dams in the Scone, Gloucester and Greater Taree areas are dry. Dry paddock feed is depleting in quantity and quality. Scattered storms have seen a short green pick and</p>	<p>Rainfall has been good but scattered. More rain would be appreciated. The long dry autumn and limited growth of wintery pastures has resulted in many graziers feeding cattle especially breeders, and early weaning of calves.</p>

Region	April	May	June
	<p>in these areas and generally very low across the Upper Hunter with no significant run-off rainfall for months. Taree, parts of Gloucester and Maitland have received favorable summer and late autumn falls resulting in good pasture feed availability and germination of winter crops. Substantial rain is still required to top up stock and irrigation water. Good to reasonable dry paddock feed features in the lower Singleton/Muswellbrook area but quality is depleting and supply tightening. As the cooler weather settles in, the season hangs in the balance with follow up rain required for a clover germination and growth. 45-60mm or rain on the final weekend in April for Merriwa-Cassilis is not fully reflected in these figures and has seen a flurry of tractor activity sowing winter crops and a welcome drink for dry-sown oats.</p>	<p>clover germination in some areas but predicted follow-up falls from the east coast low in early June are desperately needed. At Muswellbrook, rain at the start of May resulted in a good clover germination but winds and an extended dry have since brought growth to a halt. Scattered heavy storms west of Merriwa have kept crops and pastures ticking along but once again the ranges east of Scone have missed out with falls reducing as the system moved towards the coast. Stock water is a major problem in many areas and beef producers are production feeding livestock especially lactating cows. Many have sold cattle to maintain ground cover or at least weaned calves. Heavy frosts hit in the last week of May with snow falls on the Barrington Tops. The northern ranges around Scone and Gloucester are very bare and wintery. Farmers will be looking forward to some decent falls from June's predicted East Coast low minus the destructive floods of last year.</p>	
<p><b>Murray</b></p>	<p>Very little rain recorded until 29th April when good falls will make a significant difference to the entire area in the next report. In many areas, this was the first effective rain since February. With quite a bit of sowing already undertaken and tractors now working overtime, this rain was extremely timely, but follow up will be needed to keep things going. Across the board supplementary feeding is high, but may reduce significantly within two weeks where enough moisture fell to get pastures up and running. Water quality has improved although BGA is still an issue in some areas. Stock condition generally remains very good considering the lack of pasture as most producers have supplementary fed to retain condition. Irrigation allocations remain unchanged - 23% of general security entitlement in the Murray Valley, and 37% of general security entitlement in the Murrumbidgee. Limited pre-irrigation for cereal crops occurring - some watering up of canola. Many producers using limited water resources on pastures. Feral animals are being noted as very high, especially in the west and far east.</p>	<p>Excellent (above average) rainfall has been experienced across the area since 29th April - recording averages of around 100mm across most areas. With excellent growing conditions the Autumn got a great boost to its late start (generally warm conditions experienced up until the 3rd week of May). Early sown crops and most pastures are looking very good with groundcover improving significantly across the whole region. The rain triggered a significant bout of tractorbumitus, and although most producers have recovered, some are still suffering through the last paddocks. Irrigated annual pastures are performing well - many producers had already commenced grazing. Irrigation allocations remain unchanged - 23% of general security entitlement in the Murray Valley, and 37% of general security entitlement in the Murrumbidgee. Small amount of pre-irrigated country is too wet to sow. Supplementary feeding is varied with many producers beginning to reduce the amount fed, but most are still feeding, especially lambing ewes or lambs. Stock are</p>	<p>Wet weather continued for June. Cropping - mostly conditions are very good - across the region crops are growing well. The rainfall triggered a significant amount of sowing of all winter cropping varieties. Most growers completed a majority of their sowing programs - still some late season wheat and barley sowing to be completed - but over 90% completed. There is now adequate moisture but various levels of water-logging causing problems to both crops &amp; pastures. Any country that was pre-irrigated is suffering excessive waterlogging. Groundcover has improved significantly. Pasture growing conditions have slowed - cold and wet particularly in 2nd half of the month but generally pastures in the west and central are growing well for this time of year however the East missed a good break and growth has dropped considerably (normal for this time of year). Whilst growing conditions are good, in some areas there is still not a lot of bulk of feed/dry matter available so supplementary feeding is still ongoing and will continue throughout the winter,</p>

Region	April	May	June
		<p>still doing well enough (especially sheep) but in most situations will need this break to pick back up before the cold weather sets in, however without a bulk of dry matter, many cattle producers are currently feeding to get cattle through the winter, while trying to let pastures build before winter.</p> <p>Water quality has improved, although blue green algae are still an issue in some areas.</p> <p>Pest issues; Onset of cooler conditions in last week of May has seen significant numbers of crop pasture pests - in particular red legged earthmite and blue oat aphid in central Murray. Deer and other feral animals are becoming more of an issue in the Upper Murray and some Western areas.</p>	<p>particularly in the east where the cold stopped growth earlier. Some of the central and western areas have adequate feed however waterlogging is limiting feed in some areas as livestock can't be moved to fresh paddocks. Foot abscess potentially a problem in merino ewes with big fleece. Overall, much animal husbandry on hold until yards dry out and roads /tracks are suitably dry to enable stock movement. One participant commented that ewe scanning was down due to the dry in May.</p> <p>Many ground tanks reliant on surface inflows have seen levels replenished - with many full or close to. Water quality has improved, although blue green algae is still an issue in some areas.</p> <p>On set of cooler conditions has seen significant numbers of crop pasture pests - in particular red legged earthmite and blue oat aphid in crops and pastures. Kangaroos are still an ongoing issue in the Upper Murray (East). Feral Pigs also an issue in the Upper Murray.</p> <p>Irrigation allocations (general security) in the Murray commenced at 0% for the 2017 'water year' (2016 year finished @ 23%) whilst in the Murrumbidgee has commenced the 2017 water season at 20% (2016 year finished @ 37% of entitlements).</p>
<b>North Coast</b>	<p>A very similar story to last month with the Northern Rivers receiving good rainfall and their season continuing to tick along nicely. The Coastal strip along the entire North Coast has also experienced a good month with timely rainfall and continued warm weather.</p> <p>Areas away from the Coast are starting to report low surface water volumes due to lack of rainfall, this lack of rainfall and the continued warmer than normal conditions have depleted pastures and has not allowed the winter feed gap pastures of Rye, Chicory and Clover to become established as you would expect for this time of year.</p>	<p>With exception of the far North East corner it has been a very ordinary month across all of the Local Government areas with little or no rainfall being recorded this month following from the past dry two (2) months. Averages are way down as is pasture growth (native and improved), water levels in some areas are severely depleted, while livestock condition is still good most producers are reporting an unseasonal drop in condition across all categories.</p> <p>On a brighter note is the forecast for this weekend and into next week with an East Coast low predicted to form over the weekend and dump plenty of rain in the northern part of the state.</p>	<p>Producers across the region were very happy to receive the rainfall and it has certainly improved the overall picture with very few negatives.</p>
<b>Northern</b>	Overall, little change across the Northern Tablelands for the	Modest rainfall over the whole area has done nothing	Good general rains across the whole Northern

Region	April	May	June
<b>Tablelands</b>	<p>last month, however this is not the full story. As in previous months, rainfall has been mostly from storms and consequently both patchy and inadequate to generate run-off except on a few properties. Fortunately evaporation has dropped as we move towards winter but some properties, particularly in the Uralla LGA are critical for surface water. The month has remained warmer than average with no frosts recorded yet, and so, where there has been rain there has also been some pasture growth. Fodder crops range from fantastic to disastrous, again depending on whether they have caught the rain or not and winter grain crop preparation is well under way with plantings starting.</p>	<p>to ease the significant water deficit, with continuing critical water levels particularly in Uralla LGA. With the advent of frosts late in the month, pastures have deteriorated somewhat and except for some small pockets, fodder crops have failed to provide expected yields with most still waiting for sufficient growth to allow the first grazing. Winter crop plantings are in full swing with the early plantings struggling with the low moisture levels and large areas being planted "dry" in anticipation of the predicted rainfall in early June.</p>	<p>Tablelands LLS area have brought about improvements in water supplies in all LGA areas. In most of the LGAs this improvement has been quite dramatic, however in the two with the lower rainfall totals (Inverell and Tenterfield) improvement has been limited as run off was only starting when the rain ceased. Fodder crops which were struggling at the end of May, have also undergone a major turn-around with the added moisture and are generally providing excellent winter feed. Pastures along with stock numbers and condition remain little changed as is expected through the winter months on the tablelands.</p>
<b>North West</b>	<p>Warmer weather across the region, coupled with limited rainfall has resulted in poor pasture growth, minimal runoff and very few planting opportunities. Sowing of winter crops has commenced but the forecasted area is still very small at this stage. Some areas around the south were dry sown in the expectation of rain and while there has been sufficient rainfall to get crops established, significant follow up rain is required. Almost all summer crop is harvested with good yields and quality, despite the dry summer. Stock numbers are reducing across the region with significant offloading on the slopes around Baraba and Bingara due to limited water and pasture. Remaining stock are in good condition but require supplementary feeding to maintain/increase weight as pasture quality degrades. Late rain will increase forage crop planting and providing warmer weather prevails, pasture growth will occur.</p>	<p>Despite rainfall throughout late April and early May, on-farm water reserves continue to worsen as there has been no runoff. Winter crop planting has been staggered with chickpeas and faba beans being deep planted to reach the limited soil moisture. Small areas of Canola and cereals have been planted onto marginal moisture and there is a large area still left to sow. Livestock numbers are still significantly reduced and recent rainfall has depleted quality of dormant summer pasture but has generated small amounts of winter forage, however most stock are still receiving supplementary feed to maintain condition.</p>	<p>Water - There has been good widespread rainfall across the region with the highest falls being over 400mm at Mt Kaputar and an average of over 100mm. This rainfall has been steady, resulting in limited runoff, other than in the Tamworth region. Farm dam supplies are still low but with lower temperatures, the demand for water has reduced Agronomics - Forage crops are performing very well and this is filling the winter feed gap from tropical and native pastures in the region. Large areas of crop have been planted already and some areas around Rowena, Burren Junction and Collarenebri have been inundated, potentially requiring replanting if conditions permit. Pulse crops are being monitored closely for foliar diseases as Ascochyta Blight has already been found near Mungindi. Livestock - A strong flush of winter legumes has created a bloat risk and farmers are managing this risk with supplementary feeding. Stock numbers are still reduced and high prices are kerbing restocking rates.</p>
<b>Riverina</b>	<p>The majority of producers in the Riverina have had a drier April that followed on from a dry March, with warm afternoon temperatures and cooler autumn nights. Evaporation rates declined further since March but were still high compared to the rainfall received; Burrinjuck Dam received a monthly</p>	<p>Producers in the Riverina have now had wet conditions over the month of May that followed on from a very dry March and a dry April. While temperatures were above average for the month of May, they cooled off by the end of the month with</p>	<p>Producers in the Riverina are now describing conditions as very wet, after two wet months. Temperatures were above average for June, with pasture growth slow but reasonable on the better drained soils. Burrinjuck Dam received a monthly</p>

Region	April	May	June
	<p>rainfall of 8.4mm and monthly evaporation was 84.4mm. Dam water supplies range from adequate to empty, but are generally low. Livestock condition across the region was above average at the end of February but has now slipped with producers supplementary feeding or feeding full rations to hold breeding stock in reasonable condition and to prevent Pregnancy toxaemia occurring as ewes lamb. Rangeland pastures have deteriorated rapidly in quantity and quality and groundcover is very low. Feed on offer is lower in quantity and quality than in previous months and described by many as barely above zero.</p> <p>The Hay area is now regarded by local producers as being drought stricken (a seasonal drought). Stubble paddocks have been fed off in previous months and have been sown for the new season or are being prepared for sowing; some stubbles are retained and some have been burnt, depending on weed burdens and the use of disc or tyne seeders. There has been progress with the sowing of early options such as oats, dual purpose wheat, lupins and faba beans and substantial areas of canola. Crops sown to date have been sown dry or on marginal moisture with estimates of about third of the cropping program sown in the Riverina. Grain-growers are continuing with sowing preparation and dry-sowing of their cropping program while they wait for the proper autumn break (&gt;40-50mm in one event). Growers are looking for the autumn break to bring up their winter pastures and crop sown to date, renew perennial pastures, give confidence to cropping programs, provide relief from feeding stock and replenish farm dams.</p> <p>In Irrigation areas the maize harvest is complete while the cotton harvest commenced with reports of excellent yields and is still going.</p>	<p>chilly nights. Burrinjuck Dam received a monthly rainfall of 167.0 mm and monthly evaporation was only 60.4mm. Farm dam water supplies throughout the region are generally adequate to above. Supplementary feeding or maintenance rations to stock held their condition over dry autumn months but rations have reduced with new pasture growth. Breeding stock generally are in reasonable to good condition, averaging fat score 2.5. Growers are monitoring herd health with ewes lambing, lactating and with lambs at foot. In the western Riverina the rangeland pastures germinated at the start of the month and have been showing good growth rates, along with volunteer annual pastures. Elsewhere perennial pastures are growing well, and annual pastures are young and green, showing above average growth rates for May. Growers need to monitor stock for bloat in some lucerne and clover pastures. The quantity of Feed on Offer is still low with only four weeks of growth under grazing pressure.</p> <p>The Hay area has responded quickly to the welcome rainfall and rebounded from a very low base. The winter crop has largely been sown with only small areas remaining. Sowing of early options such as oats, pulses and canola is finished. Remaining late options include shorter season varieties of wheat and some new pastures. Grain-growers, mixed farmers and graziers have all welcomed the continuing May rainfall with regular and significant falls. Conditions have been as close to perfect for the month of May with respect to rainfall and temperature.</p> <p>In Irrigation areas the completion of the cotton harvest was delayed by rainfall in some areas. The Hay district experienced a wet month and producers are happy with new pasture growth and the condition and health of livestock.</p>	<p>rainfall of 238.4mm and monthly evaporation was only half that of May at 30.9mm. Farm dam water supplies throughout the region range from 2/3 full to overflowing with significant run-off occurring this month. Supplementary feeding of stock is continuing on some farms to hold stock in reasonable condition, with breeding stock facing cold and wet conditions and higher energy requirements with young progeny at foot. Some producers are having issues with boggy conditions and taking hay and grain out to stock in paddocks too wet to drive on. Breeding stock generally are in reasonable condition, averaging fat score 2. Stock health issues include a number of diagnosed and reported cases of grass tetany in the region, a metabolic disease that affects cattle and sheep, associated with low levels of magnesium in the blood in stock grazing on young grass pastures and dual purpose cereal crops. There have been issues of pregnancy toxaemia in late pregnant ewes grazed on pasture only without supplementation and also hypocalcemia in sheep on grazing cereal crops and some early cases of rickets in lambs. On the other extreme, growers are continuing to monitor stock for bloat in some lucerne and clover pastures. The quantity of feed-on-offer is increasing gradually for stock although moisture contents of green pastures and grazing crops feed are currently high and around 70-75% which equates to only offering 25-30% Dry Matter on a weight basis. Clover content is poor in paddocks that had an early strike before the dry months of March and April, and excellent where the seed struck on the autumn break. Medics have also had an excellent strike this season.</p> <p>The winter crop is in a mixed condition. The early sown crops have faced higher than normal insect pressure but were trafficable enough to spray early for pests. Late sown crops have suffered from seed bursting to seedlings facing waterlogged conditions to some paddocks becoming too wet for late-sown options. Generally the early sown crops are quite good while</p>

Region	April	May	June
			<p>many later sown paddocks have suffered waterlogging and losses are increasing as paddocks do not have the chance to dry out while evaporation rates are so low. While continued rainfall was welcomed in May, many paddocks are now too wet to do a follow up insect spray for pests, spray post-emergent weeds or to spread fertilisers. In any case, urea is also in short supply at present and hard to get delivered on-farm.</p>
<p><b>South East</b></p>	<p><b>Coastal</b> - The majority of the coastal area received below average rainfall for the month of April. Some areas are holding on better than others. Dam water is starting to disappear at an alarming rate in some areas, creeks and rivers are generally holding on well. Pasture is at a stage that without rain in the next couple of weeks will deteriorate quickly. The combination of lack of rain and an expected sharp drop in temperature over the next month is turning the outlook for the coast from good too bad.</p> <p><b>Highlands</b> - The Highlands for April received below average rainfall. Dam water is starting to be effected due to the lack of rain and water quality is also an issue. Pasture growth in the area is lower than normal for this time of year due to the lack of rain. Like the coastal area the outlook for the winter is looking worse every day.</p> <p><b>Tablelands</b> - Tablelands for the month of April received mainly well below average rainfall. Totals for the month in most areas were below 25mm. Pasture availability has declined again for the month due to warm weather and limited rainfall. Water supplies further reduced during the month of April to the point that many farm dams are now dry which is starting to force stock into the sale yards. Creeks and rivers in the area are generally good. Many producers are starting to hand feed for production reasons with their breeding stock. Night time temperatures are starting to drop and frosts are starting in many areas, which are having a detrimental effect on what pasture is left. The outlook for the Tablelands for the coming winter is very poor as the major growth season is now behind us. Most producers will have to reduce numbers or plan to feed livestock this winter.</p> <p><b>Monaro</b> - The majority of the Monaro area received below average rainfall for the month of April. Mostly totals were</p>	<p><b>Coastal</b> - The majority of the coastal area received below average rainfall for the month of May. Most areas are showing signs of the dry and frosts have started which is making what pasture that is left drop in quality. Dam water is still dropping at a very fast rate and creeks and rivers are still holding very well. Pasture is at a stage that without rain in the next couple of weeks will deteriorate quickly. The combination of lack of rain and the sharp drop in temperature is having a serious effect.</p> <p><b>Highlands</b> - The Highlands for May received below average rainfall. Dam water is starting to be effected due to the lack of rain and water quality is also an issue. Pasture growth in the area is lower than normal for this time of year due to the lack of rain. Like the coastal area the outlook for the winter is looking worse every day.</p> <p><b>Tablelands</b> - Tablelands for the month of May received below average rainfall in most areas. Some areas mainly in the North west Gundaroo through to Yass responded to some rain but is looking for follow up rain. Pasture availability has declined again for the month due to frost and limited rainfall. Water supplies further reduced during the month of May which has continued the trend started in April of selling stock. Creeks and rivers in the area are generally good. Many producers are starting to hand feed their breeding stock. Night time temperatures are starting to drop and frosts are starting to become cold down to minus 7 in many areas, which are having a detrimental effect on what pasture is left. The outlook for the Tablelands for the coming winter is very poor</p>	<p>Most of the seasonal conditions are the same as the previous month except we have had considerable rainfall across the majority of the area.</p>

Region	April	May	June
	<p>generally below 50mm. The Bombala area is better off than most however the onset of winter well see this area deteriorate. Given that rainfall for the Monaro has been below average this area has held on much better than the tablelands, a little rain at the right time makes a massive difference.</p>	<p>as the major growth season is now behind us. Most producers will have to reduce numbers or plan to feed livestock this winter.</p> <p><b>Monaro</b> - The southern end of the Monaro around Bombala receives some good rain and did respond very well. Mostly totals were generally below 50mm. The Bombala area is better off than most. Given that rainfall for the Monaro has been below average this area has held on much better than the tablelands, a little rain at the right time makes a massive difference. As the frost get colder the pasture quality will drop off very quickly.</p>	
<p><b>Western</b></p>	<p>All areas reports extremely dry conditions for April and landholders have either been hand feeding in the south or are considering selling livestock to reduce grazing pressure on natural pastures. This is compounded in some areas by higher kangaroo numbers.</p> <p>Rainfall has been patchy</p> <p>Cropping areas in the southern parts of the board area are looking for opening season rains during April but only minor falls were recorded on the last days of April. Much more rain will be required for cropping programs.</p>	<p>Generally a good month for rainfall across the region but low rainfall for April has left feed very short in many areas and landholders in some situations have de-stocked to maintain ground cover while others have chosen to hand feed.</p> <p>We expect good pasture growth from the May rains will change the outlook in many areas.</p> <p>Some wheat crops in the south were sown dry and will benefit from the rains in mid to late May.</p>	<p>Water - Barwon River running well from earlier rain's to the east, &amp; likely to remain full throughout winter. Culgoa/Bolond river systems have had local flows for the past month. Paroo/Warrego river systems running well, with some flood warnings. Bogan River in minor flood. Landholders reporting good run off into ground tanks.</p> <p>Agronomic Conditions - The country has responded well, with winter herbage, Lams tongue, Spinach, Burr &amp; some clover with marsh-mellow.</p> <p>With more rain expected in July, this will keep the country wet until the warmer days in September, when summer grasses should start to respond, with minimal rain falls.</p> <p>Livestock Conditions - Small numbers of reports of Bloat affecting cattle so far, but predict more to come due to the wetter than usual conditions for winter. Cattle look great as do most of the sheep. Stock numbers remain low on most properties due to higher prices for restocking.</p>



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