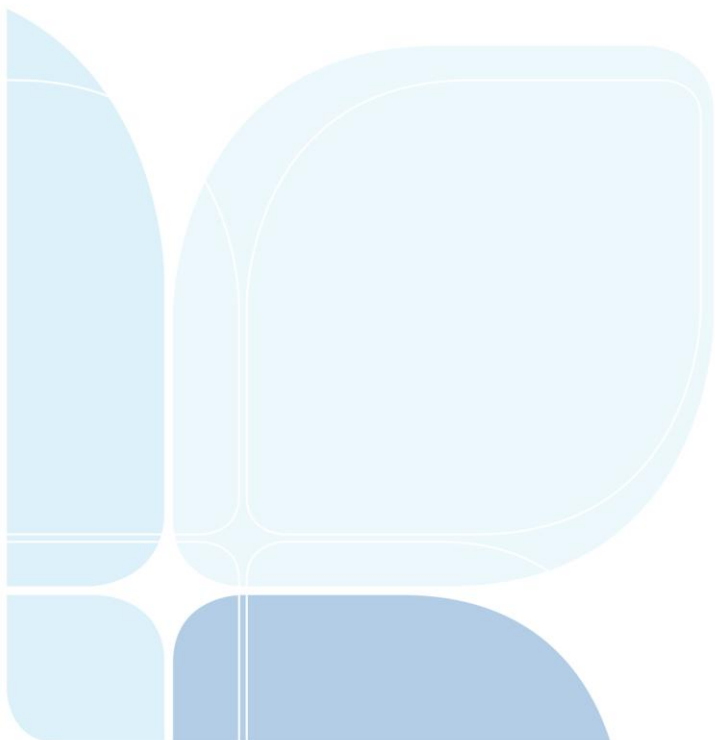




Local Land
Services

On-ground Seasonal Conditions Report

May 2015



Published by the Local Land Services

Seasonal Conditions Report

First published June 2015

ISBN

More information

www.lls.nsw.gov.au

Acknowledgments

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing June 2015. 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.

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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.

Table 1: Seasonal Condition Report Overview

Details	March 2015	April 2015	May 2015
State overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seven of the ten regions have reported a decline in conditions from last month. Reflecting an increase in average regional scores by one to two points. Three of these regions are now ranked at poor. Three of these regions are now ranked at below requirements. Three of the ten regions have reported minimal change in conditions from last month, ranking at very good and good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seven of the 11 regions have reported an improvement in conditions from last month. The remaining four regions have reported no change to their average regional scores. Seven of these regions are now ranked at reasonable or below requirements. Four of these regions are now ranked very good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight regions have reported no change to their average regional score from last month including Central Tablelands, Greater Sydney, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, Riverina and Western. Central West and North West have reported an improvement in conditions from last month. South East has reported a decline in conditions from last month.
Regional Ranking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Good – Greater Sydney and North Coast Good – Hunter and South East Reasonable - Murray Below Requirements – Central Tablelands, North West and Riverina Poor – Central West, Northern Tablelands and Western 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Good – Greater Sydney, Hunter, North Coast and South East. Reasonable – Central Tablelands, Murray and Riverina. Below Requirements – Central West, Northern Tablelands, North West and Western. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Good – Greater Sydney, Hunter and North Coast. Good – South East. Reasonable – Central Tablelands, Central West, Murray, North West and Riverina. Below Requirements – Northern Tablelands and Western
LGA Scores – Extremely Poor, Extreme or Extremely Critical	The following LGAs: Coonamble, Walgett, Brewarrina and Cobar.	The following LGA: Walgett and Brewarrina	The following LGA: Walgett
LGA Scores – Excellent or Very good	The following LGA's: Cessnock, Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie, Greater Taree, Cootamundra, Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee, Goulburn/Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan and Bombala.	The following LGA's: Dungog and Shoalhaven.	The following LGA's: Camden, Tamworth, Bombala, Snowy River and Yass.

Data Analysis

Table 2: Surveyed Property Numbers

Region	Number of properties surveyed		
	March	April	May
Central Tablelands	40	40	39
Central West	58	40	40
Greater Sydney	14	10	14
Hunter	25	22	18
Murray	55	54	57
North Coast	46	42	44
Northern Tablelands	31	35	31
North West	33	31	33
Riverina	30	15	19
South East	59	55	33
Western	39	28	40
TOTAL	430	372	368

Table 3: Seasonal Conditions Reporting Scale

Scale	Regional description	Regional description of seasonal condition as scaled 1 to 10
Level 1	Excellent	Previous 12 months above average seasonal conditions
Level 2	Very Good	Previous 6 months above average seasonal conditions
Level 3	Good	The current season is average
Level 4	Reasonable	The current season is below average
Level 5	Below Requirements	The current season has failed
Level 6	Poor	Consecutive failed seasons
Level 7	Very Poor	The past 6 months have been below average
Level 8	Extremely Poor	NSW DPI trigger event (1 in 5 years 20 th percentile for rain, pasture, soil moisture) expected to be flagged
Level 9	EXTREME	NSW DPI trigger event 3 consecutive months
Level 10	EXTREMELY CRITICAL	12 months of failed seasons

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

Region	March			April			May		
	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGAs)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)
Central Tablelands	Below Requirements (5)	Orange - Good Bathurst, Blayney and Cowra - Reasonable	Cabonne , Mid Western and Oberon - Poor	Reasonable (4)	Bathurst, Lithgow and Orange– Good	Cabonne – Below requirements Mid Western - Poor	Reasonable (4)	Bathurst, Blayney, Lithgow and Orange– Good	Mid-Western and Cabonne – Below requirements
Central West	Poor (6)	Dubbo, Forbes, Weddin and Lachlan – Below Requirements	Gilgandra and Warren – Very Poor Coonamble - Extreme	Below requirements (5)	Dubbo, Narromine, Parkes, Weddin and Lachlan - Reasonable	Gilgandra, Warren, Coonamble and Warrumbungle - Poor	Reasonable (4)	Wellington and Narromine - Good	Gilgandra, Coonamble, Warrumbungle and Forbes – Below Requirements
Greater Sydney	Very Good (2)	-	Blue Mountains - Good	Very Good (2)	Camden and Wollondilly - Excellent	-	Very Good (2)	Camden - Excellent	-
Hunter	Good (3)	Cessnock, Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie and Greater Taree – Very Good	Upper Hunter and Muswellbrook – Below Requirements	Very Good (2)	Dungog - Excellent	Muswellbrook, Gloucester, Maitland and Great Lakes - Good Upper Hunter - Reasonable	Very Good (2)		Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook, Gloucester, Dungog and Great Lakes - Good
Murray	Reasonable (4)	Urana and Murray - Good	Hume, Conargo and Deniliquin – Below Requirements	Reasonable (4)	Corowa, Urana, Jerilderie, Deniliquin and Murray - Good	Conargo and Wakool– Below Requirements	Reasonable (4)	Tumbarumba, Albury, Corowa and Murray - Good	Conargo and Wakool– Below Requirements

Region	March			April			May		
	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGAs)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)
North Coast	Very Good (2)	-	Port Macquarie Hastings, Kempsey, Nambucca, Clarence Valley Council, Ballina, Lismore and Byron - Good	Very Good (2)	-	Port Macquarie Hastings, Kempsey, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour, Ballina, Lismore, Byron - Good	Very Good (2)		Port Macquarie Hastings, Nambucca, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour, Ballina, Lismore, Byron - Good
Northern Tablelands	Poor (6)	Walcha, Armidale Dumaresq, Tenterfield and Inverell – Below Requirements	-	Below Requirements (5)	Walcha - Reasonable	-	Below Requirements (5)	Walcha - Reasonable	Guyra – Very Poor
North West	Below Requirements (5)	Tamworth - Good Gwydir and Liverpool Plains - Reasonable	Narrabri - Poor Moree Plains – Very Poor Walgett - Extreme	Below Requirements (5)	Gwydir, Tamworth and Liverpool Plains – Good Narrabri and Gunnedah - Reasonable	Moree Plains – Very Poor Walgett - Extreme	Reasonable (4)	Tamworth – Very Good Gwydir - Good	Moree Plains - Poor Walgett – Extremely Poor
Riverina	Below Requirements (5)	Cootamundra, – Very Good Griffith and Murrumbidgee - Good Harden, Young, Junee, Temora and Leeton - Reasonable	Wagga and Narrandera – Poor Lockhart and Hay – Very Poor	Reasonable (4)	Young, Cootamundra and Coolamon - Good	Tumut and Lockhart – Below Requirements	Reasonable (4)	Young and Temora – Good	Junee, Coolamon, Wagga and Hay – Below Requirements Narrandera - Poor

Region	March			April			May		
	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGAs)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)
South East	Good (3)	Shoalhaven – Excellent Wingecarribee, Goulburn/Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan and Bombala – Very Good	Boorowa - Reasonable Pallerang – Below Requirements	Very Good (2)	Shoalhaven - Excellent	Illawarra (Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kaima), Pallerang, Eurbodalla, Bega, Cooma-Monaro and Snowy River - Good	Good (3) ¹	Bombala, Snowy River and Yass – Very Good	Pallerang, Eurobodalla – Reasonable Upper Lachlan – Below Requirements
Western	Poor (6)	Wentworth – Good	Balranald – Poor Bourke, Central Darling - Very Poor Brewarrina, Cobar – Extremely Poor	Below Requirements (5)	Wentworth – Good Part Carathool - Reasonable	Balranald, Central Darling and Cobar – Poor Brewarrina – Extremely Poor	Below Requirements (5)	Wentworth – Good Unincorporated - Reasonable	Balranald, Brewarrina, Central Darling and Cobar – Poor Bourke – Very Poor

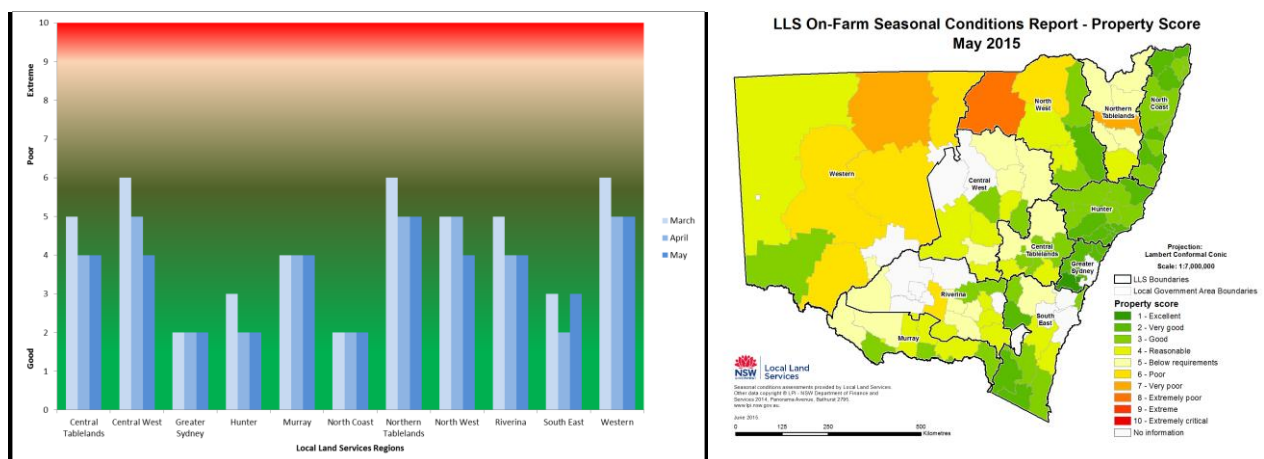
¹ South East has provided a limited report using old data due to staffing issues.

Average Regional Property Score

Table 5: The average regional property score (including water, agronomic and livestock categories across the regions LGAs)

Region	Average Scores for regions		
	March	April	May
Central Tablelands	5	4	4
Central West	6	5	4
Greater Sydney	2	2	2
Hunter	3	2	2
Murray	4	4	4
North Coast	2	2	2
Northern Tablelands	6	5	5
North West	5	5	4
Riverina	5	4	4
South East	3	2	3
Western	6	5	5

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

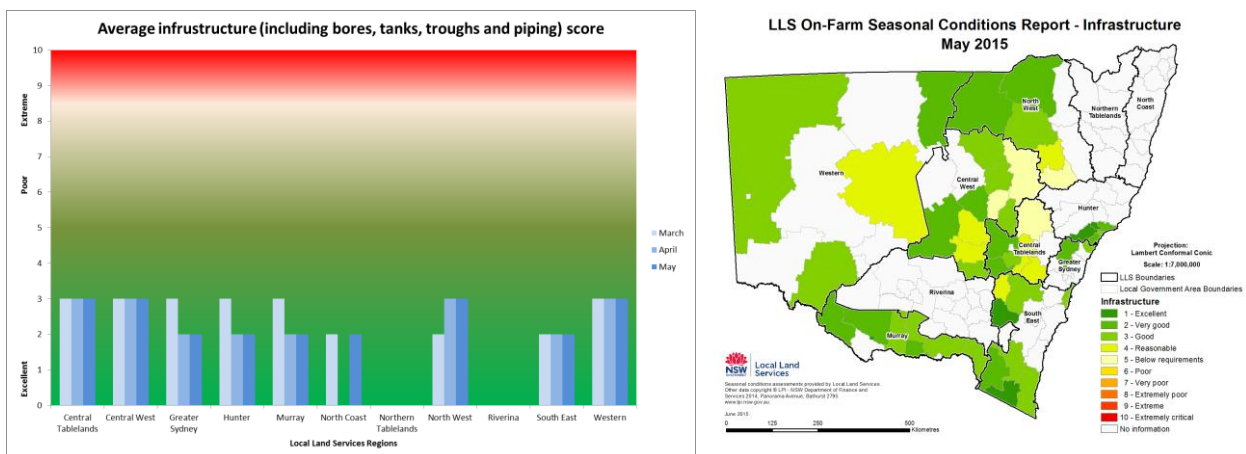


Average Regional Score for Infrastructure

Table 6: The average regional infrastructure (including bores, tanks, troughs piping) score

Region	Average Scores for regions		
	March	April	May
Central Tablelands	3	3	3
Central West	3	3	3
Greater Sydney	3	2	2
Hunter	3	2	2
Murray	3	2	2
North Coast	2		2
Northern Tablelands			
North West	2	3	3
Riverina			
South East	2	2	2
Western	3	3	3

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

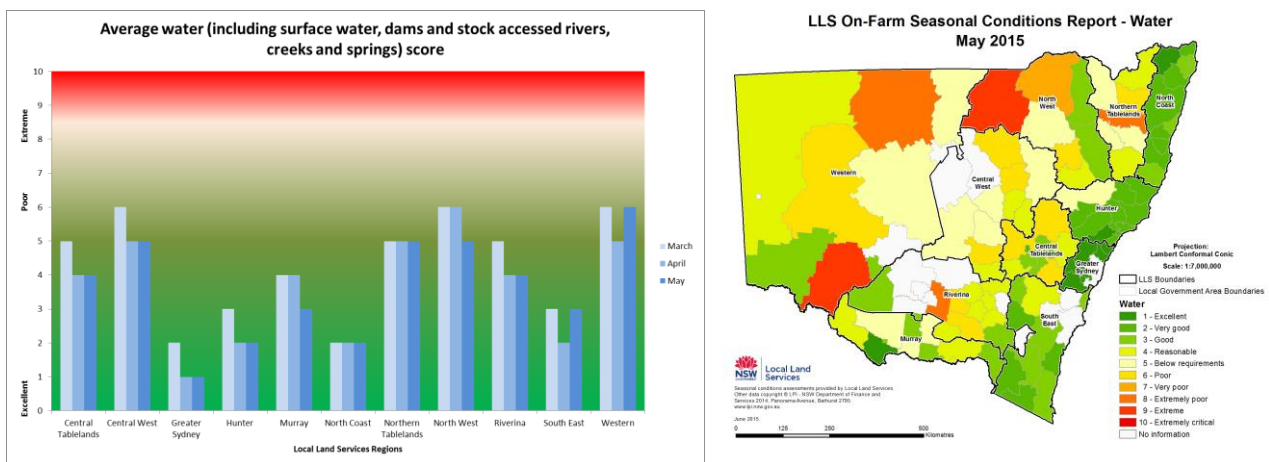


Average Regional Water Score

Table 7: The average regional water (including surface water,dams and stock accessed rivers, creeks and springs) score

Region	Average Scores for regions		
	March	April	May
Central Tablelands	5	4	4
Central West	6	5	5
Greater Sydney	2	1	1
Hunter	3	2	2
Murray	4	4	3
North Coast	2	2	2
Northern Tablelands	5	5	5
North West	6	6	5
Riverina	5	4	4
South East	3	2	3
Western	6	5	6

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

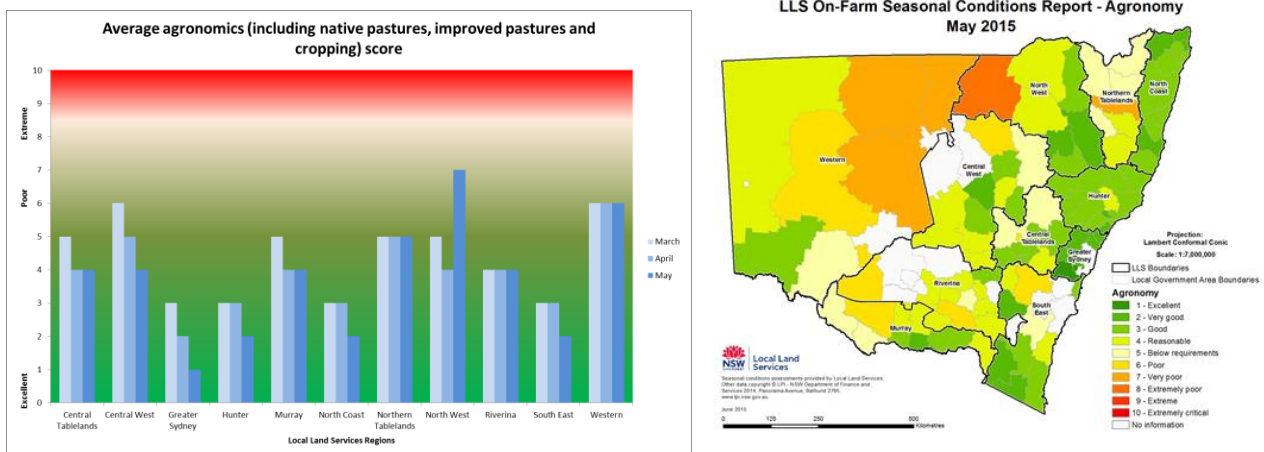


Average Regional Agronomics Score

Table 8: The average agronomics (including native pastures, improve pastures and cropping) score

Region	Average Scores for regions		
	March	April	May
Central Tablelands	5	4	4
Central West	6	5	4
Greater Sydney	3	2	2
Hunter	3	3	3
Murray	5	4	4
North Coast	3	3	3
Northern Tablelands	5	5	5
North West	5	4	4
Riverina	4	4	4
South East	3	3	3
Western	6	6	6

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

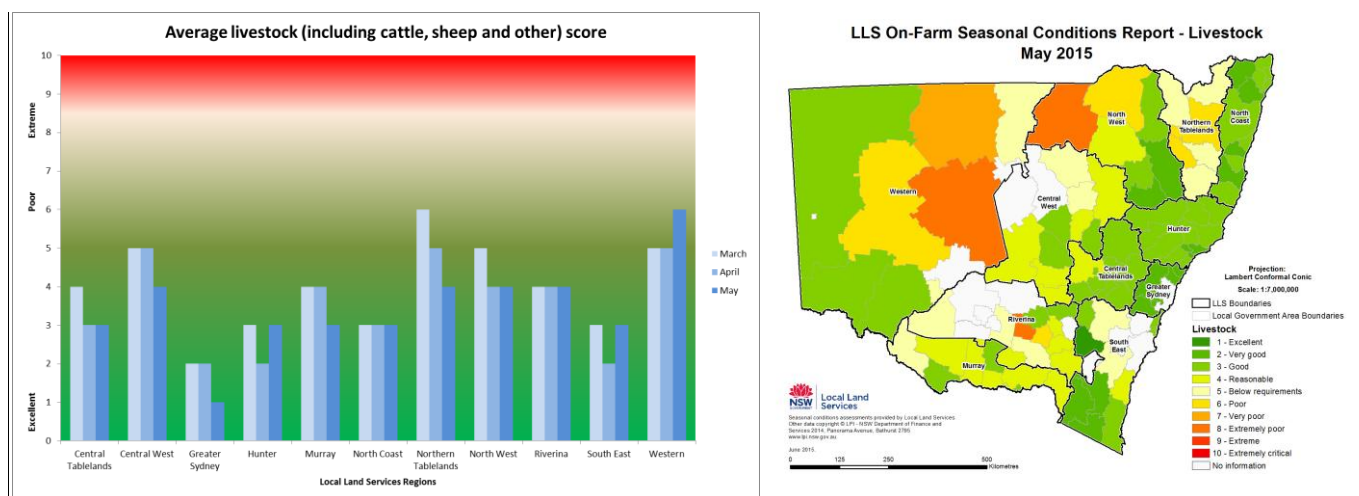


Average Regional Livestock Score

Table 9: The average livestock (including beef, sheep and other) score

Region	Average Scores for regions		
	March	April	May
Central Tablelands	4	3	3
Central West	5	5	4
Greater Sydney	2	2	2
Hunter	3	2	3
Murray	4	4	4
North Coast	3	3	3
Northern Tablelands	6	5	5
North West	5	4	4
Riverina	4	4	5
South East	3	2	3
Western	5	5	5

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



Regional Comments on Seasonal Conditions

Region	March	April	May
Central Tablelands	<p>Conditions across the region have generally worsened from last month with water availability and poorer pastures causing concern for many landholders. Some properties have gone completely dry with little or no water accessibility, whilst one property surveyed has destocked as a result.</p> <p>Many landholders stated that due to lack of pastures, they will be supplementary feeding from now on through winter, whilst an added concern for some landholders primarily throughout the Mid-Western (Mudgee) area has been recent locust activity which has decimated available pastures.</p>	<p>Good rainfall across the region has eased water and pasture concerns for many landholders although the Cabonne and Mid-Western Region council areas are still receiving little run-off, whilst pasture availability is also still a concern in these areas.</p>	<p>No report provided.</p>
Central West	<p>As can be seen it is still very dry and deteriorating further in most areas.</p> <p>Lack of water is the most pressing issue in most of the region at the moment, with a large percentage of dams dry or nearly there. The upside is that landholders, in most cases, are grasping the opportunity to clean these out which will be good preparation for the future.</p> <p>Some water cartage is occurring, mainly for stock but the occasional domestic supply has run low as well.</p> <p>Limited irrigation is most likely into the new water year.</p> <p>The TSR network in this region has had extensive use over the last couple of months, but like the rest of the country the grass and water supply are rapidly disappearing and this refuge will soon have limited access.</p> <p>Some producers have sold stock and others have stock on agistment, where they can find it. The aim is to maintain the breeding herd.</p> <p>Another issue that will become more relevant is depending when useful rain falls, whether the temperature will allow sufficient feed growth before winter. This could mean an extended hand feeding period for stock owners.</p> <p>The other long term problem could be locust in the</p>	<p>Down on numbers this time with staff away and cockies on the tractor sowing crops or harvesting cotton.</p> <p>Whilst there has been some good rain about the region there has been very little run off into farm storages or the big dams, Burrendong and Wyangla.</p> <p>The rain has allowed the sowing of the winter cereal crops in most areas. Feed growth is very slow and has minimal value at this early stage.</p> <p>Cotton harvest is well underway.</p> <p>So despite a change in colour of the landscape and the smell of diesel in the air, conditions have remained much the same from the previous month, with a bit more promise.</p> <p>More rain needed this month to carry things on.</p>	<p>Not a lot of change from last month. There has been some quite useful rain across the region which will help with pasture growth and crop establishment. Rainfall ranged from 7 - 90 mm falling over 2 - 9 days. However there still has not been any substantial run off and water, or the lack of it, remains the most critical problem for landholders at this point. Rainfall in the south west of the region was below average which is having an obvious effect on pasture and crops. The north west has shown no major improvement despite some useful rain. The road to recovery for this area will be a long one especially now going into winter.</p> <p>With the onset of colder weather, pasture growth will be reduced but stock energy requirements will increase, especially lactating stock, which will mean more hand feeding for those in that situation.</p> <p>Some of our respondents have sold some or all of their stock or have them away on agistment and some have delayed winter cropping due to lack of moisture.</p> <p>You will notice that we had no responses this month from Bogan or Warren LGA's but having recently driven through that area I can advise there is no substantial change and their conditions are consistent with the rest of our region.</p>

Region	March	April	May
	<p>spring. There are significant egg beds in the north east of the region that will most likely over winter and hatch in the spring, posing a threat to winter cereal and pulse crops.</p> <p>Some may hatch in the next couple of weeks but this will be a minor threat in localised areas</p>		<p>So overall our region has shown some improvement in terms of crops and pasture, water is a major concern, stock condition is holding. Potentially a very hard winter for most.</p> <p>The forecast from the BoM of an El Nino is not very comforting.</p> <p>The cotton harvest in the Condobolin area went very well with good yields recorded.</p>
Greater Sydney	No report provided.	No report provided.	No report provided.
Hunter	<p>Upper Hunter - low stock numbers after prior dry spell, under stocked but stock in excellent condition.</p> <p>Descriptions in explanatory table not appropriate.</p> <p>Muswellbrook - #from landholder: Obviously no effective rainfall over March - as supported by the Pasture Growth chart. Sent 86 fat bullocks off last Sunday - so we are down to our last 100. They are doing OK with the reduced stocking rate. Reseeded 300 acres (broadcast with my spinner) with pasture legumes with 100 acres to go.</p> <p>Fertilising finished. Most pastures have been ungrazed for six weeks but there has been little growth although the short dry pick would have excellent quality. The pastures would respond well with some good soaking rain now that autumn has arrived. Water has continued to go down with no runoff for 12 months (except some in the back country) - I wouldn't like this to continue into next spring. However, we have some good deep dams and next week we are cleaning out one, expanding another and creating one new dam.</p>	No report provided.	Despite reasonable rainfall over the past few months and some freshes in the major rivers groundwater is still low and not recharged some creeks are now starting to flow but others are still dry.
Murray	With very little rainfall this month conditions have worsened. Many surface dams are drying up and landholders are relying on bores and irrigation channel access for stock water (however irrigation water is very expensive and in short supply). Many graziers are supplementary feeding across the region particularly in the west.	<p>Not as many responses as normal - I believe a reflection of farmers being on the tractor.</p> <p>Mostly good rainfall received throughout the area in April. In general, falls of around 50mm (ranged from around 20 - 80mm) in the western regions and up to 80 - 100mm in the Central and Eastern regions.</p> <p>- The good rainfall, plus warm conditions towards the end of the month have seen good recovery and germination of native and naturalised pastures in some</p>	<p>Rainfall has been patchy throughout May and generally quite dry throughout the western areas. Many crops were sown dry and emergence is patchy (again in the western areas). Great start to cropping in the central areas that had more rain.</p> <p>In the western areas pastoral conditions are poor for most landholders and most graziers either reduced stock numbers, are seriously considering doing so, or resorted to hand feeding. Surface dams reliant on rainfall runoff</p>

Region	March	April	May
		<p>areas. Pastoral conditions could go either way - but with the upper profile quickly drying, good follow-up rain is now needed to avoid 'false break' conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Livestock conditions similar to previous period - supplementary feeding levels have 'backed off' a little since the last period, but still ongoing as pastures do not yet meet stock requirements. - The good rainfall resulted in little surface runoff - with ground tanks reliant on rainfall runoff continuing to deplete. - Summer crop yields in general have been pleasing. <p>Note: Kangaroo numbers are exploding in the western areas, taking available green feed.</p>	<p>continue to deplete - with many ground tanks in the west currently dry.</p> <p>Fair to say there is a degree of pessimism with the drying outlook generally and the lack of decent May rainfall in the west.</p> <p>One livestock issue regarding facial eczema in lactating merino ewes related to the number of wet days, extended damp conditions and night temperature above 15 deg. at time of April break. First time landholder experienced this in fifty years. Ewes now recovering.</p>
North Coast	No report provided.	No report provided.	<p>A very wet month across the region with rainfall varying from 150 to 450mm with a lot of water logging occurring on low lying floodplain country. Pastures in these low lying areas are severely impacted with most being de-stocked. The later than usual arrival of cooler conditions has offset some of the impact of the continued wet weather.</p> <p>Taylor's Arm in the Upper Nambucca Valley (Nambucca Shire LGA) received unprecedented rainfall in the first week of May 2015 with reports of in excess of 450mm in a twelve (12) hour period and 250mm of that rainfall in a three (3) hour period. This was a localised event described as being similar to the recent Dungog severe storm event. Damage assessment reports are being prepared by affected landowners for compilation by LLS and an on forwarding to DPI Regional Director.</p> <p>Nambucca Shire Council also sustained significant infrastructure damage and will also be submitting a claim for a natural disaster declaration.</p> <p>Harvesting of some soy bean crops has been delayed due to prevailing weather conditions and this will impact negatively on overall quality.</p> <p>The significant improvement in cattle prices for all classes of stock has been welcomed by producers with larger than normal yardings being reported across the region.</p>
Northern	Except for the northern part of our region, rainfall for	Generally good rains and mild temperatures across the	Surveys in Guyra and Glen Innes Severn LGAs are less

Region	March	April	May
Tablelands	<p>March has been poor.</p> <p>In the far north good rain has led to significant improvement in water supplies and in pasture growth while for the majority of the region we have seen deteriorating water supplies and pastures. What rainfall there has been over this major part of the region has been from storms and therefore quite patchy, with isolated areas catching good rain, but most properties missing out.</p> <p>Pastures in the more southerly LGAs have deteriorated quite quickly and very few crops have been sown although there is quite a bit of country prepared for fodder crops. Good fodder crop plantings have been completed in the Inverell and Tenterfield LGAs.</p> <p>Overall stock numbers are still very low with many producers wary of purchasing replacements, both because of price and uncertainty of their water supplies. Due to these generally low stock numbers, what stock are on the properties are in very good condition and sheep joinings are expected to be excellent.</p>	<p>region have brought about significant improvements for April.</p> <p>Some areas, where the rain was insufficient to induce run-off, are still critical for surface water, particularly in parts of Uralla, Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra LGAs. Pastures have responded well, however some of the improved pastures have been damaged to the point where re-sowing is needed before full recovery can be achieved. Fodder crops are establishing well and grain crops are being sown under favorable conditions in Inverell LGA.</p> <p>Stock numbers are still low with little prospect of buying in replacements. Stock are in excellent condition and with the low numbers is going into winter under good conditions.</p>	<p>than normal due to unavailability of staff. This has biased the data for Guyra giving a less favorable result than indicated by casual observation.</p> <p>Continued rain and mild temperatures have delayed the heavy frosts common at this time of year and so little change in pastures are recorded.</p> <p>Some areas of Uralla, Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra LGAs are still critical for surface water as generally the rainfall has been insufficient to generate much run-off. Pasture growth has slowed but fodder crops are responding very well and many have already been grazed. Commercial cropping in the Inverell LGA has had an excellent start with faba beans, barley and early wheat looking good with later wheat and chick peas being planted under very good conditions.</p> <p>Stock numbers are still low and stock condition is very good.</p>
North West	<p>Gwydir - Hail storm damaged good standing pasture.</p> <p>Narrabri - De-stocked to maintain dry feed as back-up, looking for groundwater.</p> <p>We had several significant storm events on the 21/3 that caused damage to infrastructure, crops and pasture. We have submitted Ag natural disaster assessments for RAAC to consider through our MBES</p>	<p>Gunnedah LGA - good rainfall has improved pasture growth and increased area likely to be planted to winter crop. Minimal change to surface water supplies at this stage.</p> <p>Walgett</p> <p>Even though there has been some rainfall events in the Walgett shire - they have been small and have not alleviated the dry conditions. The prospect of winter crop is almost diminished. Growers have not purchased additional livestock and many still owned remained on agistment elsewhere and/or core breeding stock that remain are still being fed on a full ration.</p> <p>Moree shire has received some good falls of rain - patchy but east of the Newell Hwy, (Croppa creek to Bellata) has received decent rain since Christmas and many have a full profile of moisture. Planting is underway and the winter cropping season is looking promising. West (Mungindi, Watercourse, Colly, Garah) have not had as much rainfall. Some planting is underway despite the soil profile still being relatively dry</p>	<p>Gunnedah - Good rain across the region has promoted winter feed growth and forage crops are in good condition. No runoff to improve water situation. Winter crop planting area increasing with extra rainfall.</p> <p>Walgett - There has been some isolated rainfall that has resulted in short term (expected) improvements. Some livestock agisted out have been returned to farm and current pasture levels are supporting their nutritional needs. However, this is not a widespread and will not last long. In these areas (Cryon, Rowena and Burren Junction) there has been about 30% of normal cropping area sown on very long fallow country. Expectation for these crops is failure without significant in-crop rainfall, however, the farmers hope to achieve a minimum of some ground cover from this exercise.</p> <p>Overall, (in 90% of the LGA) it is still very dry, there is no re-stocking being carried out and unlikely now that a winter crop will be sown this year. The real risk now is to get some ground cover on these areas which are eroding quickly with no ground cover.</p>

Region	March	April	May
		and growers are risking the crop hoping to get rainfall. However, overall many growers have opted out of planting long season species (faba beans) and hope that more rainfall may occur this month to plant short season cereals or chickpeas.	Narrabri and Moree - East of both LGA's is in a very good position planting on excellent profiles of moisture and receiving 20-50mm of rainfall post sowing. Ground cover levels are excellent and livestock are in fantastic condition moving into winter. West of both LGA's is slightly more marginal. Limited cropping opportunities (on a full profile) and approx. 50-60% of the normal cropping area has been sown to date on limited profile. The crops only have primary roots developed at this time and will need some additional rainfall in the next 2-4 weeks before secondary root establishment will occur. Until this time the crop is quite vulnerable.
Riverina	Very little to no rain was received over the Riverina in general during March; the highest recorded rainfall reported by the responders was 8mm reported near Wagga. As a result conditions have generally deteriorated especially in most areas.	Good rainfall > 50mm was received over the Riverina in general during April; the highest recorded rainfall reported by the responders was 128mm reported near Young. As a result conditions have generally improved in most areas, but follow up rain is required	Some very scattered rainfall < 40mm was received over the Eastern Riverina with total declining to generally < 5mm in the Western portions during May; the highest recorded rainfall reported by the responders was 50mm reported near Young. As a result conditions have generally improved in some eastern areas, but follow up rain is required
South East	No report provided.	No report provided.	No report provided.
Western	Not looking too good for March in the upper east, Central & central South of the Western division. Around the Gooedooga, Weilmoringle, Collierina down to Gongolgon it would be some of the driest I have ever seen the country. Level 9-10 in my opinion. Stock sighted were in light condition, still strong, if not pushed too hard. (What's left). South of Gongolgon, the country is dying off quickly; level 7-8 in my opinion. Livestock, strong. Most of the landholders I've spoken to have had enough.(could be the start of a mass exodus from the land) Broken Hill - The country has changed a little since last month in that the feed has dried out a lot from Broken Hill up north towards Tiboburra and all the way over to White Cliff's and North towards Wanaaring. Down South towards Wentworth is still very dry. I have spotted the odd Locust in my travels but had no official reports. Balranald - Conditions for the month of March have been	In the Brewarrina LGA the only rain fall for the month of April fell on 30th, up to 75ml were reported by landholders around the Weilmoringle area, down to 30ml south of Brewarrina. The rain event seems to have covered most of the Bre LGA, But some of the properties in the north/east have missed out. This event will only benefit the lighter country/soils where run off happens, follow up rain will be needed to help the heavier soil types, and probably will not help cropping country. Livestock remain strong, on the main, due to landholders reducing numbers to a low level & a supplementary feeding program. The Balranald LGA has received a most welcome rain with most land holders receiving on average 60ml for the month. There is just a slight green tinge starting to appear in paddocks across the district but not enough to	From my prospective on the areas I have traveled to the North and East, in the past month things look pretty good having a lot of winter growth starting to pop up and the rain that was received in the month of April is certainly showing the benefits to the land holders now. Whilst travelling down to Ivanhoe through Menindee things didn't look as flash with feed, but in saying that there was still a lot of green pick around and recent rain will help. Travelling South to Wentworth is still pretty average with feed at the moment. In general conditions across the area are ok there is a reasonable green tinge across paddocks however rain is needed to sustain pasture growth and the average across the area for the month was only 1 to 2 ml not enough to promote pastures and keep them growing landholders are still keeping their carrying capacities way below average and are still hand feeding any remaining stock. A good 15 to 25ml rain is needed in the next few weeks to enable

Region	March	April	May
	<p>quite dry in the Balranald LGA Most landholders have not recorded rainfall for the month and the feed situation is becoming quite a concern. Majority of landholders are supplementary feeding the stock that they have left and all are down on their carrying capacity with most only holding onto minimal breeding stock and below 1/4 of what they would normally carry. Bourke - Having just done aerial surveillance to the north along the Warrego, out to the Cuttaburra, out to the Paroo, down to Wanaaring and back to Bourke, the overall picture is not very good. The majority of ground tanks seen are empty, stock numbers are down to low levels (with more being trucked out). The pilot made the comment that the conditions out here are the same as the southwest of Queensland.</p>	<p>sustain stock at the moment. A much needed follow up rain in a week or two would be just ideal. Most landholders still either have stock away on agistment or a sup feeding</p>	<p>the seed base to be retained. We got lucky and had around 20 - 25 ml at the end of the month. The rain was widespread but dropped off as you went north. Hungerford, Enngonia had less than 5ml. There was no runoff from this rain event, it was good soaking rain. If we have follow up rain it may make some improvement to the district. The conditions as you drive around are from very bad to desperate, most landholders have now destocked to the point that even if we get good rain, it will take a number of years for them to recover. The north side of the darling river is in good condition (mainly the west side) the east side is still average. The southern side of the darling river is very dry the black ground has just soaked up the rain and there has been no run off to fill dams. Travelling through the southern end between Menindee and Ivanhoe yesterday and most landholders are still feeding there stock and relying on bore water. Good rain at the end of April, has kick started an early winter growth, specifically so on the lighter country. Warm weather throughout the month of May has also helped. Last week saw a significant weather pattern come in from the west of Australia in a West- East band, of which most of the rain fell from about 40 km North of Bre, to 80 km South of Brewarrina. Rain reports were around the 20 - 25 ml within this band. Goodooga land holders reported falls of 1-2 ml. Weilmoringle landholders reported falls of up to 8 ml. Although any rain is always welcome, it was very light & slow in falling , (Thur night > Sunday night) it did not create a lot of run off for landholders who rely on ground tanks for stock water.</p>

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