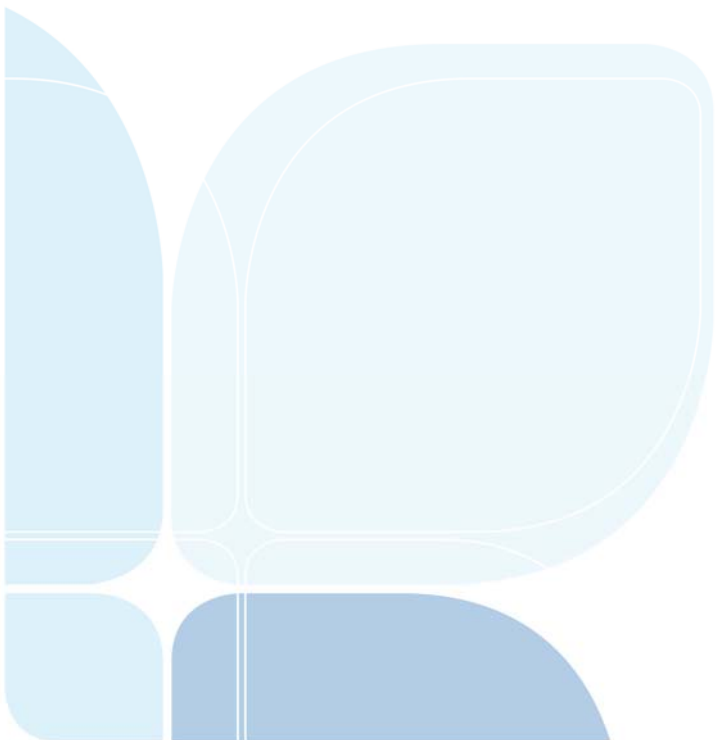




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On-ground Seasonal Conditions Report

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing October 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	July 2015	August 2015	September 2015
State overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seven regions reported no change to their average regional score from last month including, Central Tablelands, Hunter, Murray, Northern Tablelands, North West, Riverina and South East. Central West and Western have reported an improvement in conditions from last month. North Coast has reported a decline in conditions from last month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seven regions reported no change to their average regional score from last month including, Central West, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, North West and Western. Central Tablelands, Riverina and South East have reported an improvement in conditions from last month. Greater Sydney has not submitted a report this month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ten regions reported no change to their average regional score from last month including, Central Tablelands, Central West, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, Northern Tablelands, North west, South East and Western. Greater Sydney has submitted their first report in three months, so no comparison can be made.
Regional Ranking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good – Central West, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, North West, Riverina, South East and Western. Reasonable – Central Tablelands Below Requirements – Northern Tablelands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Good – Riverina and South East Good – Central Tablelands, Central West, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, North West and Western. Below Requirements – Northern Tablelands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Good – Greater Sydney, Riverina and South East. Good – Central Tablelands, Central West, Hunter, Murray, North Coast, North West and Western. Below Requirements – Northern Tablelands.
LGA Scores – Extremely Poor, Extreme or Extremely Critical	There are no LGAs within this scale.	There are no LGAs within this scale.	There are no LGAs within this scale.
LGA Scores – Excellent or Very Good	The following LGAs: Narromine, Corowa, Bellingen, Kyogle Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee, Goulburn/Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan, Bega, Bombala, Snowy River and Yass Valley.	The following LGAs: Narromine, Weddin, Corowa, Urana and Deniliquin, Narrabri and Tamworth.	The following LGAs: Cowra, Gilgandra, Warren, Forbes, Cessnock, Maitland, Hume, Urana, Bellingen, Kyogle, Tamworth and Jerilderie.

Data Analysis

Table 2: Surveyed Property Numbers

Region	Number of properties surveyed		
	July	August	September
Central Tablelands	40	40	40
Central West	51	57	46
Greater Sydney	¹	²	14
Hunter	23	18	18
Murray	48	53	50
North Coast	43	48	47
Northern Tablelands	35	36	33
North West	32	27	31
Riverina	22	23	18
South East	62	59	³
Western	23	32	33
TOTAL	379	393	331

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	The past 6 months have been below average
Level 7	Very Poor	Consecutive failed seasons
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

¹ Greater Sydney hasn't provided a report this month due to staff member being on leave.

² Greater Sydney hasn't provided a report this month due to staff member being on leave.

³ South East have submitted a regional seasonal condition report however it did not include the number of properties surveyed for September.

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

Region	July			August			September		
	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)
Central Tablelands	Reasonable (4)	Bathurst, Blayney and Cowra- Good	-	Good (3)	-	Cabonne, Lithgow, Mid Western, Oberon and Orange- Reasonable	Good (3)	Cowra – Very Good	Cabonne, Mid Western and Oberon - Reasonable
Central West	Good (3)	Narromine – Very Good	Wellington, Dubbo, Coonamble, Warrumbungle and Lachlan - Reasonable	Good (3)	Narromine and Weddin – Very Good	Coonamble and Warrumbungle - Reasonable	Good (3)	Gilgandra, Warren and Forbes – Very Good	-
Greater Sydney	-	-	-	-	-	-	Very Good (2)	-	Blue Mountains - Reasonable
Hunter	Good (3)	-	-	Good (3)	-	Dungog, Port Stephens, Newcastle and Greater Taree - Reasonable	Good (3)	Cessnock – Excellent Maitland – Very Good	Singleton - Reasonable
Murray	Good (3)	Corowa – Very Good	Deniliquin - Reasonable Conargo – Below Requirements	Good (3)	Corowa – Excellent Urana and Deniliquin – Very Good	-	Good (3)	Hume and Urana – Very Good	Wakool - Reasonable
North Coast	Good (3)	Bellingen and Kyogle – Very Good	-	Good (3)	Bellingen and Kyogle – Very Good	Port Macquarie Hastings – Below Requirements	Good (3)	Bellingen and Kyogle – Very Good	-
Northern Tablelands	Below Requirements (5)	Walcha - Reasonable	-	Below Requirements (5)	Walcha and Armidale Dumaresq - Reasonable	-	Below Requirements (5)	Walcha, Uralla and Armidale Dumaresq - Reasonable	-

Region	July			August			September		
	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)
North West	Good (3)	Moree Plains - Reasonable Walgett – Below Requirements	Tamworth – Very Good	Good (3)	Narrabri and Tamworth – Very Good	Gwydir - Reasonable	Good (3)	Tamworth – Very Good	Walgett – Below Requirements
Riverina	Good (3)	-	Narrandera and Jirilderie – Very Good	Very Good (2)	-	Tumut, Cootamundra, Gundagai, Wagga Wagga, Leeton and Hay - Good	Very Good (2)	Jerilderie - Excellent	Tumut, Lockhart and Hay - Good
South East	Good (3)	-	Pallerang and Eurobodalla – Below Requirements	Very Good (2)	-	Illawarra and Cooma – Monaro – Good Pallerang and Eurobodalla – Below Requirements	Very Good (2)	-	⁴
Western	Good (3)	-	Brewarrina and Unincorporated Areas - Reasonable	Good (3)	-	Brewarrina and Unincorporated Areas - Reasonable	Good (3)	-	Brewarrina and Unincorporated Areas - Reasonable

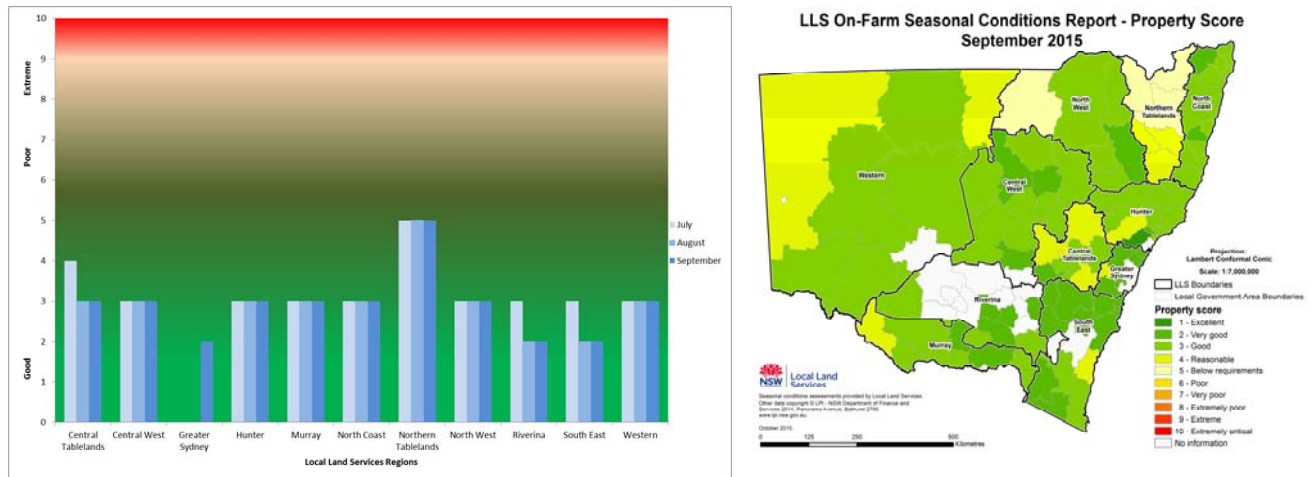
⁴ Information not available for South East when the report was submitted to RAAC.

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		
	July	August	September
Central Tablelands	4	3	3
Central West	3	3	3
Greater Sydney	-	-	2
Hunter	3	3	3
Murray	3	3	3
North Coast	3	3	3
Northern Tablelands	5	5	5
North West	3	3	3
Riverina	3	2	2
South East	3	2	2
Western	3	3	3

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

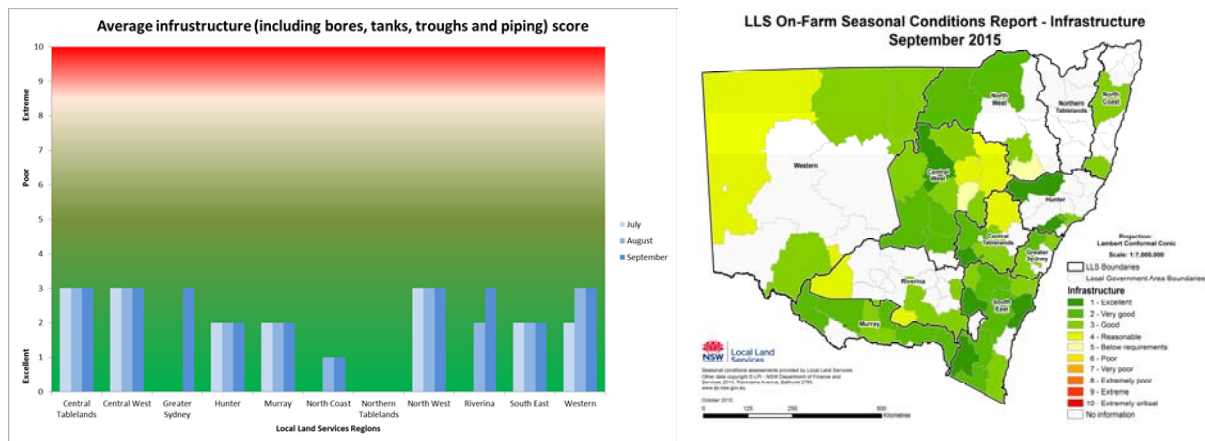


Average Regional Score for Infrastructure

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

Region	Average scores for regions		
	July	August	September
Central Tablelands	3	3	3
Central West	3	3	3
Greater Sydney	-	-	3
Hunter	2	2	2
Murray	2	2	2
North Coast	-	1	1
Northern Tablelands	-	-	-
North West	3	3	3
Riverina	3	2	3
South East	2	2	2
Western	2	3	3

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



Water, Agronomic and Livestock Reporting Scale (1 to 10)

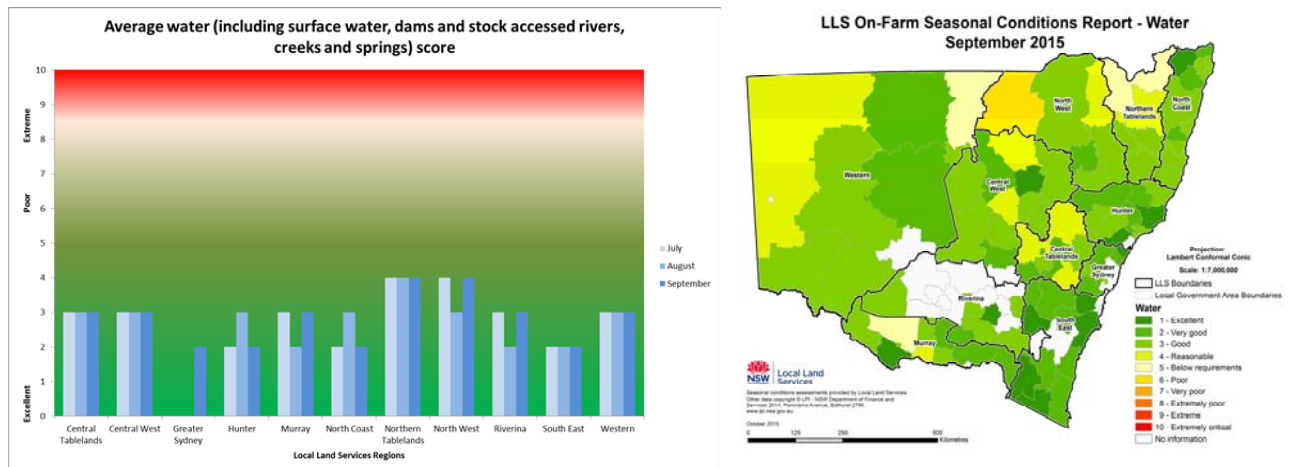
Scale	On-farm observations	Water (quantity, quality and infrastructure) description	Agronomic conditions (winter or summer crops, native and/or improved pasture) description	Livestock conditions/ carrying capacity description
Level 1	Very Good	Water security established on the property for a 12 month period exceeding demands and without any further infrastructure improvements.	2 nd 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	Good	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	Reasonable	Water supply meets demands.	Crops and pasture growth meeting demands plus silage and hay storage observed on farm.	Average carrying capacity.
Level 4	Below requirements	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	Depleting	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	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	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.
Level 8	Extremely Poor	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. Fat score 3 and 2 within herd/flock.
Level 9	EXTREME	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	No surface water supplies.	No improved pastures, native pasture depleted. Bare ground.	

Average Regional Water (including surface water, dams and stock accessed rivers, creeks and springs) Score

Table 7: The average regional water score

Region	Average scores for regions		
	July	August	September
Central Tablelands	3	3	3
Central West	3	3	3
Greater Sydney	-	-	2
Hunter	2	3	2
Murray	3	2	3
North Coast	2	3	2
Northern Tablelands	4	4	4
North West	4	3	3
Riverina	3	2	3
South East	2	2	2
Western	3	3	3

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

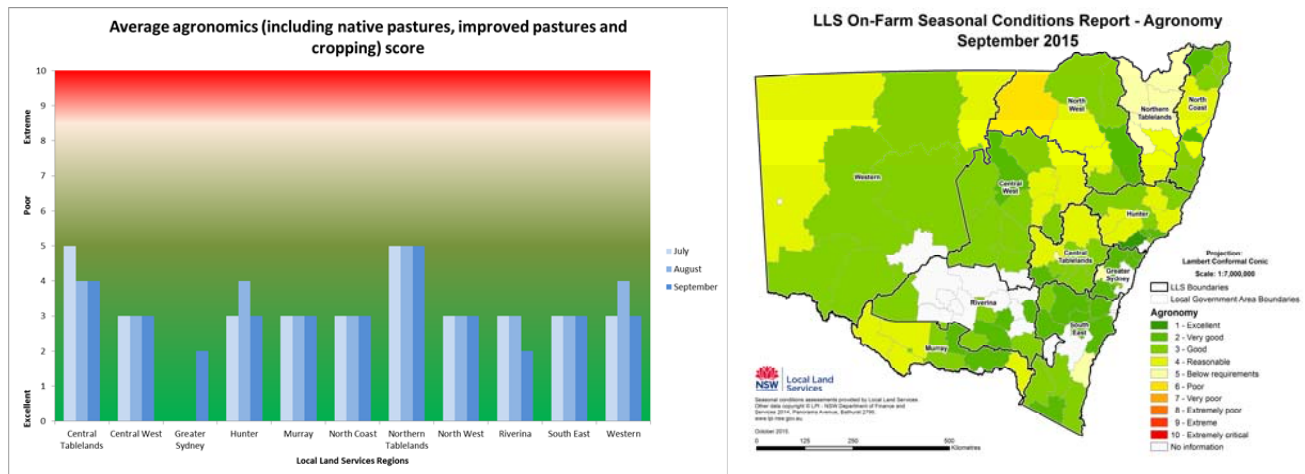


Average Regional Agronomics (including native pastures, improve pastures and cropping) Score

Table 8: The average agronomics score

Region	Average scores for regions		
	July	August	September
Central Tablelands	5	4	4
Central West	3	3	3
Greater Sydney	-	-	2
Hunter	3	4	3
Murray	3	3	3
North Coast	3	3	3
Northern Tablelands	5	5	5
North West	3	3	3
Riverina	3	2	2
South East	3	3	3
Western	3	4	3

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

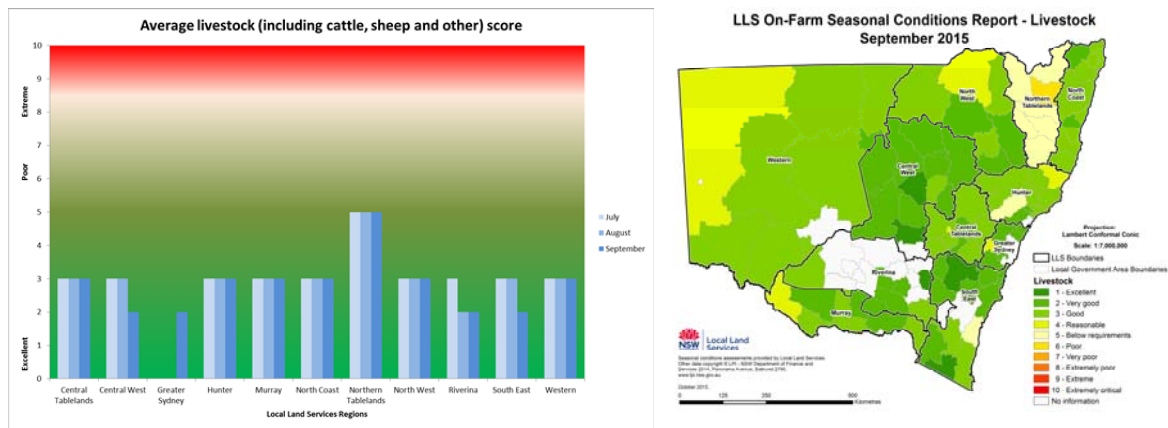


Average Regional Livestock (including beef, sheep and other) Score

Table 9: The average livestock score

Region	Average scores for regions		
	July	August	September
Central Tablelands	3	3	3
Central West	3	3	2
Greater Sydney	-	-	2
Hunter	3	3	3
Murray	3	3	3
North Coast	3	3	3
Northern Tablelands	5	5	5
North West	3	3	3
Riverina	3	2	2
South East	3	3	2
Western	3	3	3

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



Regional Comments on Seasonal Conditions

Region	July	August	September
Central Tablelands	<p>Decent rainfall across the region has helped ease water concerns for many landholders although some properties are still receiving little run-off. Heavy snowfall events have helped add moisture into the ground although some stock losses were also reported as a result. Pasture conditions are still a problem for many landholders with little or no growth occurring. This has resulted in supplementary feeding becoming the norm for many producers across the region.</p>	<p>Reasonable rainfall across the region has continued to ease water concerns for many landholders although a lack of run-off is still causing issues for some producers primarily in the Cabonne and Mid-Western Council areas. Pastures are starting to green up although there is still very little growth occurring at present due to cooler temperatures and frosts impacting on pasture growth. With warmer temperatures on the way and clover starting to grow there is still some optimism for the spring period although competition for pasture from high numbers of kangaroos is creating some headaches. Many producers are still supplementary feeding although this should ease off at pasture growth increases across the region. Livestock condition across the Central Tablelands has remained relatively stable although many landholders have decided to sell excess stock to take pressure off their properties and take advantage of good prices. Some stock which has been supplementary fed are in a lighter condition to normal and once again this is more prevalent in those areas where pasture availability and quantity are lacking.</p>	<p>A lack of decent rainfall across the district has prevented dams from replenishing water supplies in most areas. Despite this water supply has generally held up with the exception of some properties primarily in the Cabonne and Mid-Western Council areas, where some properties have extremely low water supplies with water carting, pumping water from other infrastructure and de-stocking the result of low dam levels. Pastures continue to remain a concern for many producers as green feed diminishes and hot dry winds result in feed burning off quickly. Many landholders have commented that they are currently sufficient for feed but continuing conditions such as those experienced during September will have a serious impact and will result in changing management decisions and likely supplementary feeding over coming months due to a lack of feed availability. The Cabonne and Mid-Western Council areas are once again those of most concern for lack of feed. Livestock condition remains good although landholders are likely to reduce stock numbers as conditions continue to dry and a lack of feed becomes more prevalent.</p>
Central West	<p>Overall things are on the improve across the region. Cold weather is still impacting on pasture growth rates across the region with some isolated pockets with minimal growth due to rain deficiency. Rainfall has ranged from 50 - 110 mm over 5 -12 days on average. Crops are coping well in general with some areas experiencing disease issues due to excessive moisture levels. A couple of producers in the Coonamble area have not sown crops because it's too wet. Livestock have suffered a bit with the onset of better conditions with losses from bloat, lambing sickness etc. but</p>	<p>There has being some useful rainfall across the region with falls ranging from 11 – 100mls falling over 4 – 8 days. However substantial runoff rain to fill dams is still a problem for some landholders in the northwest of the region. The southern region has received some very good falls with water storage getting to full capacity. The warmer weather has seen a boost in growth for pasture and crops that have being put in though if no follow up rain heading into the warmer months feed supplies will be in short supply once again. Stock are gaining condition with feed growth and warmer weather. Stock numbers are</p>	<p>No report provided.</p>

Region	July	August	September
	<p>are generally in good condition. Surface water storage's are still below average despite good rainfall and will still be an issue leading into spring and summer. I have personally witnessed water running from paddocks across the road a couple of kilometers away from a half empty dam.</p> <p>Overall we are experiencing a fairly normal winter so far. The fact we had a below average Autumn has impacted on the benefits of the July rain.</p> <p>No reports from Bogan or Warren LGA's due to staff shortages.</p>	<p>low in the northwest with landholders starting to purchase stock from drought affected areas in QLD. Bloat was a serious problem at the beginning of the month but as feed has hardened off the issue has eased.</p>	
Greater Sydney	<p>No report provided.</p>	<p>No report provided.</p>	<p>Water and rainfall: Ground water supply and rainfall is average across the region although in central coast there was a very good amount of rainfall recorded in the reporting month. Dams are almost full but started to drop the level. Creeks are flowing slower than last month. Rainfall has been reduced in the western Sydney area.</p> <p>Pasture: Overall pasture condition is good across the region but in some LGA in Western Sydney area greenness has been reducing and started to fading out. Some of the low lying flood plain area still showing very good pasture condition.</p> <p>Stock: Body condition of stock good as last month and carrying capacity had been slightly reduced from last month. In the Blue Mountain LGA stocks has suffered scarcity of green pasture due to snowfall through out three quarter of last month but grazing condition started to catch up in late August. Due to declining pasture condition in some LGA farmers started to using a good amount of silage and hay.</p>
Hunter	<p><u>LOWER HUNTER DISTRICT</u> (Maitland, Cessnock, Dungog, Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie LGA's)</p> <p>Water: Supply and quality in the Lower Hunter is still very good. Dams are full and creeks are still flowing.</p> <p>Pasture: Considering the time of year, pastures are in average condition, but lack of follow up rain has pastures in a winter lay off. Some of the low lying flood plain areas still</p>	<p>Conditions in the Hunter are broadly consistent with pasture conditions expected. We have had some handy rainfall and waiting for the warmer days ahead.</p> <p>As expected feed is tight in some areas but the current moisture conditions leave us hopeful for a Spring response. Time will tell.</p>	<p>Conditions varied from excellent to good across the Hunter LLS for September. This has been an excellent clover season, with its own problems. However, the last few days have been very hot and dry and soil moisture is rapidly drying off. Rain will be needed to prevent a deterioration of pasture, water conditions for the months ahead.</p>

Region	July	August	September
	<p>remain water logged following the super storm event of April.</p> <p>Stock: De-stocking has continued as a result of the floods. Stock condition is declining marginally. Supplementary feeding is increasing.</p> <p>UPPER HUNTER DISTRICT (Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook and Singleton LGA's)</p> <p>Water: Ground water in some areas is slowly replenishing; declining in others. Creeks in some areas are slowly dropping.</p> <p>Pasture: Native pasture is average for the time of year, but spring rain will be required. Improved pasture quantity and quality is fair.</p> <p>Stock: Stock numbers are down in general; restocking has not occurred, and therefore condition of remaining stock is good.</p> <p>MANNING GREAT LAKES DISTRICT (Greater Taree, Gloucester and Great Lakes LGA's)</p> <p>Water: Capacity for most properties has declined since last month due to lack of rainfall, but levels are still reasonable.</p> <p>Pasture: Little growth is being experienced due to cold conditions and lack of rainfall, but conditions are close to normal for the time of year.</p> <p>Stock: Cattle are declining in conditions due to lack of dry feed, but de-stocking is not fully evident.</p>		
Murray	<p>Reasonable rainfall across region in July, adequate for the moisture requirements during the cold weather, but not enough to replenish dry sub-soils in the west that will need good late winter-early spring rains. Frosts have been prevalent across the region but crop damage is unlikely because of stage of crop development. Cold conditions & frosts have led to slow pasture & crop growth. Some waterlogging of some crop areas and bogging of vehicles reported in the central and south eastern areas, while towards the west growers with sprinkler irrigators (centre pivots) and on-farm storage intend to commence watering next week with canola crops most adversely affected by cold, dry conditions.</p> <p>Major concern is poor outlook for irrigation supply and very high cost of temporary water. In the central, northern areas,</p>	<p>Overall, season progressing OK in some areas, and very good in others. Some areas in the Western districts are facing real concerns and some crops being sprayed out and stock turned onto them. Majority of these areas are surviving on rainfall event to rainfall event at the moment and water levels in ground tanks fed by rainfall runoff in these areas remains a critical issue as we move into spring and summer generally across the area.</p> <p>Other areas in the central and Eastern districts saw a significant boost in crop and pasture growth during August. Rainfall was very varied across the region and rainfall in the East has given landholders almost a guarantee for the next 6 weeks.</p> <p>With most canola flowering, and some early cereals in the booting stage, the potential for late season frost damage</p>	<p>Overall most many landholders in the West, central West and far East are concerned about a long, dry summer. Stock water from ground tanks reliant on rainfall runoff is likely to be a significant issue as we move into summer in most circumstances. Low irrigation allocation is a huge concern across the Western and Central areas. Early Oct heat expected to cause heat shock and significantly lower crop yield potentials. Little likelihood of any significant summer cropping program for those in the Murray system which may reduce income by up to 70%. Conversely other south and central areas are having a fantastic spring.</p> <p>WEST: Across many Western areas the spring has been extremely dry resulting in a very limited spring</p>

Region	July	August	September
	<p>surface runoff to ground tanks continues to be an issue as landholders move into warmer months.</p> <p>Pasture growth not keeping up with stock demand so supplementary feeding still going on. Graziers that reduced stock numbers in June are pleased they did and are still not in a position to purchase replacements. Some graziers reduced numbers further in July. Lamb losses have been high in some areas (frost, limited feed).</p> <p>Overall, continued deterioration of SOI, and outlooks from BoM are proving sobering for many producers and producers are mindful of the el Nino forecast.</p> <p>Increasing number of reports of high kangaroo numbers in the West now causing damage to crops, and deer and fox numbers in the East.</p> <p>On a positive note, livestock prices, and forward contracting for winter crops are a major positive at the moment - but there are significant production risks.</p>	<p>rates as a potential threat to crop production. Overall livestock condition remains good with less or no supplementary feeding occurring. Pastures (both native and improved) are generally meeting livestock requirements at this stage - but no generally no excess. Worms are a real threat to sheep this spring, particularly in the east.</p> <p>Irrigation water availability remains low - 0% GS in the Murray Valley, and 27% GS in the Murrumbidgee. Full access to carryover is available. Significant implications to irrigation productivity for the 2015/16 season at this stage. For most of the east, landholders have relaxed a little. For much of the west, the season could turn significantly either way and the next 4-6 weeks will dictate which way it turns.</p>	<p>growth period with the limited growth now drying off very quickly. Some crops have already been cut for hay and some de-stocking (including breeder cattle) has already started while prices remain high. Low water allocation means no water to pastures and crops which have now failed. One comment was that landholders have been unable to plan farm program because of lack of information on available irrigation water</p> <p>CENTRAL: Most central areas received good rains late August and into early September although no/little rain since 1st week of September. There is above average crop growth in some areas particularly pre-irrigated crops and canola although in some areas cereals are struggling while some in the north west have already failed. There will be very little rice or other summer crops sown this season and the small amount of water that has been allocated has largely been used to apply a spring irrigation to winter crops. Livestock are holding well for now, although many landholders are considering cutting or grazing marginal crops to finish stock. In many areas there is a reduced bulk of feed compared to a 'typical' spring - high concerns for carryover feed moving into the autumn. Some producers already considering options (e.g. selling, purchasing feed, early weaning etc.) and unless things turn around significantly, stock numbers will be reduced in the next 6-8 weeks.</p> <p>EAST: Some far Eastern areas have also experienced barely enough rain to keep pastures up to livestock, let alone grow enough for cutting. Many landholders in this region are very concerned about how quickly things will deteriorate if no rain soon. One report of slugs resulting in re-sowing.</p>
North Coast	<p>The late arrival of severe winter weather conditions has hit producers hard. Frosts have been very heavy on consecutive days and the strong winds took its toll on pastures. Water is still good in all areas except a portion of the Upper Macleay (McKenzie's Creek) who report an alarming drop in surface water availability.</p>	<p>Conditions have started to come back in the Southern parts of the Region. This can be attributed to these areas only receiving about one third of their average rainfall over the past couple of months and the later onset of winter with August frosts severely impacting on pastures both native and improved.</p>	<p>Cold and windy conditions prevailed for most of the month with some storm events thrown in mid-month. Reports of hail damage to the blueberry crop around the Corindi/Red Rock area of the Coffs Harbour LGA were received with initial estimates being damage to crops and infrastructure in the range of \$11-14m.</p>

Region	July	August	September
	<p>Rainfall was mainly confined to the Coastal beach strip, with producers west of the Pacific Highway looking for a top up.</p> <p>Livestock condition overall is still good and with record prices producers are taking full advantage of the money while it is on offer. Producers that have cows calving are putting additional rations out to compensate for slower growth rates in improved pastures and stable growth in native pastures.</p>	<p>Kempsey airport recorded 18.2mm for August compared to the ten (10) year average of 55mm, July 9mm compared to the long term average of 24mm and June 12mm compared to 136.</p> <p>Coffs Harbour also only recorded one third of their normal average rainfall in August 27mm compared to the 73 year average of 72.9, July 32.2mm compared to 73mm and June 55.8mm compared to 123mm.</p> <p>Grafton recorded 36.6mm for August compared to the 97 year average of 40.6mm, July 19.6mm compared to 44.44 and June 17.6mm compared to 68.4mm.</p> <p>Casino and Lismore have varying deficiencies but not quite to the extreme of their Southern counterparts.</p> <p>The statutory Busfire Danger Period (BFDP) has been introduced effective from 1st September 2015 in all Local Government Areas in recognition of the build of fuel, prevailing dry conditions and the predicted El Nino type conditions that are forecast for the coming months.</p> <p>While Spring on the North Coast is traditionally a dry period storm activity can generally be relied upon to provide some short term relief.</p> <p>Livestock producers have continued to take advantage of the very good prices and have continued to offload stock.</p>	<p>Assessment teams are preparing damage assessment reports in conjunction with producers with the aim of applying for a natural disaster declaration.</p> <p>Rainfall across the region was well received with most areas receiving at least the monthly average. This rainfall was very timely for improved pastures as they were starting to fail due to moisture stress.</p> <p>The forecast hot and dry conditions will temper a lot of the benefit if follow up rainfall is not received.</p> <p>Isolated reports of cattle deaths from bloat caused by the flush of clover and very little other ground cover have been received.</p>
Northern Tablelands	<p>Rain throughout the region has been patchy with good falls on the western side but disappointing across some parts of our area. Consequently surface water is still limiting in parts of Uralla, Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra LGAs although the affected area has reduced significantly.</p> <p>Frosts and snow falls have been widespread and pastures have generally deteriorated in line with expectations for July.</p> <p>Fodder crops have continued to do well and have been heavily utilised for breeding and fattening stock.</p> <p>Commercial crops continue to have a good outlook in the Inverell LGA.</p> <p>Stock numbers are still low and stock condition remains generally good with excellent prices being realised for most sale stock.</p>	<p>Most of August was dry, windy and with widespread frosts taking a toll on pastures and livestock across the region.</p> <p>Excellent widespread general rain came to the region in the last week of the month, giving much needed relief across all sectors. This rain was particularly timely for the commercial cropping enterprises in the Inverell LGA continuing an excellent start to their season.</p> <p>Most rivers and creeks have re-established good flows, however some areas still have below average storage in dams.</p> <p>Stock numbers generally remain below the long term average with producers reluctant to pay high re-stocker prices, particularly in the light of the predicted dry outlook for our region.</p>	<p>Generally below average rainfall for September with a run of late frosts, has seen pastures struggle to produce significant spring growth. Grain crops in the Inverell LGA have also struggled for moisture, however no significant frost damage has been reported. Supplementary feeding has been significantly reduced.</p> <p>Stock numbers remain below average, however with calving almost complete and lambing well under way these numbers will pick up over the coming months.</p> <p>With larger than average planting of winter crops, there has been less area fallowed for summer crops and without significant rainfall these plantings will be further reduced.</p>
North West	Walgett -surface water (ground tanks) 4 (some tanks would	Walgett - Some producers bringing stock back from	Walgett - Significant areas of late planted crop are

Region	July	August	September
	<p>be 3, some 5 for quantity, and quality would be about 4). There is a lack of dry matter and has been a rapid growth of soft herbage in response to winter rain - nutritional value may be improving a bit, but certainly would be lacking to start with. Even without further rain, the pasture should last until about October. It would be adequate for dry stock, but insufficient for the lactating ewes). All areas have been sowed to barley now - late sowing, only just emerging - would typically be further along at this point. Still highly exposed to limited rain - yield potential low at this point until further rainfall occurs. Supplementary feeding some livestock only, they are selectively grazing from the feeders.</p> <p>Moree - Fallow soil water profiles near full in some areas. Excellent growth of legume pasture species. Winter crops have good soil moisture profiles. Some crops may flower earlier this year due to warmer conditions and be exposed to greater frost risk.</p> <p>Gwydir - Bloat issues in livestock, waterlogging of crops. Lack of runoff in some areas possible limitation in spring summer.</p> <p>Narrabri - Little runoff in some areas due to improved pastures. Poor subsoil moisture in western area for crops once weather warms up. Bloat concerns in livestock.</p> <p>Gunnedah - Good clover growth and limited roughage from dry native grass is increasing bloat risk in livestock. Dams getting limited runoff. Some waterlogging of crops. Winter forages performing very well.</p> <p>Tamworth -Bloat a massive issue as the clover comes after the rain especially in the face of reduced grass coverage/competition from grasses. Areas around Manilla that missed the heavier rainfall storms have lacked run off water, leaving dams etc. still low. Some issues around lambing present at the moment - hypocalcemia in ewes grazing crops & ewes being in low BCS at point of lambing effecting both ewe & lamb survival.</p> <p>Liverpool Plains - Pasture legume producing well. Some recharge of dam water on some properties. Some winter cereals crops may flower earlier than ideal increasing frost risk.</p>	<p>agistment. Some winter herbage growing including medics and turnip. Feed supplies West of Walgett could carry stock through to summer. Late sown crops ok but will need rain to harvest. Groundcover is better than last year.</p> <p>Moree Plains - Good subsoil moisture for summer crops in some areas (Croppa Creek) and very little in others. Rain ranges from 0-80mm depending, some hail damage. Limited strip rust and heliothis pressure. Fallow moisture varies greatly.</p> <p>Narrabri - Still lack of runoff is a concern for long-term water demand - could be about 3 month's water in some dams. Still poor runoff on black soil.</p> <p>Gunnedah - Good runoff into farm dams. Pasture grasses starting to grow well, still small bloat risk. Crops performing well, minimal disease presence yet. Stock in good condition, but numbers still down due to high prices.</p> <p>Tamworth - Manilla and Barraba have not reached the start of spring yet like Tamworth has. But it is on its way. Flush of clover proving to be an issue for grazing cattle in particular, stock losses experienced due to bloat.</p> <p>Liverpool Plains - Short green feed available but limited in quantity.</p>	<p>struggling with some farmers grazing or cutting them for hay. Pasture areas still have reasonable groundcover but limited biomass for stock feed.</p> <p>Moree Plains - Subsoil moisture for summer crop sowing limited in western areas, good in eastern areas. Heliothis pressure has been low occasional armyworm infestation. Planting moisture drying away quickly.</p> <p>Gwydir - Made some oaten hay, paddock of oats that was eaten out has come back after the August rain. There has been excellent clover/medic around the paddocks but to be honest we don't have an abundance of standing dry feed which might become a problem if it becomes a long hot dry summer. More a problem for next winter I think, rather than this summer.</p> <p>Narrabri - Pastures lightly grazed, downsized herd numbers. Winter crops some being harvested others being cut for hay. Nil summer crops being planted. Water limited to pools as there has been no runoff. Stock being supplementary fed.</p> <p>Gunnedah - Hot weather and lack of rain has burnt off pastures and lowered water levels in the dam. Late planted crops have significantly reduced yield potential with some crops being cut for hay. Early planted crops are faring well. Stock condition is reasonable.</p> <p>Tamworth - The warm weather has really zapped the area! Things had started the month looking not too bad throughout most of the area however drying out rapidly now.</p> <p>Liverpool Plains - Grain crops will yield around average to a little above. Pasture drying out and quality diminishing. Surface moisture for sowing summer crops limited.</p>
Riverina	The southern, central, and eastern Riverina is wet with	The southern, central, and eastern Riverina is even wetter	The moisture profile of the Riverina LLS region has

Region	July	August	September
	<p>continued rainfall throughout July. The winter has been cold with cold days and nights and frosts ranging from light to severe. The soil moisture for crops and pastures ranges from good to excellent, with a proportion of paddocks now reaching water-logged status. Inflows into dams have been noticeable for many. The rangelands of the Riverina are in a better situation than before winter but patches south and west of Hay have missed out on rainfall. The drier areas of the Riverina are the western and northern parts of the Carathool Shire i.e. north of Rankin Springs and Bland Shires who need more rain for pastures, crops and stock water. Land-holders all need a favorable spring.</p> <p>Dual purpose winter crops, forage crops, winter-active lucerne pastures and annual pastures are all providing some green feed. Dual purpose and forage crops were sown early to on time this season and have provided useful quantities of high quality feed. Annual pastures have shown very low growth rates this winter, limited by very cold temperatures not rainfall. Some native pastures are inactive, others are showing growth and their annual grass and weed component is providing some feed for stock. A lot of supplementary feeding (75% surveyed) to stock has been occurring across the district with pasture feed levels generally low and coinciding with peak nutritional demand and high energy requirements for lactating ewes and cows. Pastures are only growing slowly due to grazing pressure and cold temps. Some land-holders at Harden, Cootamundra and Lockhart have sold stock earlier than usual.</p> <p>Winter crops are growing well with cereal crops now between mid-late tillering unless late-sown where held back by frosts. Canola has progressed from vegetative leafy growth to stem elongation and early flowering. Pulse crops are generally growing well. Disease levels in pastures and crops are reported to be low but this could change in spring with high levels of soil moisture.</p> <p>Dam levels range from empty or very low where there has been rainfall but no run-off yet, to good and up to 50% capacity, to excellent and full. As the moisture profile has been added to, further rainfall has provided some runoff in</p>	<p>with substantial rainfall throughout August. The cold winter combined with cloudy, overcast days slowed any pasture recovery although days are now longer and temperatures have warmed slightly in the last week. Stock health issues have included hypocalcaemia, photosensitisation, rickets in young sheep, bloat in cattle and worms in sheep. The soil moisture for both pastures and crops ranges from good to excellent, with even more paddocks now water-logged including low pastoral land, last season's rice country and some winter crops. The majority of dams have continued to fill with some overflowing and creeks rising. Dams on flat to gently sloping country haven't all had run-off and range between 30-60% capacity which means the stock-water situation varies across the region. The drier areas of the Riverina continue to be the western and northern parts of the Carathool Shire and Bland Shires but they have improved. The Rangelands of the Riverina have changed markedly since mid-June with increasing available feed on native pastures and improving stock condition. Hay has had 35mm rain for the month and a milder winter than the cold temperatures experienced elsewhere. Some native pastures are showing good growth on lighter grass country and slower growth on bush country. Annual grasses and weeds are also providing feed for stock. Growth in the paddocks has resulted in ewes and lambs in excellent condition and there a cattle sale organised for Hay next month with fat cattle to sell.</p> <p>Ground cover on public lands in the MIA and CIA including TSRs in the west is in excess of 78%. Hillston had 36mm total rainfall for August, Griffith had 42mm, Yanco 79mm and Narrandera had 83mm. Despite good winter rainfall the Irrigators are looking at signals like the high price of water and require more certainty in irrigation supplies/allocations for forward planning.</p> <p>In the central Riverina seasonal conditions have continued to be good with above average rainfall for the last 3 months. Crop growth has been excellent. Feed supply is still good to excellent, although tapers off slightly as you move west into the Murrumbidgee and Jerilderie</p>	<p>dried out quickly from mid to late September. Cold weather was revisited between the 23rd - 25th September with a series of moderately severe frosts. Some barley crops were already flowering and many wheat crops were coming into head. Low levels of frost damage to early sown cereal crops and flowering pulse crops (5-10% yield) are likely to have occurred but may not be evident until harvest-time. Stock health issues have included foot scald (benign foot-rot), foot abscess, bloat in cattle, some metabolic issues, and scour worms and pulpy kidney in sheep in drier localities having their best season in years. The topsoil has dried out and where good subsoil moisture exists it is being drawn on by pastures and crops that haven't received useful rainfall since mid-September. Previously waterlogged paddocks are now nearly all trafficable. For most land-holders the pressure on stock water has eased. A drier September than average has meant no new run-off events for dams and creeks.</p> <p>The Hay district has officially had 13.2mm rain for the month. The annual grass component of rangeland pastures is hayed off prematurely with only showers in early September and warming temperatures. The barley grass is finished as are the medics. The perennials are waiting for the summer rain before they start shooting. Native pastures including saltbush have supported stock which are holding their condition well and the stock prices are good reason for optimism.</p> <p>Across Hillston, Gunbar, Hay, Booligal and Carrathool the farmers are commenting that it is the best season in over ten years. There is a level of inquiry about regulations associated with bringing extra stock in from other areas and states – due to the abundant feed. Because of the amount of feed and moisture that fell this season, there have been unusual cases of pulpy kidney and also scour worms.</p> <p>Cattle and sheep that were in poor body condition at the beginning of winter are now fat. Crops are looking</p>

Region	July	August	September
	<p>paddocks and dams are slowly filling. In the Eastern Riverina from the South West Slopes to the Highlands some heavier falls have resulted in dams being nearly full to overflowing, to the delight of land-holders. Farms across the region (especially in Eastern Shires of Gundagai and Tumut) have felt the effects of the very cold temperatures with stock losing condition on farms where not supplementary fed or grazed on dual purpose and forage crops.</p> <p>Windmills are operating well in the MIA and CIA and dam inlet channels are working well from cleanout upgrades last year. Northern parts of irrigation districts had a dry summer and autumn, but recent heavy rainfall events in winter have now helped ease the pressure on water storages including stock water. Hillston had a total of 40mm for July, Griffith had 66mm, Yanco and Narrandera had 56mm.</p> <p>Groundcover in the Rangelands and western Riverina remains patchy with pasture growth reliant on annual grass and weed species. Cold weather has increased energy and feed requirements so stock condition has slipped. Winter rainfall has helped on all fronts as some land-holders around Hay were experiencing drought conditions prior to June and July rainfall.</p>	<p>LGAs. Over the last few days growth has begun to improve with a few days of higher temperatures and sunny days. Many of the annual grasses under lower grazing pressure, including roadsides and fence lines are now setting seed. Since last month there is more water in dams for the majority of livestock producers in the Central Riverina.</p> <p>Dual purpose winter crops, forage crops, winter-active lucerne pastures and annual pastures have all provided green feed through winter. The majority of livestock producers have now removed their stock from dual purpose crops which is normal timing in August. There is some supplementary feeding continuing due to very slow pasture growth rates and high energy requirements from stock in cold weather.</p> <p>Winter crops are growing well with cereal crops now at mid-late tillering through to jointing. There are many bulky crops with very good plant populations and high tiller numbers. Some paddocks show well above average yield potentials. Canola is now at 20-50% flowering across the region and fungicides for disease control are in short supply. Pulse crops are looking good except on waterlogged soils. There has been some yellowing of waterlogged cereal crops and trafficability has been an issue for spreading urea and post emergent weed control.</p> <p>In the Eastern Riverina from the South West Slopes to the Highlands more dams and creeks/streams and springs are full to flowing and also overflowing. Where they are not, one questions their dam placement and capacity for run-off after this wet winter. Farms across the region in the Eastern Shires of Gundagai and Tumut have continued to experience a very cold winter. Cattle-growers are starting to report bloat cases as the clover content of their pastures increases and will continue to supplementary feed to help manage bloat in some paddocks.</p> <p>Land-holders across the Riverina are becoming more confident of a favorable spring despite the El Nino forecasts. Winter rainfall has been above average, pasture growth is improving with warming temperatures</p>	<p>good for yield potential at the end of September however the increasing heat might cause issues. Hillston had 16.2mm total rainfall for September, Griffith had 17.6mm, Yanco 22.6mm and Narrandera had 22mm.</p> <p>Conditions in the Narrandera shire are generally good to very good although there has been little useful rain in the previous four weeks. In the parts of the Carathool and Bland Shires that missed out on earlier rain these areas have a lot less feed available and there will be issues for them carrying stock through the summer. Flies are a potential issue over the next few weeks if farmers don't use preventive treatment/management. Grass seeds could also be a larger issue than usual.</p> <p>In the Irrigated districts, allocations remain low for the Murrumbidgee Valley, and the cost of temporary water is very high resulting in many landholders now making the 'hard' decision to reduce summer cropping areas with rice expected to drop substantially due to the higher water requirements of this crop. Water use for irrigated pastures and rice enterprises has changed towards cotton. Winter crops have been looking extremely good and farmers are budgeting on 1-2 waterings to see these crops through to maturity. Standing feed is excellent. The hay making season is underway.</p> <p>In the Central and Northern Riverina the winter crops are growing well with cereal crops peeping to heading and most cereals now flowering. There are many bulky crops with high plant populations and high tiller numbers. Some paddocks showed well above average yield potentials at the end of September. The canola flowering period is coming to a finish with warmer weather which will result in lost yield potential lost as flowering could have continued for a further 7-10 days. Most wheat and canola crops were early or main season sown and have advanced quickly from mid-September onwards. Crops in the north and west of the Riverina are more advanced. The full soil</p>

Region	July	August	September
		<p>and winter crops in a healthy condition have subsoil moisture in the profile.</p>	<p>moisture profile from early September provided a buffer in late September for the drying conditions but crops have now drawn heavily on subsoil moisture reserves. Faba beans and lupins are now under pressure to finish in warmer temperatures than is ideal. Pasture growth has been excellent in late September and annual grasses have now gone to head. Lucerne pastures are performing well with high growth rates. Dam water supplies are still good for the most part, with good volumes available for the summer.</p> <p>In the Young district feed levels in pasture are still quite high with clovers/ lucerne and grasses holding on. Stock water options at the moment are reasonable to good. Stock body conditions are very good with stock in 3-4 score on average. Lambings and calvings haven't been problematic. The main animal health issues seen this month were lameness (footrot - benign, virulent; foot abscess; interdigital dermatitis); cases of Pulpy Kidney earlier in the month; cases of Bloat earlier in the month before the fibrous content of pastures increased. There was the occasional issue with metabolic diseases such as hypocalcaemia in pregnant ewes or travelled stock.</p> <p>In the Gundagai district September started out where August left off, cold and damp. Stock water supplies are sitting at close to 100% with most springs and gullies running ample water. Feed supplies kept up with stock and went forward from around the first week in September. Stock are in good condition with better utilization of feed-on-offer now. Stock are not requiring supplementary fed for maintenance. Hay and silage paddocks have been locked up in preparation.</p> <p>In the Eastern Riverina from the SW Slopes - Highlands early spring conditions have been good with excellent growth of pastures, however the lack of rainfall is starting to impact on pasture growth. Most of the annual species are well into reproductive phase. Late spring to early summer rainfall will be</p>

Region	July	August	September
			<p>required to continue growth of perennial and native species. Silage and hay making is underway. Land-holders across the Riverina are becoming less confident of a favorable spring now after a drier September from the middle of the month. El Nino forecasts are now being taken very seriously. Pastures have lost biomass and height with warming temperatures. Winter crops are healthy but are drawing rapidly on subsoil moisture and require follow up rainfall.</p>
South East	<p>Areas of the tablelands including the Southern Highlands received a dumping of snow throughout the month of July. Some areas reporting over 200mm of snow. The rest of the tablelands have been suffering bleak conditions and little sunlight with rainfall ranging from 30-90mm. The coastal areas have had above average rainfall, but trending cooler than a normal year. Water storage and pasture are quite good.</p>	<p>It has been a long cold winter. Throughout August there has been substantial rainfall across a broad section of the South East region. The ranges are from 50-100 mm on the tablelands to over 300 mm on the coast. Flooding resulted in localised areas, causing minor stock evacuation in those areas. Because of the cold and wet weather livestock have suffered somewhat with reduced condition and some illness. Looking forward to some warm sunny weather.</p>	<p>No report provided.</p>
Western	<p>Wentworth area - July was a cooler than average month 3 - 15 degrees C against the average of 4-16 degrees C. Rainfall varied from 12 to 26 mm across the area. All places reporting good pasture and water supply (except for Darling River supply), stock in good condition and lamb marking percentages above average.</p> <p>Unincorporated area - I have been far and wide this month from Tibooburra, where there still looks to be plenty of dry feed from rains earlier in the year and a lot of winter growth among-st that. I have also been up 120kms North of White Cliffs where there is an abundance of feed and water lying in the paddocks everywhere. The Broken Hill to Menindee area still looks okay with a lot of feed around but it is patchy in areas. Down towards Wentworth is probably the most in need of rain where there doesn't look to be much feed at all.</p> <p>Brewarrina area - There has been good follow up falls throughout July, varying from just 12 ml up to 30+ml to the southern end of the shire. Goodooga area has had some falls of 25>30 mls but due to the colder weather, not much</p>	<p>Balranald - Useful rainfall for period June - August feed reasonably good but beginning to change as temperatures increase and pasture growth increases.</p> <p>Bourke - Variable rainfall has produced a variable growth during August. Evaporation rates increasing with higher ambient temperatures and increased wind velocities coming into spring.</p> <p>Brewarrina - southern areas have benefited from rains but northern areas have been drier and this is reflected in pasture growth and stock condition.</p> <p>Cobar - Very good rainfall has produced good perennial growth. Not much change from July seasonal conditions report.</p> <p>Central Darling -Useful rainfalls around Wilcannia and White Cliffs have produced good pasture growth. Some areas south of Wilcannia have also received good rainfall.</p> <p>Unincorporated areas - A range of conditions - Excellent in the North West to very dry in the North East.</p> <p>Wentworth - Similar conditions to July however will see significant changes in September and October. Pasture</p>	<p>Rainfall is much less in September across the region. Temperatures in some areas have been in excess of 30 degrees C for at least a week and winter pastures are curing quickly. Some information has been derived due to bio staff involved with Wild dog baiting program. Pasture is drying off very quickly across the region and pasture for livestock in some areas will be decreasing quickly. Areas north of Bourke pasture is diminishing quickly and Brewarrina shire some landholders beginning to hand feed or reduce stock numbers. Cobar shire variable pasture conditions. Free water will diminished in many areas as temperatures rise and rainfall is much less.</p>

Region	July	August	September
	<p>growth so far. Reports of stock dying with poisoning from new growth, (Rape, Lams tongue etc.). Quite a lot of stock moving in, on agistment from Qld. Looks like we may get a great spring.</p> <p>Bourke area - Country side getting dryer, is haying off. Livestock in good condition.</p> <p>Reduced number of western regional landholders for July, many were unavailable.</p>	<p>growth is average to below average.</p> <p>Pt of Carrathool not available this month.</p>	

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