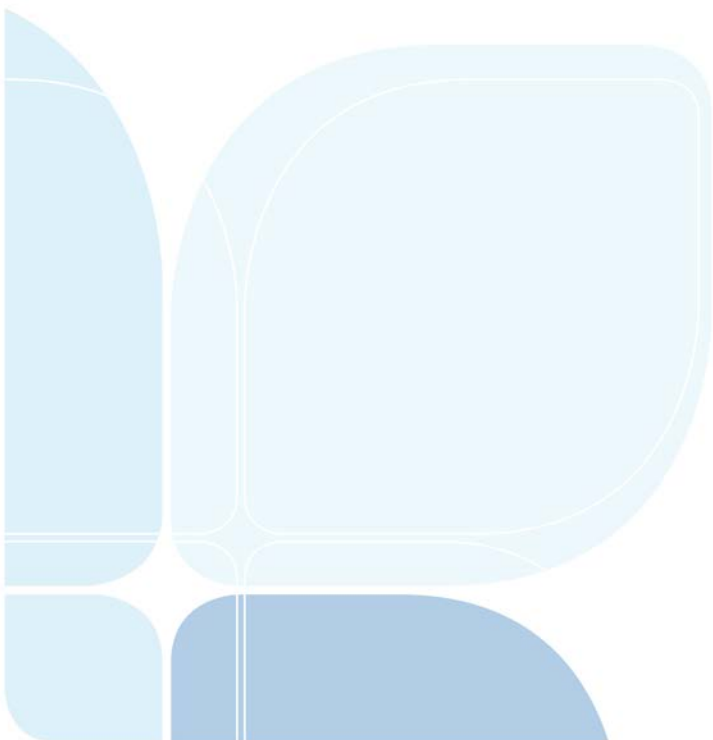




Local Land
Services

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 August 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	May 2015	June 2015	July 2015
State overview	<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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six regions have reported no change to their average regional score from last month including, Central Tablelands, Central West, Greater Sydney, North Coast, Northern Tablelands and South East. Murray, North West, Riverina and Western have reported an improvement in conditions from last month. Hunter 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 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.
Regional Ranking	<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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Good – Greater Sydney and North Coast. Good – Hunter, Murray, North West, Riverina and South East. Reasonable – Central Tablelands, Central West and Western. Below Requirements – Northern Tablelands. 	<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
LGA Scores – Extremely Poor, Extreme or Extremely Critical	The following LGA: Walgett	There are no LGAs within this scale.	There are no LGAs within this scale.
LGA Scores – Excellent or Very Good	The following LGAs: Camden, Tamworth, Bombala, Snowy River and Yass.	The following LGAs: Camden, Wollondilly, Singleton, Cessnock, Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Greater Taree, Albury, Gwydir, Tamworth, Wingecarribee, Upper Lachlan, Bombala, Snowy River and Yass Valley.	The following LGAs: Narromine, Corowa, Bellingen, Kyogle Shoalhaven, Wingecarribee, Goulburn/Mulwaree, Upper Lachlan, Bega, Bombala, Snowy River and Yass Valley.

Data Analysis

Table 2: Surveyed Property Numbers

Region	Number of properties surveyed		
	May	June	July
Central Tablelands	39	38	40
Central West	40	58	51
Greater Sydney	14	14	¹
Hunter	18	20	23
Murray	57	44	48
North Coast	44	44	43
Northern Tablelands	31	34	35
North West	33	17	32
Riverina	19	15	22
South East	33	54	62
Western	40	22	23
TOTAL	368	360	379

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

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

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

Region	May			June			July		
	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, Lithgow and Orange – Good	Mid-Western and Cabonne – Below requirements	Reasonable (4)	Bathurst, Lithgow and Orange - Good	Cabonne – Below Requirements	Reasonable (4)	Bathurst, Blayney and Cowra - Good	-
Central West	Reasonable (4)	Wellington and Narromine - Good	Gilgandra, Coonamble, Warrumbungle and Forbes – Below Requirements	Reasonable (4)	Dubbo, Bogan, Narromine, Gilgandra, Warren and Weddin - Good	Warrumbungles and Lachlan – Below Requirements	Good (3)	Narromine – Very Good	Wellington, Dubbo, Coonamble, Warrumbungle and Lachlan - Reasonable
Greater Sydney	Very Good (2)	Camden - Excellent	-	Very Good (2)	Camden and Wollondilly - Excellent	-	-	-	-
Hunter	Very Good (2)	-	Upper Hunter, Muswellbrook, Gloucester, Dungog and Great Lakes - Good	Good (3)	Singleton, Cessnock, Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Greater Taree – Very Good	-	Good (3)	-	-
Murray	Reasonable (4)	Tumbarumba, Albury, Corowa and Murray - Good	Conargo and Wakool – Below Requirements	Good (3)	Albury - Excellent	Conargo – Reasonable	Good (3)	Corowa – Very Good	Deniliquin - Reasonable Conargo – Below Requirements

Region	May			June			July		
	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 Coast	Very Good (2)	-	Port Macquarie Hastings, Nambucca, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour, Ballina, Lismore, Byron - Good	Very Good (2)	-	Port Macquarie Hastings, Nambucca, Clarence Valley Council, Coffs Harbour, Tweed Shire, Richmond Valley Council, Ballina, Lismore, Byron - Good	Good (3)	Bellingen and Kyogle – Very Good	-
Northern Tablelands	Below Requirements (5)	Walcha - Reasonable	Guyra – Very Poor	Below Requirements (5)	-	-	Below Requirements (5)	Walcha - Reasonable	-
North West	Reasonable (4)	Tamworth – Very Good Gwydir - Good	Moree Plains - Poor Walgett – Extremely Poor	Good (3)	Gwydir and Tamworth – Very Good	-	Good (3)	Moree Plains - Reasonable Walgett – Below Requirements	Tamworth – Very Good
Riverina	Reasonable (4)	Young and Temora – Good	Junee, Coolamon, Wagga and Hay – Below Requirements Narrandera - Poor	Good (3)	-	Gundagai, Coolamon and Hay - Reasonable	Good (3)	-	Narrandera and Jirilderie – Very Good
South East	Good (3)²	Bombala, Snowy River and Yass – Very Good	Pallerang, Eurobodalla – Reasonable Upper Lachlan – Below Requirements	Good (3)	Wingecarribee, Upper Lachlan, Bombala, Snowy River and Yass Valley- Very Good	Goulburn-Mulwaree, Pallerang - Reasonable	Good (3)		Pallerang and Eurobodalla – Below Requirements

² South East has provided a limited report using old data due to staffing issues.

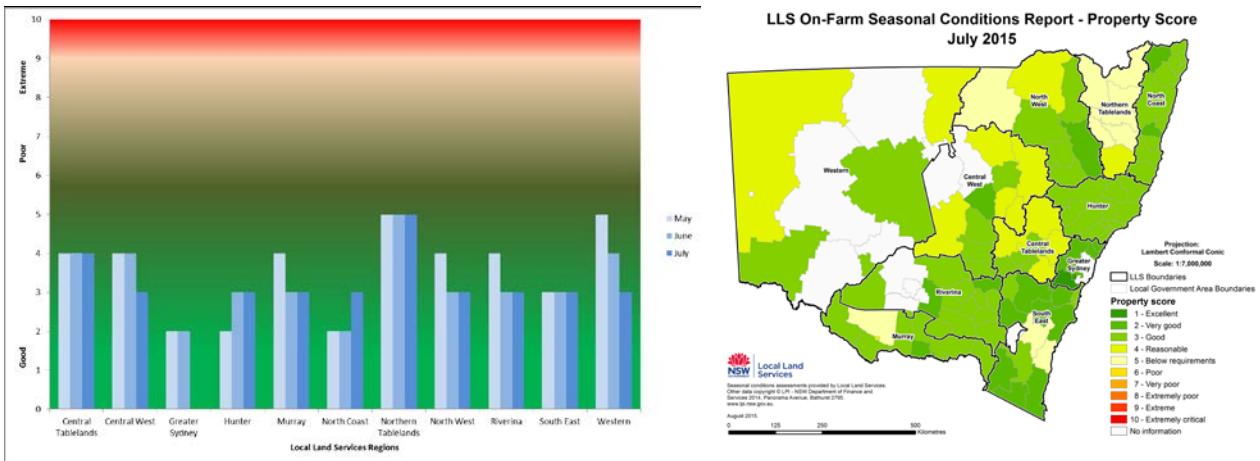
Region	May			June			July		
	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)	Average Regional Score	Positive (LGAs)	Negative (LGA's)
Western	Below Requirements (5)	Wentworth – Good Unincorporated - Reasonable	Balranald, Brewarrina, Central Darling and Cobar – Poor Bourke – Very Poor	Reasonable (4)	Wentworth - Good	-	Good (3)		Brewarrina and Unincorporated Areas - Reasonable

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		
	May	June	July
Central Tablelands	4	4	4
Central West	4	4	3
Greater Sydney	2	2	
Hunter	2	3	3
Murray	4	3	3
North Coast	2	2	3
Northern Tablelands	5	5	5
North West	4	3	3
Riverina	4	3	3
South East	3	3	3
Western	5	4	3

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

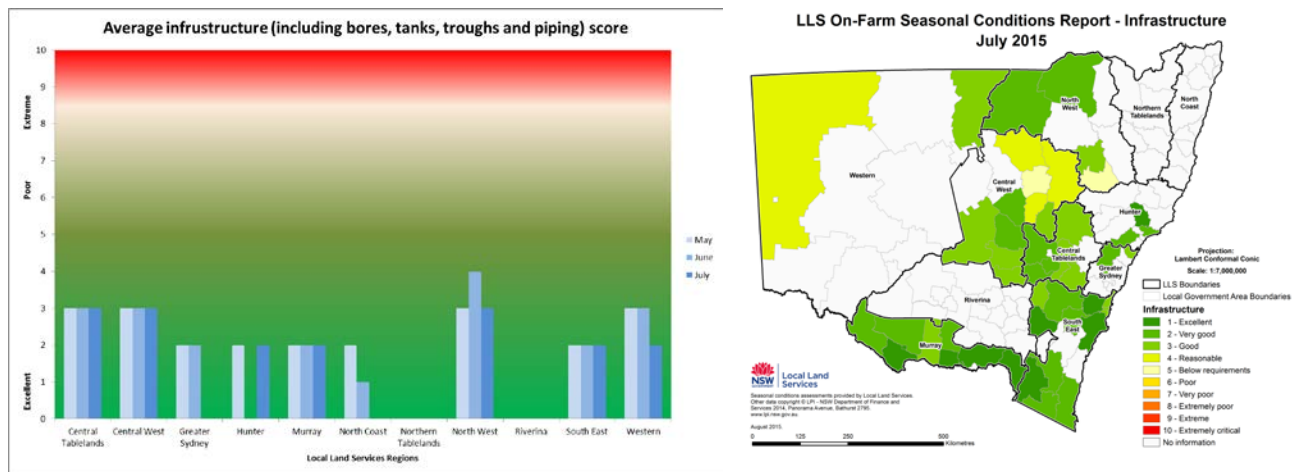


Average Regional Score for Infrastructure

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

Region	Average scores for regions		
	May	June	July
Central Tablelands	3	3	3
Central West	3	3	3
Greater Sydney	2	2	
Hunter	2	-	2
Murray	2	2	2
North Coast	2	1	-
Northern Tablelands	-	-	-
North West	3	4	3
Riverina	-	-	3
South East	2	2	2
Western	3	3	2

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



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

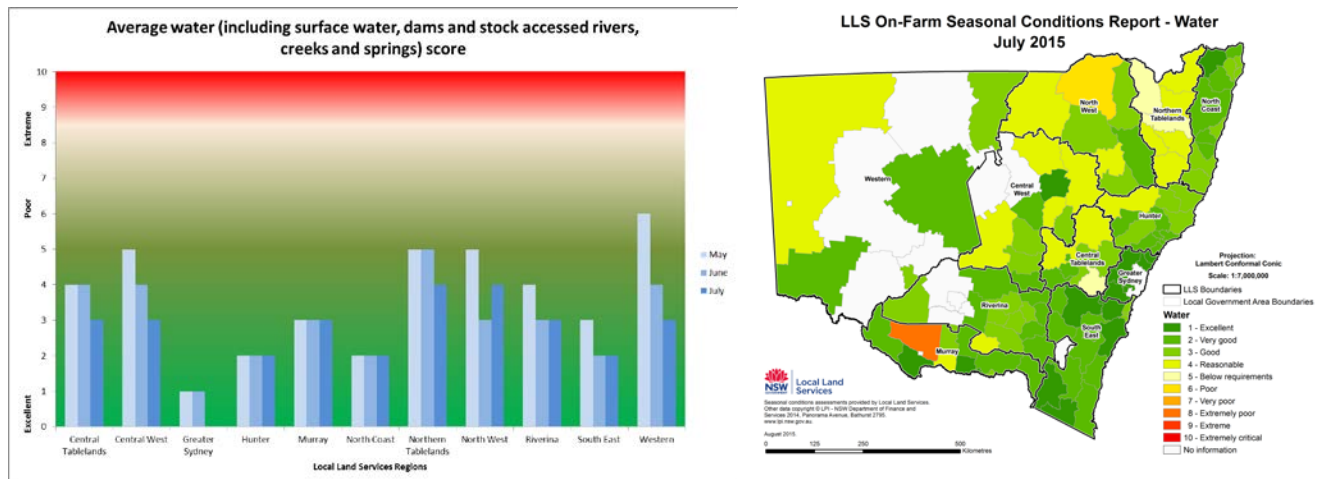
Scale	On-farm observations	Water (quantity, quality and infrastructure) description	Agronomic conditions (winter or summer crops, native and/or improved pasture) description	Livestock conditions/ carrying capacity description
Level 1	Very Good	Water security established on the property for a 12 month 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		
	May	June	July
Central Tablelands	4	4	3
Central West	5	4	3
Greater Sydney	1	1	
Hunter	2	2	2
Murray	3	3	3
North Coast	2	2	2
Northern Tablelands	5	5	4
North West	5	3	4
Riverina	4	3	3
South East	3	2	2
Western	6	4	3

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

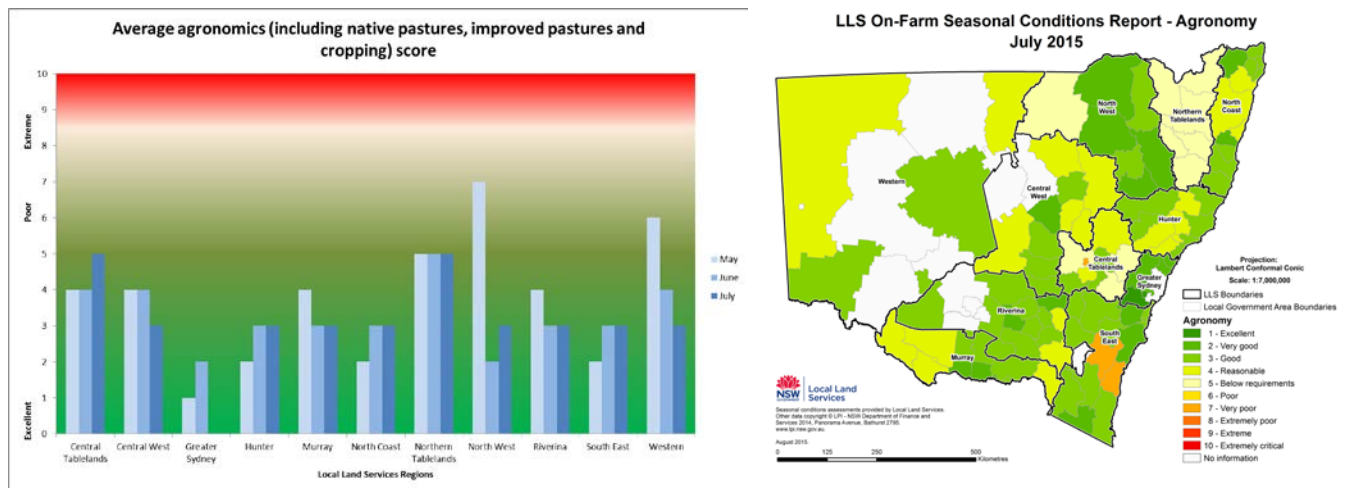


Average Regional Agronomics (including native pastures, improve pastures and cropping) Score

Table 8: The average agronomics score

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

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

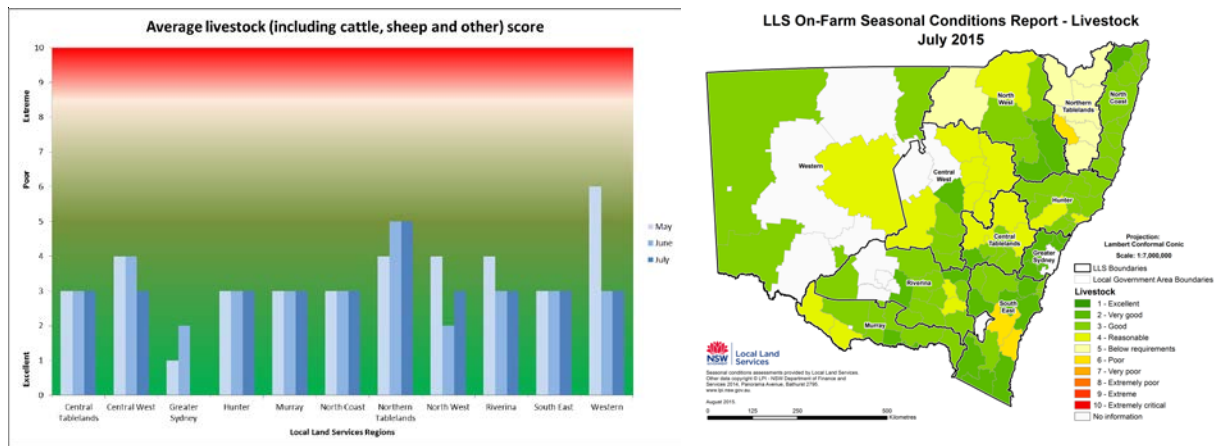


Average Regional Livestock (including beef, sheep and other) Score

Table 9: The average livestock score

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

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



Regional Comments on Seasonal Conditions

Region	May	June	July
Central Tablelands	No report provided.	Water relatively stable and no grass growth due to cold conditions and some supplementary feeding.	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.
Central West	<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> <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</p>	<p>We certainly have a mixed bag for the last month. Most of the region has received useful rain but with some areas still missing out. Rainfall ranged from 20 - 80mm falling over 3 - 11 days.</p> <p>It would appear that the majority of the region has improved or at least stabilized, however there is still the extremes of either too wet or dry. Reports of some crops "drowning" or the ground too wet to sow.</p> <p>Pasture growth rates have been very slow due to the onset of heavy frost and cooler weather, particularly with native pastures in the south of the region below a line from Nyngan - Peak Hill.</p> <p>The north seem to have missed the break a bit with areas above Coonamble, Quambone, Coonabarabran still struggling and well below average.</p> <p>On average the region has basically stayed the same with the expected variations from within LGA's.</p> <p>Surface water still remains the most critical issue across the region with very little run off occurring at this point.</p> <p>One landholder has reported that there has been no water allocation for the new year on the Lachlan river.</p>	<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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Livestock have suffered a bit with the onset of better conditions with losses from bloat, lambing sickness etc. but are generally in good condition.</p> <p>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>

Region	May	June	July
	<p>winter for most. The forecast from the BoM of an El Nino is not very comforting. 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>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.</p>	<p><u>LOWER HUNTER DISTRICT</u> (Maitland, Cessnock, Dungog, Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie LGA's) Water - Water supply and quality in the Lower Hunter is excellent. Dams are full and creeks are flushed after the recent storms and follow up rain. Pasture -Considering the time of year, pastures are in good condition, but winter haying off has commenced with the recent cold spell. Some of the low lying flood plain areas are remaining water logged, and recovery has been poor, thus explaining some of the lower pasture scores. Stock - In the Lower Hunter, generally people have de-stocked as a result of the floods, however the quality of the remaining stock has remained reasonably good, where pastures have been available. No supplementary feeding is occurring other than the water logged areas. <u>UPPER HUNTER DISTRICT</u> (Upper Hunter. Muswellbrook and Singleton LGA's) Water - Both quality and quantity have improved in most areas due to recent cumulative rainfall, but in some areas lack of run-off has been an issue. Pasture - Native pasture is in a dormant phase, but is average for the time of year, with some residue from late summer/early autumn. Improved pasture quantity and quality is fair. Annual forage crops are looking quite good. Stock - Stock numbers and condition are looking reasonable for the time of year. Those on crop are looking in good condition. <u>MANNING GREAT LAKES DISTRICT</u> (Greater Taree, Gloucester and Great Lakes LGA's)</p>	<p><u>LOWER HUNTER DISTRICT</u> (Maitland, Cessnock, Dungog, Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie LGA's) Water: Supply and quality in the Lower Hunter is still very good. Dams are full and creeks are still flowing. 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 remain water logged following the super storm event of April. Stock: De-stocking has continued as a result of the floods. Stock condition is declining marginally. Supplementary feeding is increasing. <u>UPPER HUNTER DISTRICT</u> (Upper Hunter. Muswellbrook and Singleton LGA's) Water: Ground water in some areas is slowly replenishing; declining in others. Creeks in some areas are slowly dropping. Pasture: Native pasture is average for the time of year, but spring rain will be required. Improved pasture quantity and quality is fair. Stock: Stock numbers are down in general; restocking has not occurred, and therefore condition of remaining stock is good. <u>MANNING GREAT LAKES DISTRICT</u> (Greater Taree, Gloucester and Great Lakes LGA's) Water: Capacity for most properties has declined since last month due to lack of rainfall, but levels are still reasonable. 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. Stock: Cattle are declining in conditions due to lack of dry feed, but de-stocking is not fully evident.</p>

Region	May	June	July
		<p>Water - Capacity for most rural properties would be at 80% or better. Good general rain through winter has provided good soil moisture levels.</p> <p>Pasture - Improved winter forage pastures are doing well, but naturalised pastures are experiencing no growth due to the cold conditions, but are normal for the time of year.</p> <p>Stock - Stock quality and quantity are average for the time of year in a normal season.</p>	
Murray	<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 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>	<p>Due to rain event in the 2nd week in June (ranged between 25 - >100mm) and some warmer weather over most of the month, there has been winter grass growth occurring in the west, however dry subsoils prior to the rain along with frosts since then caused conditions to dry out very quickly after the rain event.</p> <p>Water levels in ground tanks reliant on surface runoff is still a concerning issue - however, some runoff resulted in some areas.</p> <p>Livestock condition remains pretty good although a lot of supplementary feeding going on (particularly breeding stock) and/or reducing stock numbers. In some areas landholders are generally pessimistic about pastoral conditions going forward with most still hand feeding although further west farmers have been able to reduce supplementary feeding. High lamb marking percentages reported in the west and high scanning percentages across the board.</p> <p>Winter cereals are looking average/above average further west while in some areas in the central Murray winter crops are struggling, canola is very late and poor except on pre-irrigated country. Wheat is patchy, barley is handling the conditions better. Pre-irrigated country is in good condition, not too wet.</p> <p>Irrigation prospects to grow stock feed or finish winter crops are poor after the announcement of 0% water allocation on the Murray Irrigation Network. This will have a major impact on local farmers.</p> <p>Kangaroos are in large numbers in the western areas.</p>	<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, 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</p>

Region	May	June	July
North Coast	<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. 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>	<p>There is very little change since last month with the lower flood plain country still very wet and impossible in many instances for producers get a tractor on paddocks.</p> <p>While rainfall was only patchy it generally fell where it was not wanted i.e. the coastal strip.</p> <p>There has been a decrease in available feed volumes however, this is expected at this time of year, producers have usually off loaded their weaners and should now be looking after dry stock or those that have recently calved. Milk production levels are stable.</p> <p>Saleyard prices are very good at the moment with large numbers still being yarded and good returns being received by producers.</p> <p>As reported last month the severe weather event (East Coast Low) of early May resulted in damage across a small part of the region. A disaster declaration has now been approved for the Ballina, Bellingen, Byron, Clarence Valley, Kyogle, Lismore, Richmond Valley and Nambucca Local Government areas.</p>	<p>there are significant production risks.</p> <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>Rainfall was mainly confined to the Coastal beach strip, with producers west of the Pacific Highway looking for a top up. 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>
Northern Tablelands	<p>Surveys in Guyra and Glen Innes Severn LGAs are less 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</p>	<p>Some heavy frosts have been recorded and pastures have suffered as a result. However this is to be expected on the tablelands at this time of year.</p> <p>Some areas of Uralla, Armidale Dumaresq and Guyra LGAs have still had little run-off and surface water continues to be a problem.</p> <p>Fodder crops continue to do well and are providing valuable feed for fattening stock. Some supplementation of breeding stock has commenced, but is still at a relatively low level. Commercial cropping in the Inverell LGA continues to have an excellent outlook.</p>	<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. Commercial crops continue to have a good outlook in the</p>

Region	May	June	July
	<p>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>	<p>Stock generally continue in good condition, however numbers for both sheep and cattle remain below historical averages.</p>	<p>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>
North West	<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> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Walgett - Some late wheat and chickpea plantings have occurred due to the rainfall in June. These crops are only being planted on 30-50cm of wet soil, nowhere near enough to meet crop requirements without follow up rain. This rain will also promote some winter pasture growth and several producers are moving stock back into the Shire after being on agistment for extended periods.</p> <p>Moree - Western parts of shire are opportunistically planting late winter crops in a similar manner to Walgett producers so follow up rain is essential. Reduced livestock numbers in the shire will allow some pasture recovery although it will be slow until spring. Crops in the eastern part of the shire show average potential</p> <p>Gwydir - Good rainfall has improved pasture growth and caused enough runoff to fill most farm dams. Winter forages are in good condition and livestock utilising the pastures well. Some crops planted late in the cropping window but majority on track for average yields.</p> <p>Narrabri - Forage crops in good condition and livestock on hand remaining steady, allowing some pasture recovery. Farm dam levels have improved due to rainfall.</p> <p>Gunnedah - Farm dam levels improved and good winter pasture and forage growth. Livestock condition is improving, albeit with reduced numbers on hand compared to average conditions. Some late crops planted and several producers are replanting crops due to waterlogging.</p> <p>Tamworth - Forage crops in very good condition and winter pasture growth has improved with rainfall. Stock numbers still low compared to average. Farm dams levels have improved across the shire.</p>	<p>Walgett - surface water (ground tanks) 4 (some tanks would 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</p>

Region	May	June	July
		<p>Liverpool Plains - Some waterlogged crops being replanted along with some opportunistic late plantings occurring. Very good pasture and forage growth along with reduced livestock numbers has left remaining stock in good condition.</p> <p>General - Rainfall has been widespread across the region and has prompted some increased plantings on marginal soil moisture reserves in the west. These crops will require significant follow up rain to achieve even average yields. Further east in the region, crops are on track for only average yields at this stage due to the lateness of the planting and some waterlogging in the southern parts of the region. Pastures will be slower to respond to rain in winter but some winter feed and forage is filling the feed gap until spring. Livestock numbers are still below average for the region but this has left remaining stock in good condition. Farm dam water levels are improved due to minor runoff across the region, mainly in the east and south. However, runoff has been limited to farm scale, meaning creeks, rivers and major water storages across the region have not seen significant improvement.</p>	<p>lambling 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>
Riverina	<p>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</p>	<p>The southern, central, and eastern Riverina are enjoying the results of the best rainfall received in a week for this season. Despite consistent temperatures less than 10 degrees, some frosts and fogs, the soil moisture for crops and pastures is excellent. Soil moisture in the profile has increased at depth and while temperatures are low, crops and pastures are using moisture in the topsoil, rather than roots moisture seeking at depth.</p> <p>Annual grasses, dual purpose winter crops and winter-active lucerne pastures are all providing some green feed. Dam levels are still low to medium. The significant rainfall event of mid June was soft and steady rainfall, a nice soaking rain that has been taken up, with very little translating into run-off.</p>	<p>The southern, central, and eastern Riverina is wet with 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</p>

Region	May	June	July
			<p>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.</p> <p>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 paddocks and dams are slowly filling.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>

Region	May	June	July
			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.
South East	No report provided.	Rainfall across the region in June has been patchy in some locations of the Tablelands landscape but otherwise average to good in other areas. Winter cold snaps have delivered some heavy frosts across the Tablelands landscape impacting available feed and livestock conditions. Winter pasture and crops range from fair to good in most locations.	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.
Western	<p>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.</p> <p>Travelling South to Wentworth is still pretty average with feed at the moment.</p> <p>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 the seed base to be retained.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Unincorporated area - In my travel's for the month I have noticed a wide spread of feed in all directions from Broken Hill and still a lot of water lying around from previous rains this month. They predicted a dry winter but it has certainly started of okay.</p> <p>Balranald area - Overall we have had some much needed and welcome rain across the district Most landholders have received around the 25ml +. The native pasture has benefited well from this with trefoil's and grasses starting to come away nicely. However it still needs to progress to be any real benefit to stock. Have had the odd report of Pulpy kidney/bloat causing deaths in sheep due to the shortness of the vegetation and dewy mornings. These losses are only minimal at the moment and farmers are still hand feeding to combat this problem as well as vaccinations and the use of bloat oil in troughs. Crops are starting to poke their heads through nicely however the ground temp is still a bit cold to promote any significant growth from the recent rains. As usual its a wait and see what mother nature delivers in the next month or two.</p> <p>Brewarrina area - There has been good falls of rain in the Brewarrina LGA particularly in the southern end of</p>	<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 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>

Region	May	June	July
	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 Brewarrina, 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, (Thursday night > Sunday night) it did not create a lot of run off for landholders who rely on ground tanks for stock water.</p>	<p>the shire south of the Karmilaroy Highway from Bourke to the eastern shire boundary of Walgett. With good response of growth (winter herbage).</p> <p>North of the highway has received good soaking rain, but little run off for ground tanks.</p> <p>Still little to no rain recorded around the Goodooga area.</p> <p>What rain there has been will make life easier for those that have benefited from it, it's looking like a wet winter & will make for a great spring if follow up rain arrives in Aug/Sept.</p>	<p>Bourke area - Country side getting dryer, haying off. Livestock in good condition.</p> <p>Reduced number of western regional landholders for July, many were unavailable.</p>

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