28 February 2013

The full report is available from www.daff.gov.au/abares

Summary of key issues

- Heavy rainfall has brought further flooding to southeast Queensland and northeast New South Wales. Eleven regions have been declared eligible for natural disaster assistance.

- Tropical cyclone ‘Rusty’ has made landfall in the Pilbara region of Western Australia. Rainfall in excess of 300 millimetres of rain are forecast today as the system moves inland.

- A severe fire weather warning is current for the Gascoyne Inland forecast district of Western Australia. Recent cooler conditions and rain have reduced the fire threat in Victoria.

- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin have decreased by 214 gigalitres this week and are at 68 per cent of total capacity.

- The world wheat indicator price (US No. 2 hard red winter, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US$322 a tonne in the week ending 26 February 2013, compared with US$331 a tonne in the previous week.

- Saleyard lamb prices rose in the eastern states in the week ending 22 February 2013. The largest rise occurred in Victoria where the lamb indicator price (18–22kg fat score 2–4) rose by around 7 per cent to average 382 cents a kilogram.

- The Queensland young cattle indicator price (330–400 kg live weight C3) increased by around 1 per cent in the week ending 22 February 2013 to 338 cents a kilogram. In New South Wales and Western Australia young cattle prices rose by 2 per cent and 8 per cent to 348 cents and 355 cents a kilogram, respectively.

- Australian milk production was largely unchanged for the first seven months of 2012–13, compared with the same period in 2011–12.

Outlook 2013 conference – registrations open

Registrations are now open for Australia’s premier agricultural economics and commodity forecasting event. Details at www.daff.gov.au/abares/outlook
1. Climate

1.1. Notable events

- A severe warning for heavy rain has been issued for central and southern parts of New South Wales today, 28 February 2103. A rain band with embedded thunderstorms is expected to move slowly across the state, bringing very heavy rain which may lead to flash flooding.

- This week severe weather has affected large areas of New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.

- Following widespread severe weather and heavy rainfall along the New South Wales east coast earlier this week, minor flood warnings are current for the:
  - Richmond and Wilsons Rivers,
  - Clarence River,
  - Culgoa, Birrie, Bokhara and Narran Rivers,
  - Barwon-Darling River, and
  - Murray River upstream of Hume Dam.

- Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) assistance has been made available for 11 New South Wales local government areas affected by the east coast severe weather and flooding event of 23 February 2013.

- Heavy rainfall has also brought flooding to the coastal regions of south-east Queensland and across central Queensland this week, with minor flood warnings currently in place for the:
  - Don and Lower Dawson Rivers,
  - Barker and Barambah Creeks, and Stuart, Boyne and Burnett Rivers,
  - Boyne, Calliope and Kolan Rivers and Baffle Creek,
  - Cherwell and Burrum Rivers,
  - Lockyer, Laidley and Warril Creeks and Bremer and Lower Brisbane Rivers,
  - Lower Thomson and Barcoo Rivers and the Cooper Creek,
  - Upper Condamine River and its tributaries,
  - Mary River,
  - Mooloolah, Maroochy and Noosa Rivers, and
  - Western Queensland Rivers.

- Tropical cyclone ‘Rusty’ made landfall near Port Hedland in the Pilbara region of Western Australia at around 8.00 pm on 27 February 2013. Rainfall in excess of 300 millimetres of rain are forecast for the Pilbara region today as the system moves inland. Heavy falls have already been recorded on the Kimberley coast and over cattle stations in the Pilbara. Only minor damage has been reported so far despite the potentially destructive winds of over 165 km/hr. Flooding and severe weather alerts are still active in the region.

- Parts of eastern and southern New South Wales, affected by summer’s high temperatures and low rainfall, have received much-needed rainfall this week, with falls of up to 50 millimetres recorded in some areas. These falls are likely to improve pasture conditions for grazing enterprises and provide opportunities to plant fodder crops.

- A severe fire weather warning is current for the Gascoyne Inland forecast district of Western Australia.

- While fires are still burning in the southern Grampians and around Mount Hotham and Harrietville, recent cooler conditions and rain have reduced the continuing fire threat in across much of Victoria.

- The apple harvest has begun in Australia’s southeast after a hot and dry growing season. Initial reports indicate good quality fruit but a slightly lower yield due to sunburn.
1.2. Rainfall this week

For the week ending 27 February 2013, light to moderate falls were recorded over much of the continent. Rainfall in excess of 200 millimetres was recorded on the Queensland south-east coast and the New South Wales north coast. Falls of up to 600 millimetres are expected in the Pilbara region of Western Australia as tropical cyclone ‘Rusty’ moves inland. The highest rainfall total for the week was 581 mm at Yarras, west of Port Macquarie in New South Wales. For further information, go to www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml.

Rainfall for the week ending 27 February 2013
1.3. Temperature anomalies this week

Spatial temperature analyses are based on historical weekly temperature data provided by the Bureau of Meteorology. These temperature anomaly maps show the departure of the maximum and the minimum from their respective long-term average. Temperature anomalies are calculated using high resolution gridded datasets from 1911 onwards. For further information on temperature anomalies, go to www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/.

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Minimum temperature anomalies for the week ending 26 February 2013

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1.4. Rainfall outlook

The rainfall forecast below is produced from computer models. As it contains no input from weather forecasters, it is important to also check local forecasts and warnings by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Total forecast rainfall for the period 28 February to March 7 2013
2. Water

2.1. Water availability

Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin decreased this week by 214 gigalitres (GL) and are at 68 per cent of total capacity. This is 13 percentage points or 2963 GL less than this time last year.

Information on irrigation water available in the Murray–Darling Basin from 1 January 2001 to 28 February 2013 is shown above. The top horizontal (red) line indicates the storage level at the similar time last year. The bottom horizontal (orange) line indicates the amount of ‘dead’ or unusable storage.
3. Commodities

3.1. Production and commodities

- The world wheat indicator price (US No. 2 hard red winter, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US$322 a tonne in the week ending 26 February 2013, compared with US$331 a tonne in the previous week.

- The world coarse grains indicator price (US No. 2 yellow corn, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US$302 a tonne for the week ending 27 February 2013, largely unchanged from the previous week.

- The world canola indicator price (Rapeseed, Europe, free on board Hamburg) averaged US$639 a tonne in the week ending 26 February 2013, largely unchanged from the previous week.

- The world cotton indicator price (the Cotlook ‘A’ index) averaged US89.7 cents a pound in the week ending 27 February 2013, largely unchanged from the previous week.

- The world sugar indicator price (Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, No. 11 contract) averaged US18 cents a pound in the week ending 27 February 2013, largely unchanged from the previous week.

- China Cotton Reserve Procurement data indicates that, as at 27 February 2013, the government had purchased around 85 per cent of the 2012–13 cotton crop and added 6.2 million tonnes to the Chinese national reserve.

- Accordingly to the China cotton Association, the average Chinese cotton yield in 2012–13 is estimated at a record 1.4 tonnes a hectare, around 5 per cent higher than last year.

- The Australian canola indicator price (Portland, Victoria) averaged $547 a tonne in the week ending 27 February 2013, largely unchanged from the previous week.

- The wholesale prices of fruit were generally lower in the week ending 23 February 2013. The wholesale prices of avocado (hass), banana (cavendish), pineapple (smoothleaf) and strawberry where lower than the previous week while the blueberry price was higher.

- The wholesale prices of vegetables were generally lower in the week ending 23 February 2013. The prices of bean (round stringless), broccoli, cauliflower, tomato (field gourmet) and iceberg lettuce were lower than the previous week while the price of pumpkin (grey bulk) was largely unchanged.

- Australian milk production was largely unchanged for the first seven months of 2012–13, compared with the same period in 2011–12. Milk production in the smaller milk producing states of Queensland and South Australia (together around 11 per cent of national production) fell by 5.2 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively, while production in Western Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania was marginally lower. Milk production in Victoria (the largest milk producing state with around 66 per cent of national production), rose by 0.5 per cent.

- The Queensland young cattle indicator price (330–400 kg live weight C3) increased by around 1 per cent in the week ending 22 February 2013 to 338 cents a kilogram. In New South Wales and Western Australia young cattle prices rose by 2 per cent and 8 per cent to 348 cents and 355 cents a kilogram, respectively.

- The Australian Eastern Market Indicator price for wool remained largely unchanged in the week ending 21 February 2013 at 1119 cents a kilogram clean. The total number of bales offered at sale increased by 7 per cent compared with previous week.

- Saleyard lamb prices rose in the eastern states in the week ending 22 February 2013. The largest rise occurred in Victoria where the lamb indicator price (18–22kg fat score 2–4) rose by around 7 per cent to average 382 cents a kilogram. In New South Wales and South Australia, the lamb indicator price rose by 6 per cent and 4 per cent to average 405 cents a kilogram and 367 cents a kilogram, respectively. In contrast, the lamb indicator price declined by 8 per cent in Western Australia to average 270 cents a kilogram.
3.2. Recent movements in fruit and vegetable prices

Weekly wholesale prices for selected fruit, Melbourne market

Weekly wholesale prices for selected vegetables, Melbourne market
3.3. Selected world indicator prices

- World Cotton Indicator price (US cents) week ended 27 February 2013
- Australian exchange rate (US dollars) week ended 27 February 2013
- World Sugar Indicator price (US cents) week ended 27 February 2013
- Eastern Market Indicator wool price Australian cents week ended 21 February 2012
3.4. Crop indicator prices

Canola price
week ended 27 February 2013
Portland, Victoria

Feed barley price
week ended 26 February 2013
Sydney, NSW

Grain sorghum price
week ended 26 February 2013
Sydney, NSW

Feed wheat price (GP)
week ended 26 February 2013
Sydney, NSW
3.5. Livestock indicator prices

- **Young cattle indicator price**
  - (330-400 kg live weight C3)
  - Week ended 22 February 2013
  - QLD

- **Lamb indicator price**
  - (18-22 kg fat score 2-4)
  - Week ended 22 February 2013
  - Weighted Average Saleyard Price - Victoria

- **Mutton indicator price**
  - (18-24 kg fat score 2-3)
  - Week ended 22 February 2013
  - Weighted Average Saleyard Price - Victoria

- **Broiler pig indicator price**
  - (GI 60-75 kg)
  - Week ended 22 February 2013
  - NSW
3.6. Global Dairy Trade (GDT) weighted average prices
4. Data attribution

**Climate**

*Bureau of Meteorology*


**Water**

*New South Wales*


*Queensland*


*South Australia*


*Victoria*


**Water trading**


**Commodities**

**Fruit and vegetables**


**Mutton, lambs, wheat, barley and grain sorghum**


**Cattle, mutton, lambs and pigs**


**Canola**

- Weekly Times: hardcopy

**Dairy**

- Global Dairy Trade: [http://www.globaldairytrade.info/Results/HistoricalData.aspx](http://www.globaldairytrade.info/Results/HistoricalData.aspx)