



# Weekly Australian Climate, Water and Agricultural Update



3 May 2012

The full report is available from [www.daff.gov.au/abares](http://www.daff.gov.au/abares)

## Summary of key issues

- Rainfall over the past week has provided increased soil moisture in areas of South Australia for sowing of winter grain crops.
- Favourable seasonal conditions have provided a positive outlook coming into winter with abundant pasture growth assisting herd and flock rebuilding.
- Following recent flooding in some regions of south-eastern Australia there is an increased risk of liver fluke infestation in sheep and Leptospirosis disease in cattle.
- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) increased this week by 92 gigalitres (GL) and remain at approximately 89 per cent of total capacity.
- Most fruit and vegetable wholesale prices were either lower or largely unchanged in the week ending 28 April 2012.
- The world wheat indicator price (US no. 2 hard red winter, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$274 a tonne in the week ending 1 May 2012, compared with US\$272 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world sugar indicator price (Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no. 11 contract) averaged around US21 cents a pound in the week ending 2 May 2012, 4.3 per cent lower than in the previous week.
- The Australian canola indicator price (Portland, Victoria) averaged \$512 a tonne in the week ending 30 April 2012, compared with \$522 a tonne in the previous week.
- Australian milk production increased by 4 per cent year on year for the first nine months of 2011-12 reflecting improved seasonal conditions in south eastern Australia.
- The Queensland young cattle indicator price (330-400 kg live weight c3) rose by 7 cents to 374 cents a kilogram in the week ending 27 April 2012. Young cattle prices were lower in all other states. Medium cow and heavy steer prices were lower in all states.
- Australian beef and veal exports in April 2012 were around 72 000 tonnes (shipped weight), 3 per cent lower year on year.
- Saleyard lamb prices rose in all states in the week ending 27 April 2012. The largest increase was in New South Wales where the indicator price rose by 12 per cent to 442 cents per kilogram. The indicator price for lamb increased by 5 per cent in South Australia to 422 cents and 1 per cent in Victoria to 437 cents.

# 1. Climate

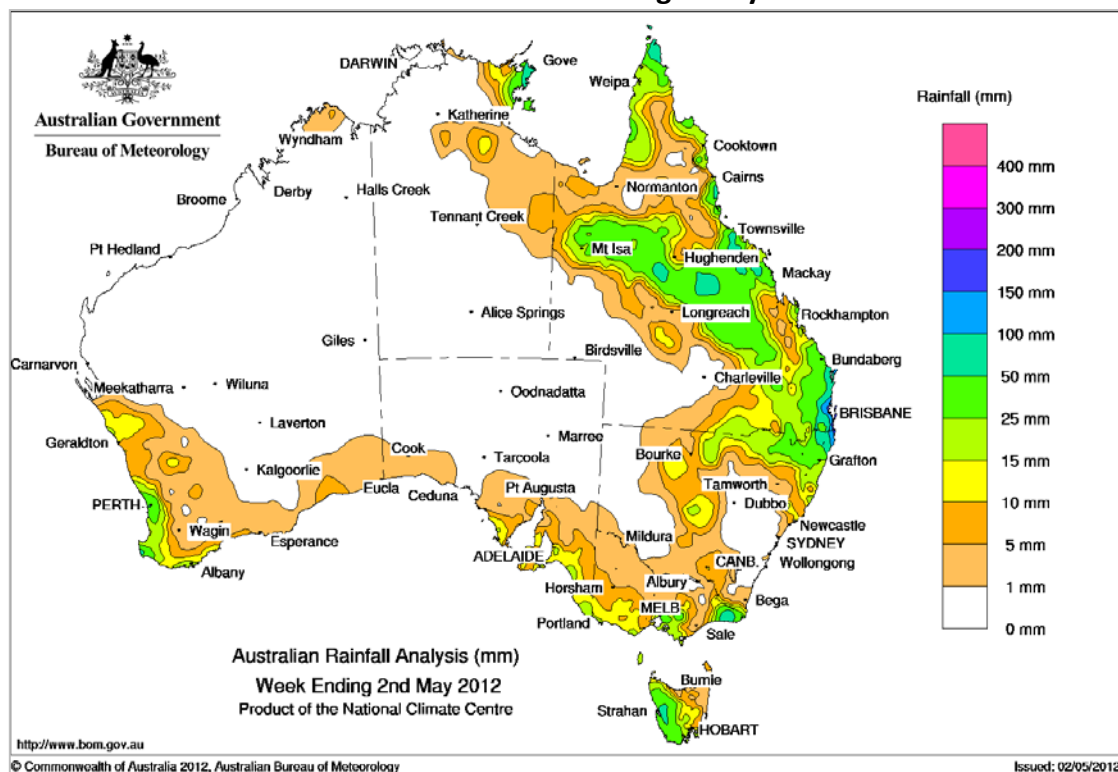
## 1.1. Notable events

- For the week ending 2 May 2012, rainfall was mostly recorded across northeast Australia and along the southern coast. The highest measured rainfall total for the week was 244 millimetres at Tweed Heads, in northern New South Wales.
- Rainfall in parts of South Australia over the past week has provided increased soil moisture for sowing winter grain crops; however producers further east in Victoria are still waiting for a rainfall break.
- Favourable seasonal conditions have given many farming enterprises a positive outlook coming into winter. Abundant pasture growth has assisted herd and flock re-building. Cattle recently exported from Western Australia were reported to all be in the top weight range.
- Following on from last year's outbreaks of rust in faba bean crops in Victoria, agronomists have warned that the recent mild summer conditions may allow the disease to persist, and early monitoring of crops for fungal outbreaks would be beneficial.
- Seasonal conditions have also led to an increase in feral animal and pest numbers. There are reports of increases of feral animal (pigs, cats, foxes, and wild dogs) numbers in western Queensland and issues with wild dogs and a potential mouse plague in Victoria.
- Following recent flooding in some regions of southeast Australia there is an increased risk of liver fluke infestation in sheep and Leptospirosis disease in cattle. Veterinarians have warned to be proactive in combating the diseases.

## 1.2. Rainfall this week

For the week ending 2 May 2012, rainfall was mostly recorded across northeast Australia and along the southern coast. For further information, go to [www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml).

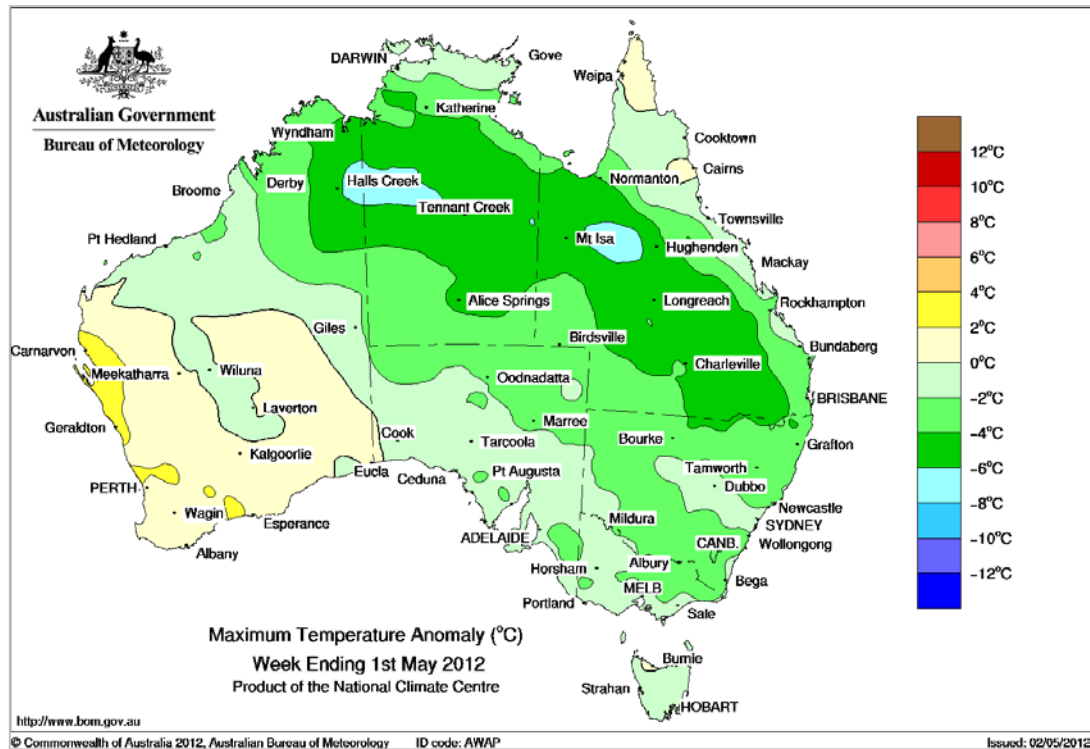
**Rainfall for the week ending 2 May 2012**



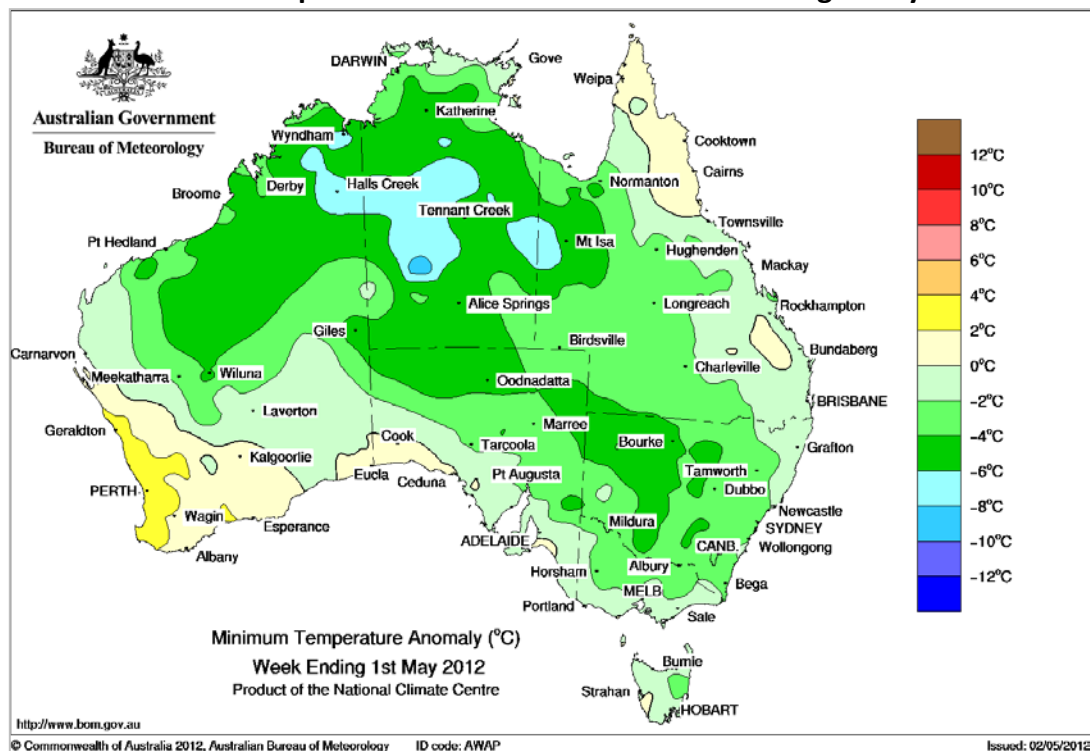
### 1.3. Temperature anomalies this week

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 minimum from the 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/](http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/).

**Maximum temperature anomalies for the week ending 1 May 2012**



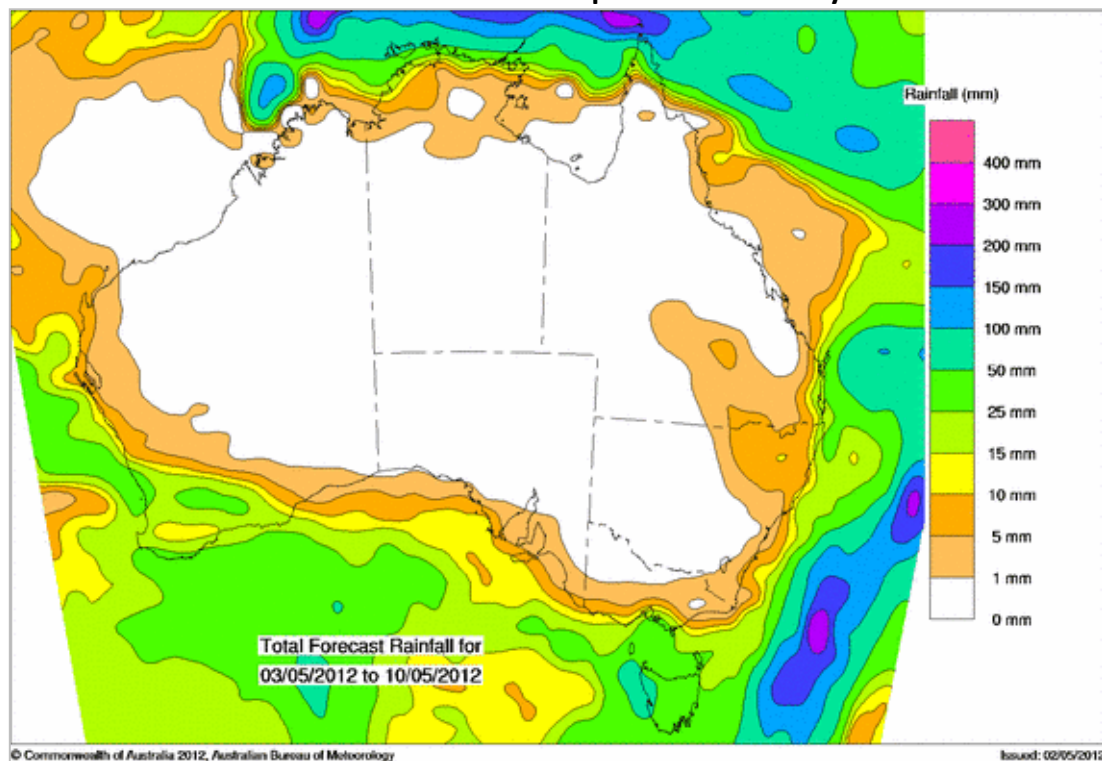
**Minimum temperature anomalies for the week ending 1 May 2012**



## 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 3 to 10 May 2012**



## 2. Water

### 2.1. Water availability

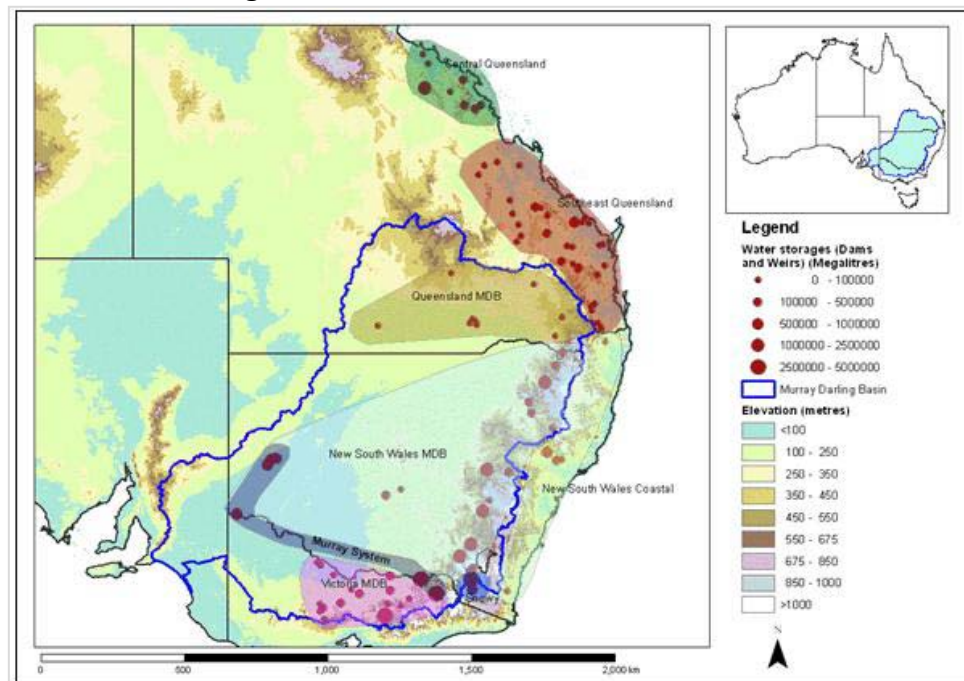
- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) increased this week by 92 gigalitres (GL) and remain at approximately 89 per cent of total capacity. This is 6 percentage points or 1474 GL more than this time last year.

### 2.2. Water storages

Changes in regional water storage for April 2012 and the previous 12 months are summarised in the table and graphs below (current at 3 May 2012).

Region	Total capacity (GL)	Current volume (GL)	Current volume (%)	Monthly change (GL)	Monthly change (%)	Annual change (GL)
Murray-Darling Basin (MDB)	22557	20129	89	+92	0	+1474
Snowy Scheme	5744	3646	63	-8	0	+1345
Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA)	9352	7840	81	+350	+4	+437
Queensland MDB	186	168	90	-2	-1	-14
Central Queensland	3154	3138	99	-8	0	0
South-east Queensland	3517	3455	98	-5	0	-41
New South Wales MDB	13884	12830	92	+255	+2	+718
Coastal New South Wales	1074	1068	99	0	0	+192
Victoria MDB	8488	7132	84	-155	-2	+769

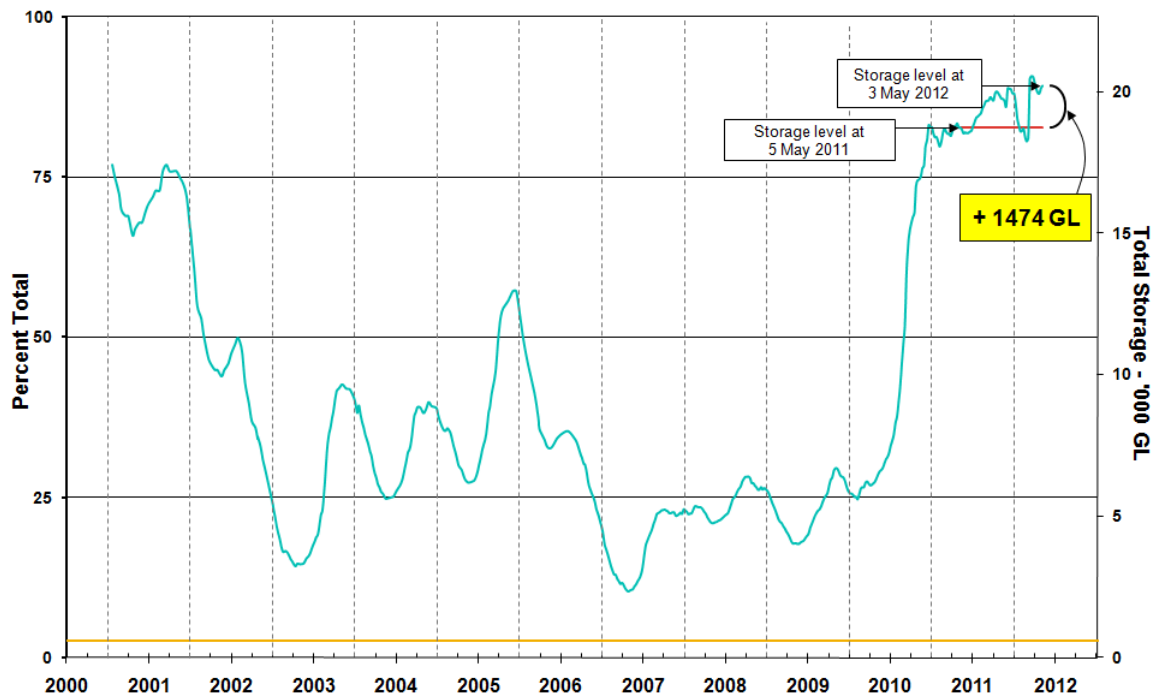
Water storages in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria



The blue line indicates the extent of the Murray–Darling Basin and the shaded areas denote the coverage of the individual reporting regions.

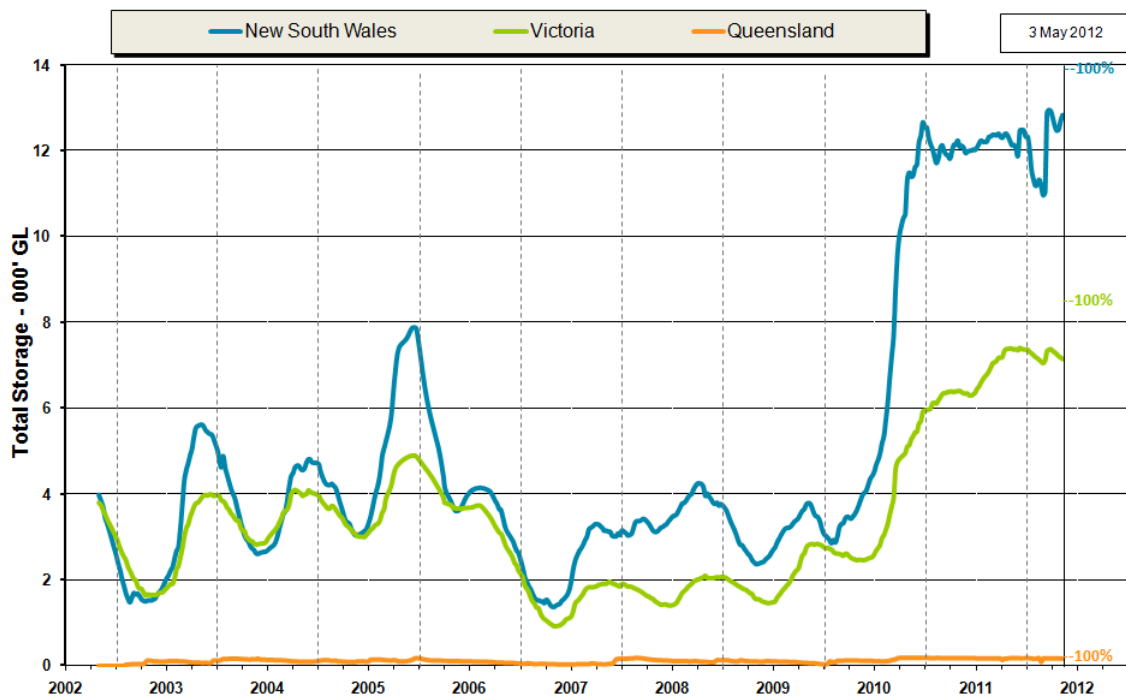


## Water storages in the Murray–Darling Basin (NSW, Victoria and Queensland)



Information on irrigation water available in the Murray–Darling Basin from 1 January 2001 to 3 May 2012 is shown above. The green line indicates the storage level at the same time last year. The orange line indicates the amount of 'dead' or unusable storage.

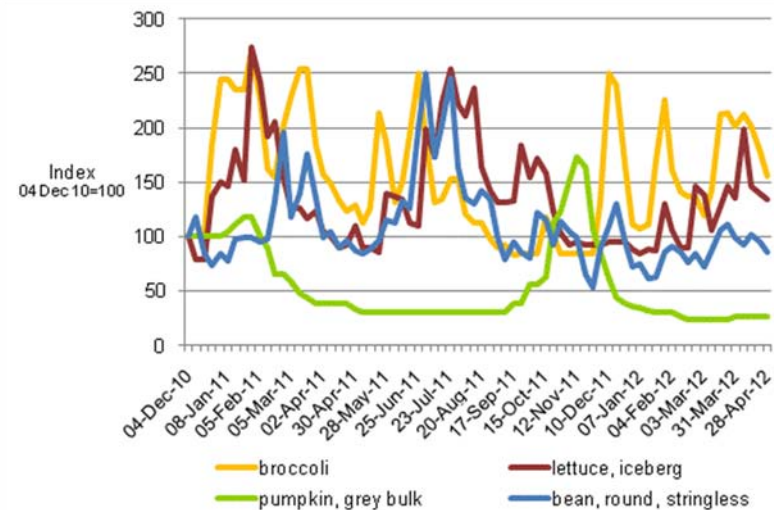
## Water storages in the Murray–Darling Basin by state (NSW, Victoria and Queensland)



## 3. Commodities

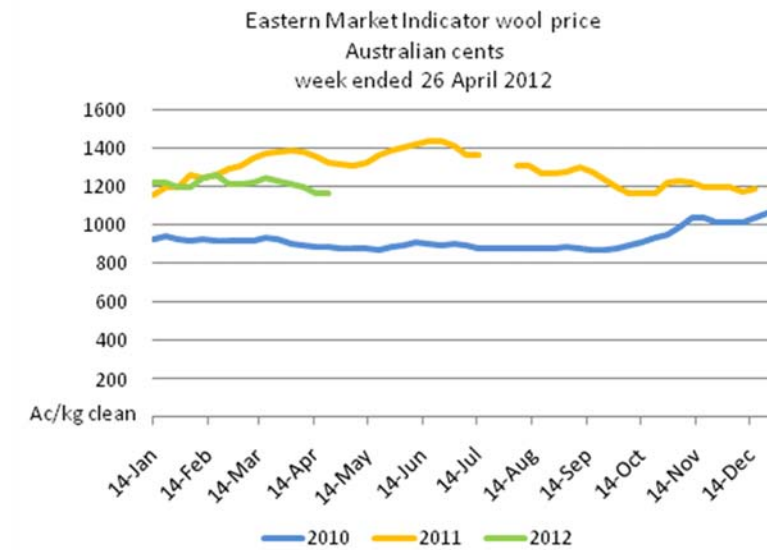
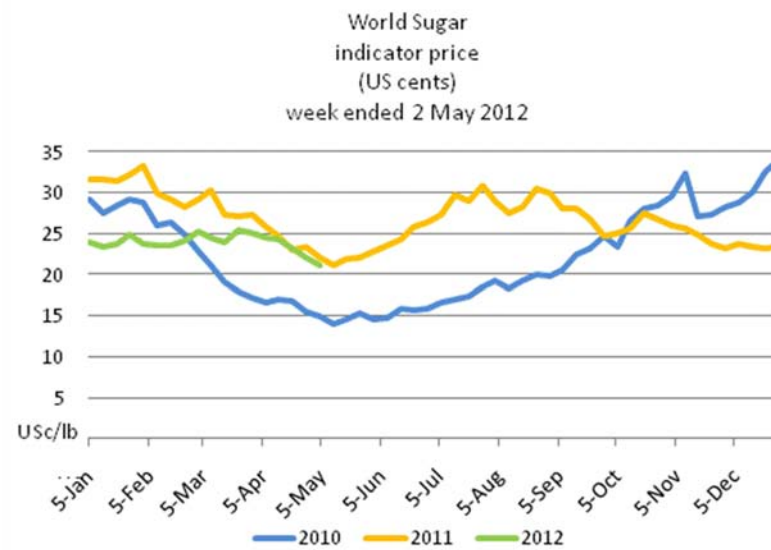
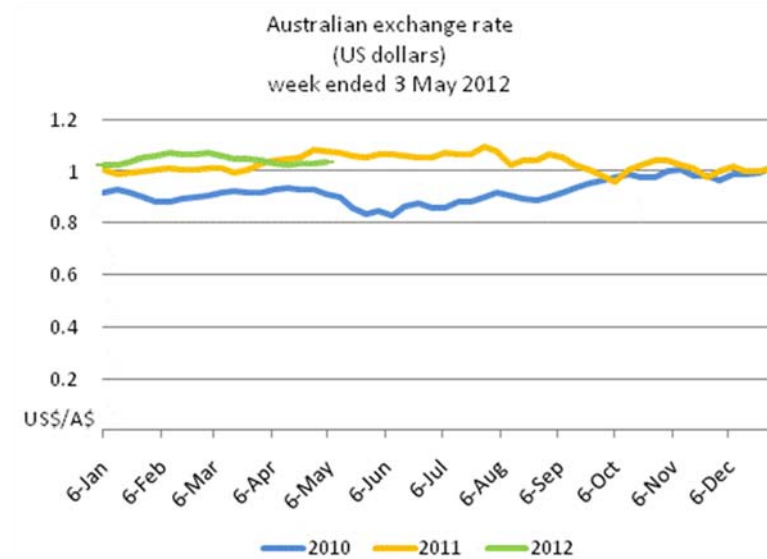
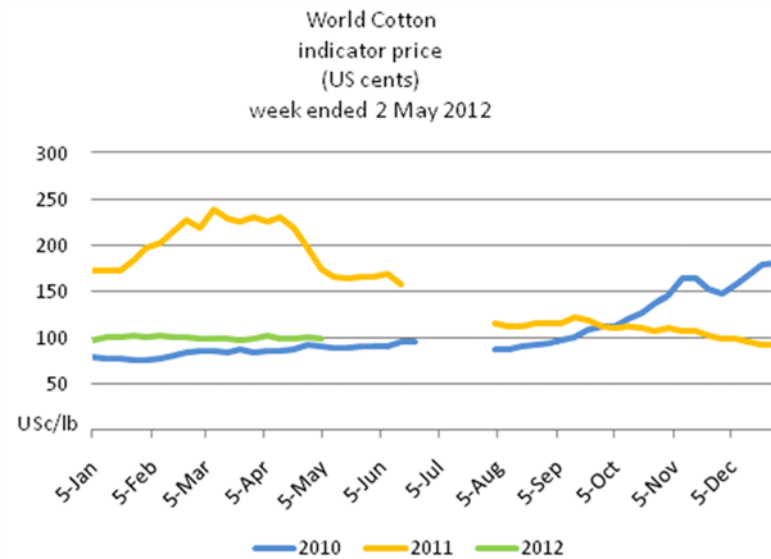
### 3.1. Production and commodities

- Wholesale prices for watermelon and banana were higher in the week ending 28 April 2012, but lower for rockmelon, orange (navel) and avocado (hass).
- Wholesale prices for cauliflower, tomato (field gourmet), broccoli, iceberg lettuce and bean (round stringless) were lower in the week ending 28 April 2012. Wholesale prices for onions (brown), potato (white, washed) and pumpkin (grey bulk) were largely unchanged.
- The world cotton indicator price (the Cotlook 'A' index) averaged 99.2 US cents a pound in the week ending 2 May 2012, compared with 173.5 US cents a pound in the same week last year.
- The world sugar indicator price (Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no. 11 contract) averaged around US21 cents a pound in the week ending 2 May 2012, 4.3 per cent lower than in the previous week.
- The world canola indicator price (Rapeseed, Europe, fob Hamburg) averaged US\$667 a tonne in the week ending 1 May 2012, which is 5 per cent lower than this time last year when the price was US\$703 a tonne.
- The Australian canola indicator price (Portland, Victoria) averaged \$512 a tonne in the week ending 30 April 2012, compared with \$522 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world wheat indicator price (US no. 2 hard red winter, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$274 a tonne in the week ending 1 May 2012, compared with US\$272 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world coarse grains indicator price (US no. 2 yellow corn, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$281 a tonne for the week ending 2 May 2012, compared with US\$268 a tonne in the previous week.
- Australian milk production increased 4 per cent year on year for the first nine months of 2011-12 reflecting improved seasonal conditions in south eastern Australia. Milk production in both Victoria and New South Wales increased by 5 per cent while production in Tasmanian rose by 10 percent. Milk production fell marginally in South Australia and Queensland.
- The Queensland young cattle indicator price (330-400 kg live weight c3) rose by 7 cents to 374 cents a kilogram in the week ending 27 April 2012. Young cattle prices were lower in all other states. Medium cow and heavy steer prices were lower in all states.
- Australian beef and veal exports in April 2012 were around 72 000 tonnes (shipped weight), 3 per cent lower than April 2011. Japan and the Republic of Korea accounted for 25 000 tonnes and 8 000 tonnes respectively, 6 per cent and 31 per cent lower than April last year. Shipments to the United States were 45 per cent higher than April 2011 at 19 000 tonnes.
- Saleyard lamb prices rose in all states in the week ending 27 April 2012. The largest increase was in New South Wales where the indicator price rose by 12 per cent to 442 cents per kilogram. The indicator price for lamb increased by 5 per cent in South Australia to 422 cents and 1 per cent in Victoria to 437 cents. The price rises followed a significant decline in numbers offered for sale as a result of the mid-week public holiday.

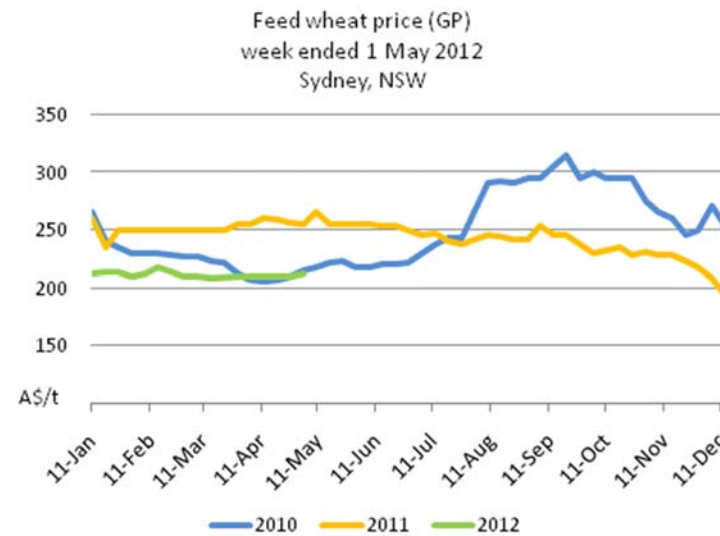
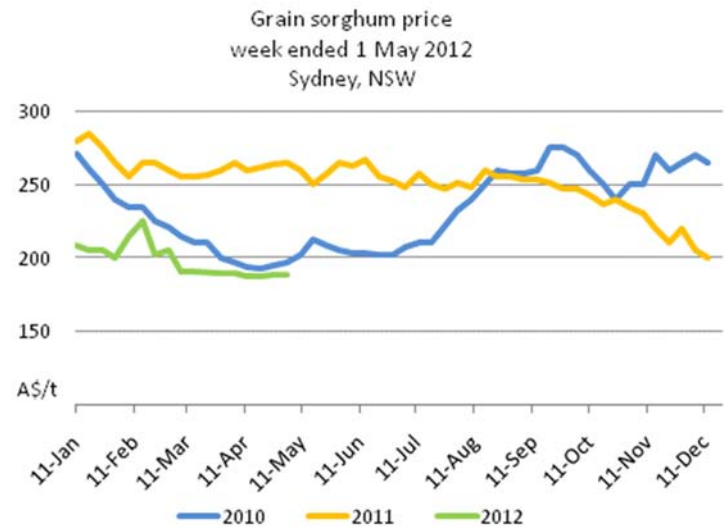
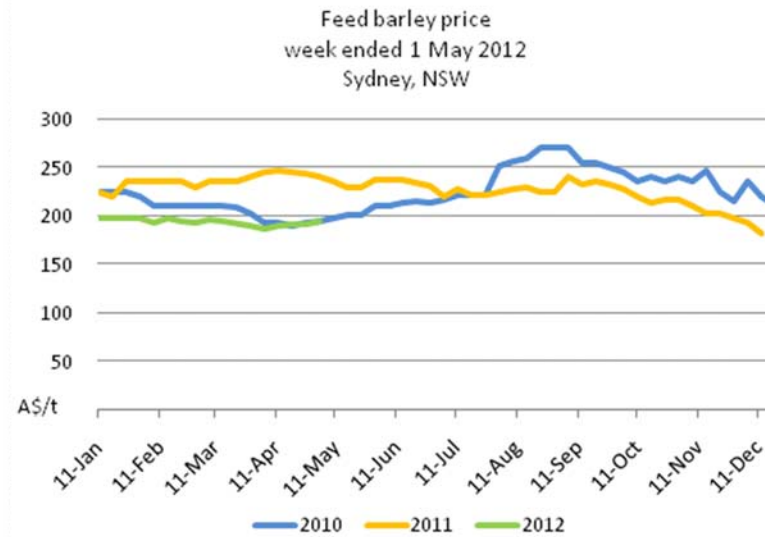
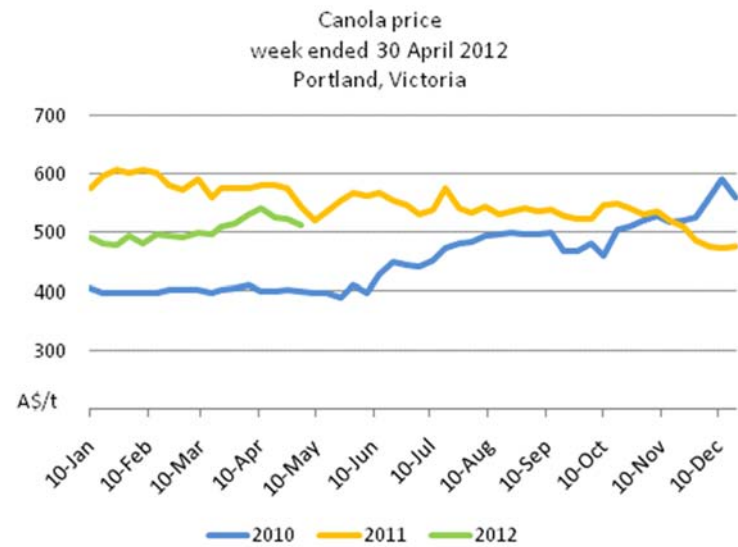




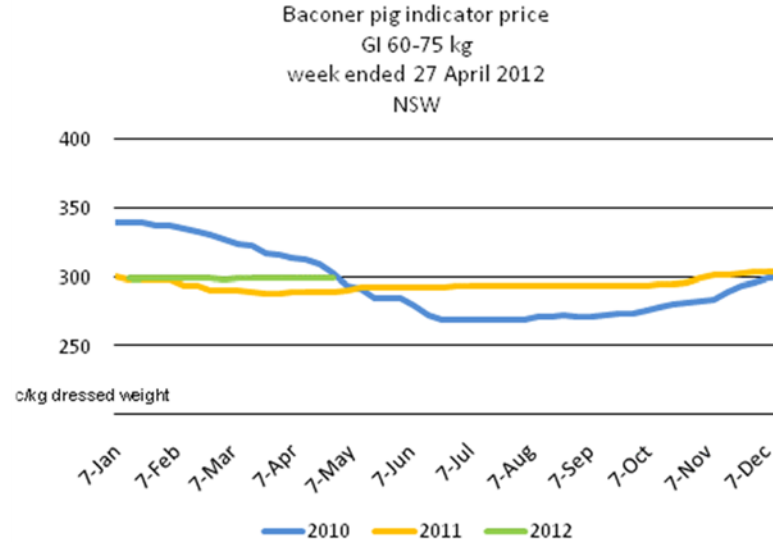
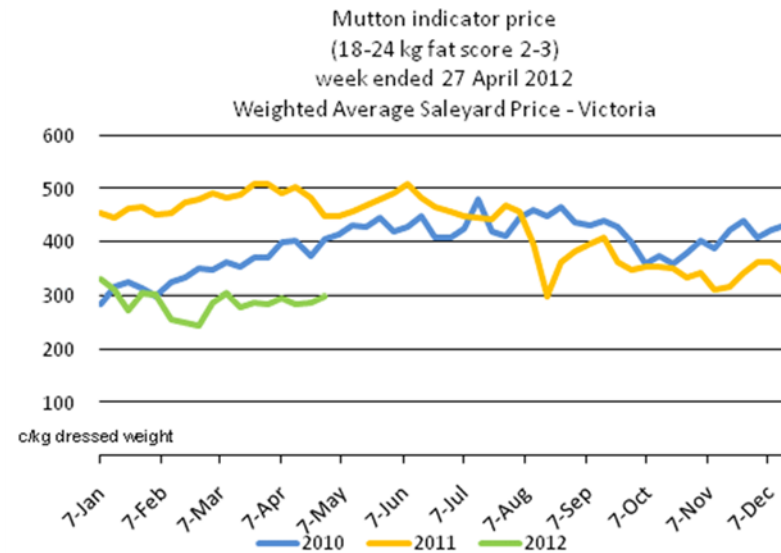
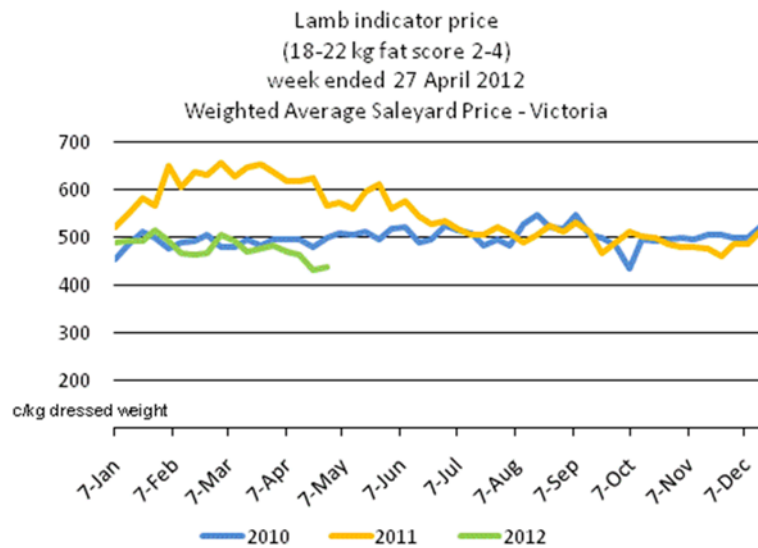
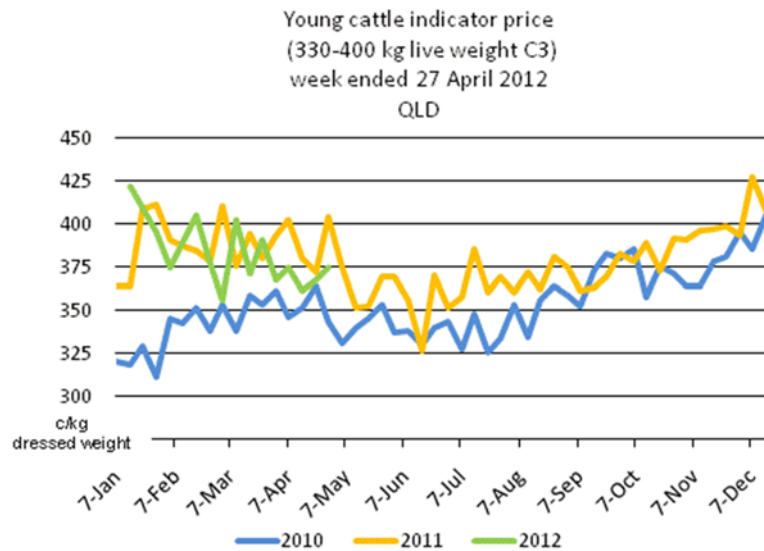
### 3.3. Selected world indicator prices\*



### 3.4. Crop indicator prices



### 3.5. Livestock indicator prices



## 4. Data attribution

### Climate

#### Bureau of Meteorology

- Weekly rainfall totals: [www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/rain/index.jsp](http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/rain/index.jsp)
- Monthly and last 3-months rainfall percentiles: [www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/](http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/)
- Temperature anomalies: [www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/](http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/)
- Rainfall forecast: [www.bom.gov.au/jsp/watl/rainfall/pme.jsp](http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/watl/rainfall/pme.jsp)
- Seasonal outlook: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead)
- Drought statement: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/drought/drought.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/drought/drought.shtml)
- ENSO Wrap-Up: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/)
- Soil moisture (BoM, CSIRO and the former Bureau of Rural Sciences): [www.eoc.csiro.au/awap/](http://www.eoc.csiro.au/awap/)

### Water

#### New South Wales

- New South Wales Water Information: <http://waterinfo.nsw.gov.au/>
- New South Wales Office of Water, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water: [www.water.nsw.gov.au/Home/default.aspx](http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/Home/default.aspx)
- Available water determinations register: [www.wix.nsw.gov.au/wma/DeterminationSearch.jsp?selectedRegister=Determination](http://www.wix.nsw.gov.au/wma/DeterminationSearch.jsp?selectedRegister=Determination)
- Snowy Hydro: [www.snowyhydro.com.au/lakeLevels.asp?pageID=47&parentID=61&grandParentID=4](http://www.snowyhydro.com.au/lakeLevels.asp?pageID=47&parentID=61&grandParentID=4)

#### Queensland

- Sunwater: [www.sunwater.com.au](http://www.sunwater.com.au)
- seqwater: <http://seqwater.com.au>

#### South Australia

- SA Water: [www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Environment/TheRiverMurray/River+Murray+Levels.htm](http://www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Environment/TheRiverMurray/River+Murray+Levels.htm)
- South Australian Department of Water: [www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au/](http://www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au/)

#### Victoria

- Goulburn–Murray Water: [www.g-mwater.com.au](http://www.g-mwater.com.au)

#### Water trading

- Waterexchange: [www.waterexchange.com.au](http://www.waterexchange.com.au)

### Commodities

#### Fruit and vegetables

- Datafresh: [www.datafresh.com.au](http://www.datafresh.com.au)

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

- The Land: hardcopy or online at <http://theland.farmonline.com.au/markets.aspx>

#### Cattle, mutton, lambs and pigs

- Meat and Livestock Australia: [www.mla.com.au/Prices-and-markets](http://www.mla.com.au/Prices-and-markets)

#### Canola

- Weekly Times: hardcopy