



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry  
ABARES

# Weekly Australian Climate, Water and Agricultural Update



25 October 2012

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

## Summary of key issues

- The Bureau of Meteorology predicts a warmer summer with average to above-average rainfall across most of Australia. An El Niño event this summer is unlikely.
- Lightning strikes have ignited hundreds of fires in central Australia, northern Queensland and far west New South Wales, burning thousands of hectares of grazing land.
- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin decreased by 144 gigalitres this week and are at 97 per cent of total capacity.
- The world wheat indicator price (US No. 2 hard red winter, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$377 a tonne in the week ending 23 October 2012, compared with US\$373 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world coarse grains indicator price (US No. 2 yellow corn, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$325 a tonne in the week ending 24 October 2012, compared with US\$321 a tonne in the previous week.
- Vegetable wholesale prices were generally lower in the week ending 20 October 2012. Fruit prices were mostly steady or lower, apart from small increases for banana and pineapple.
- The Australian Eastern Market Indicator price for wool rose by 4 per cent in the week ending 18 October 2012 to 1014 cents a kilogram clean.

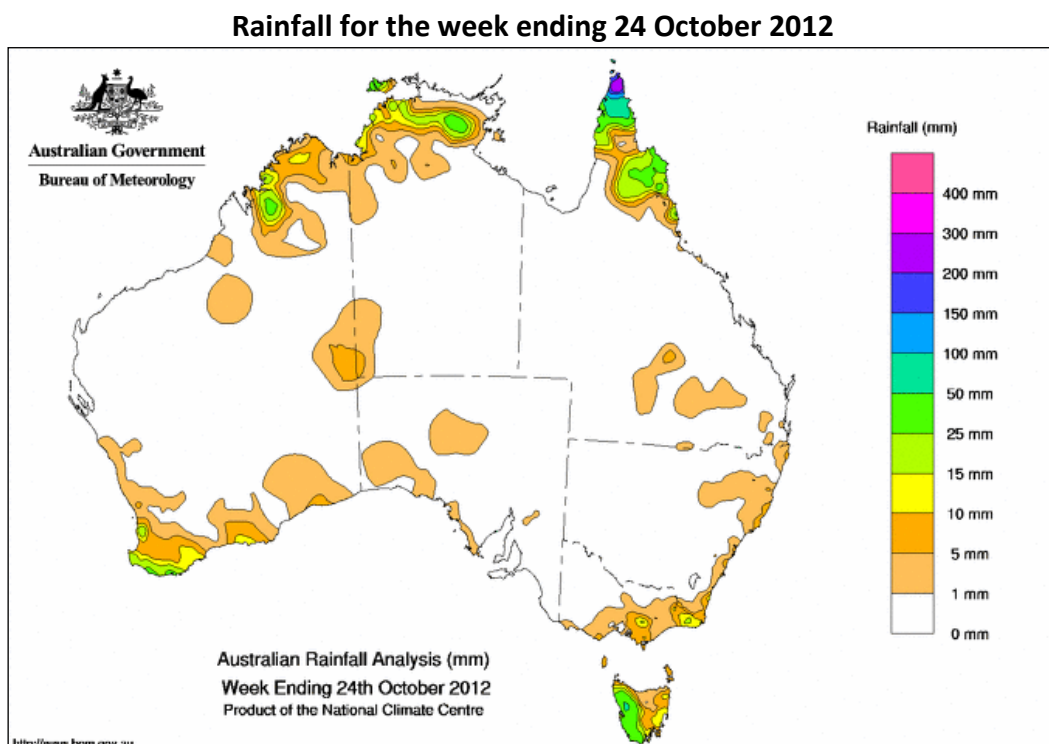
# 1. Climate

## 1.1. Notable events

- El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) indicators are showing neutral values, suggesting the El Niño event that was predicted for this summer may not occur (Bureau of Meteorology 'ENSO Wrap-Up' 23 October 2012). In the absence of an El Niño event, the Bureau of Meteorology predicts a warmer summer with average to above-average rainfall across most of Australia.
- Lightning strikes have ignited hundreds of fires in central Australia, northern Queensland and far west New South Wales, burning thousands of hectares of grazing land and causing damage to cattle yards and other infrastructure. Graziers are assessing stock and pastures losses; the full extent is not yet known.
- The record-breaking run of high temperatures in central Australia came to an end yesterday (24 October 2012) with the arrival of a cool change. This is expected to assist fire-fighting efforts in the region.
- GrainCorp reported a positive start to the harvest in Queensland and northern NSW on 23 October 2012, where hot conditions have advanced ripening. Early deliveries of wheat and canola are of good quality.
- Patchy, light rain has fallen in Western Australia's agricultural regions in the past week, bringing temporary relief from hot spring temperatures and a slight reduction to bushfire risk.

## 1.2. Rainfall this week

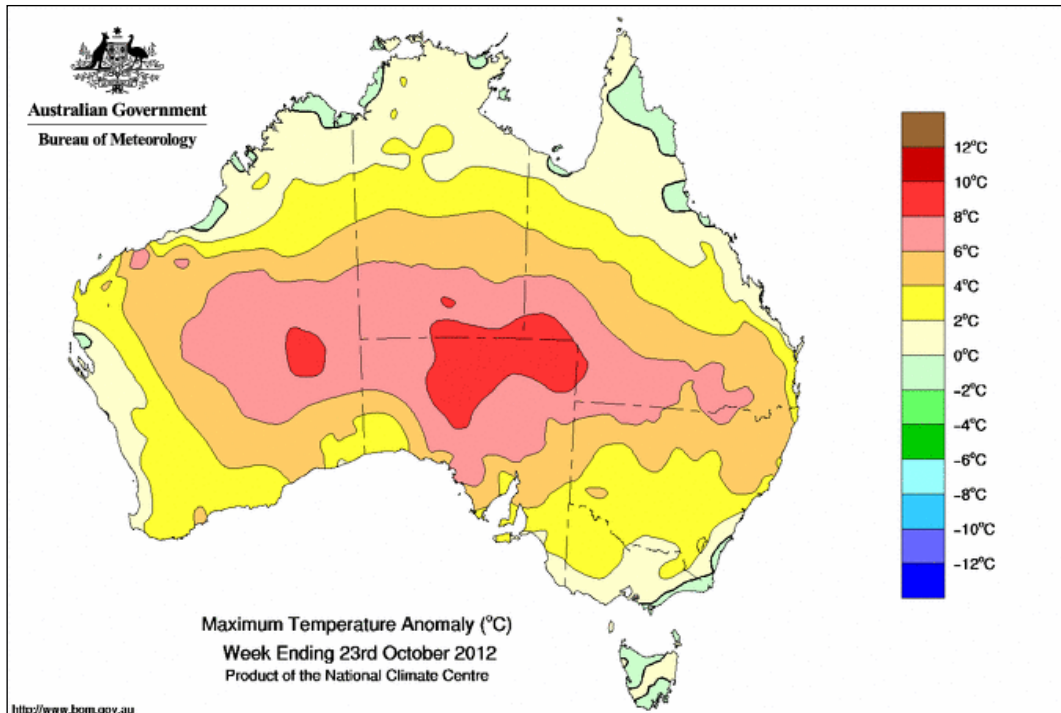
For the week ending 24 October 2012, light, patchy rain was scattered across the continent. Medium to heavy falls were recorded in the far north with more than 200 mm falling on the tip of Cape York. Moderate falls were recorded in Tasmania and south-west Western Australia. The highest measured rainfall total for the week was 118.6 millimetres at Horn Island in the Torres Strait. For further information, go to [www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml).



### 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/).

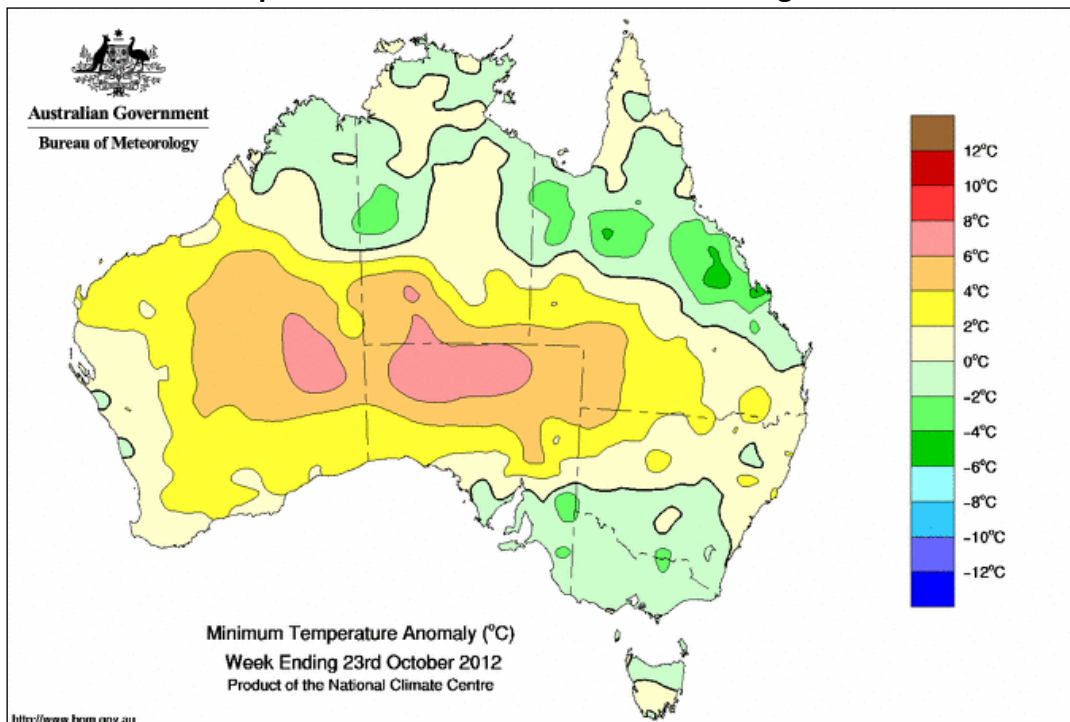
**Maximum temperature anomalies for the week ending 23 October 2012**



©Commonwealth of Australia 2012, Australia Bureau of Meteorology

Issued: 24/10/2012

**Minimum temperature anomalies for the week ending 23 October 2012**



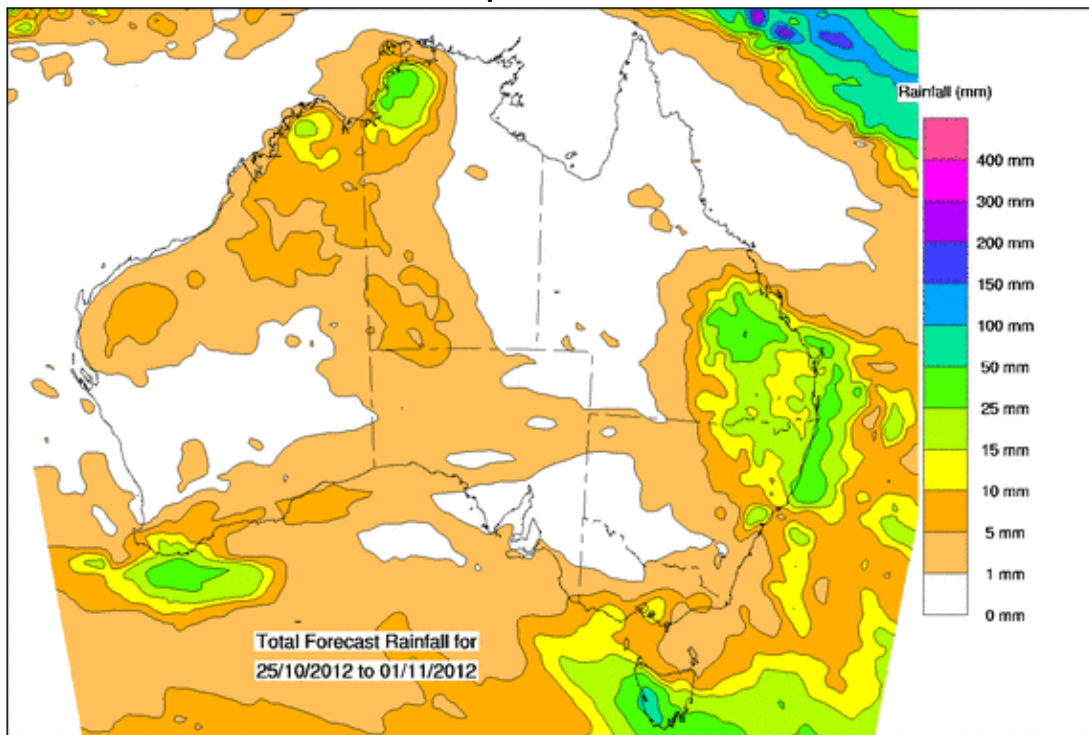
©Commonwealth of Australia 2012, Australia Bureau of Meteorology

Issued: 24/10/2012

## 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 25 October to 1 November 2012**

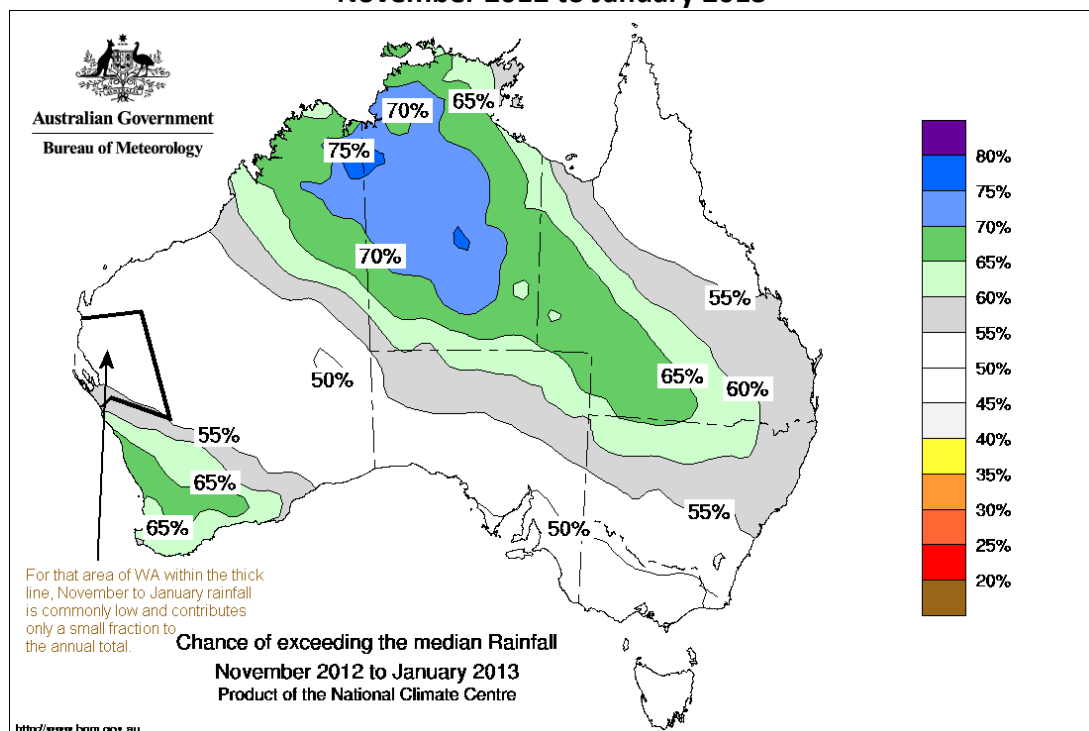


©Commonwealth of Australia 2012, Australia Bureau of Meteorology

Issued: 24/10/2012

## 1.5. Seasonal outlook

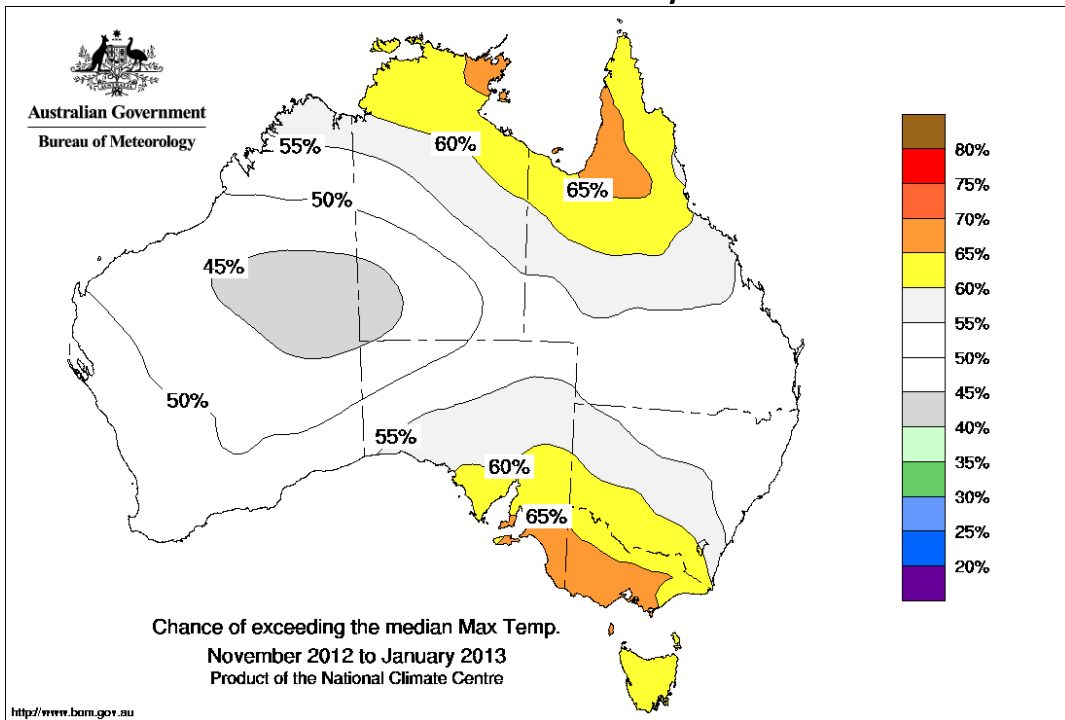
**Chance of exceeding the median rainfall  
November 2012 to January 2013**



©Commonwealth of Australia 2012, Australia Bureau of Meteorology

Issued: 24/10/2012

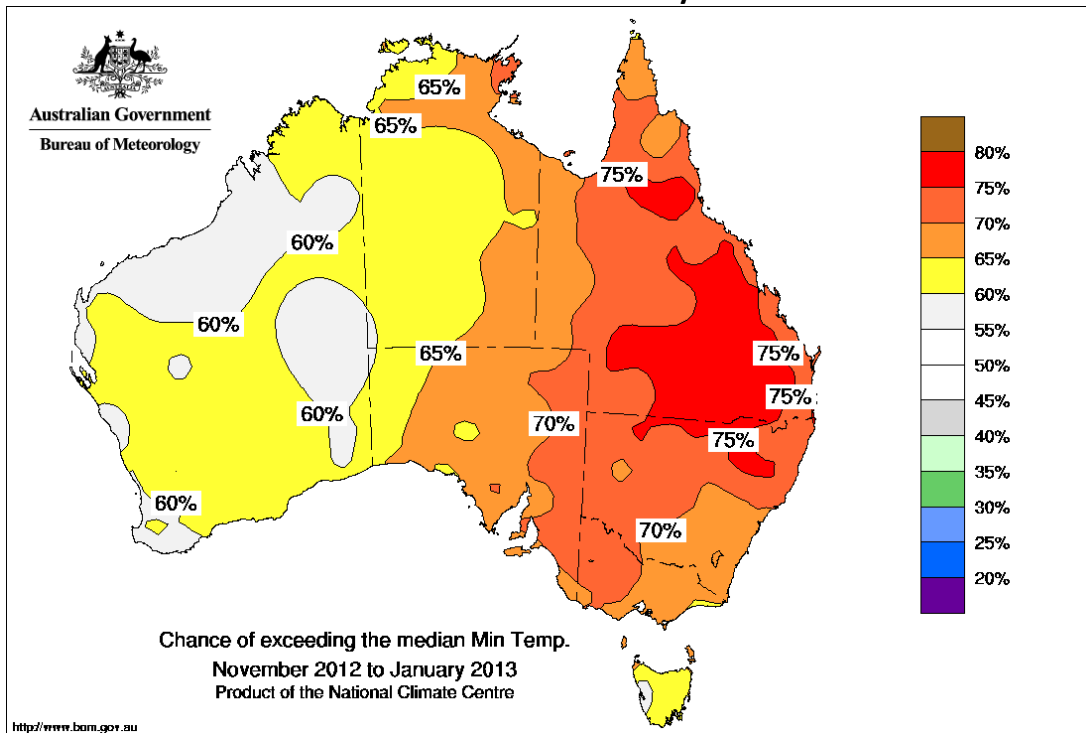
**Chance of exceeding the median maximum temperature  
November 2012 to January 2013**



©Commonwealth of Australia 2012, Australia Bureau of Meteorology

Issued: 24/10/2012

**Chance of exceeding the median minimum temperature  
November 2012 to January 2013**



©Commonwealth of Australia 2012, Australia Bureau of Meteorology

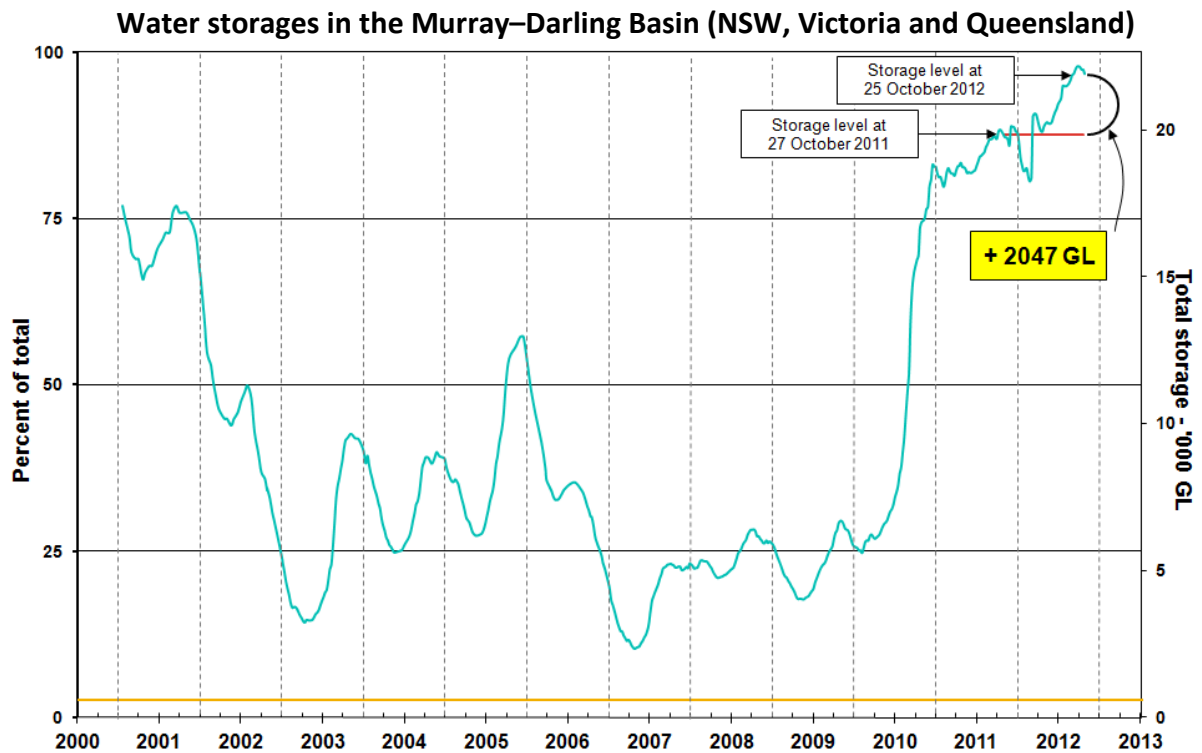
Issued: 24/10/2012

## 2. Water

### 2.1. Water availability

Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) decreased this week by 144 gigalitres (GL) and are at 97 per cent of total capacity. This is 9 percentage points, or 2047 GL, more than this time last year.

### 2.2. Water storages



Information on irrigation water available in the Murray–Darling Basin from 1 January 2001 to 25 October 2012 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.

## 2.3. Water allocations

The current water allocations for the 2012–13 water trading season for licence holders in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia water systems are summarised in the following table.

	Allocations at 17 October 2012 (%)	Allocations at 24 October 2012 (%)
<b>NSW Murray Valley</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	100*	100*
<b>NSW Murrumbidgee Valley</b>		
High security	95	95
General security	64*	64*
<b>NSW Lower Darling</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	100*	100*
<b>NSW Macquarie Valley</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	58*	58*
<b>NSW Hunter Valley</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	100	100
<b>NSW Lachlan Valley</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	0*	0*
<b>NSW Lower Namoi</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	32*	32*
<b>NSW Upper Namoi</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	100*	100*
<b>NSW Gwydir Valley</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	150*	150*
<b>NSW Border Rivers</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	100	100
<b>NSW Peel Valley</b>		
High security	100	100
General security	78*	78*
<b>Victoria Murray Valley</b>		
High reliability	95	95
Low reliability	0	0
<b>Victoria Goulburn</b>		
High reliability	100	100
Low reliability	0	0

	Allocations at 17 October 2012 (%)	Allocations at 24 October 2012 (%)
<b>Victoria Campaspe</b>		
High reliability	100	100
Low reliability	68	68
<b>Victoria Loddon</b>		
High reliability	100	100
Low reliability	0	0
<b>Victoria Bullarook</b>		
High reliability	100	100
Low reliability	100	100
<b>Victoria Broken</b>		
High reliability	100	100
Low Reliability	0	0
<b>South Australia Murray Valley</b>		
High security	100	100

\*Carryover water may also be available.



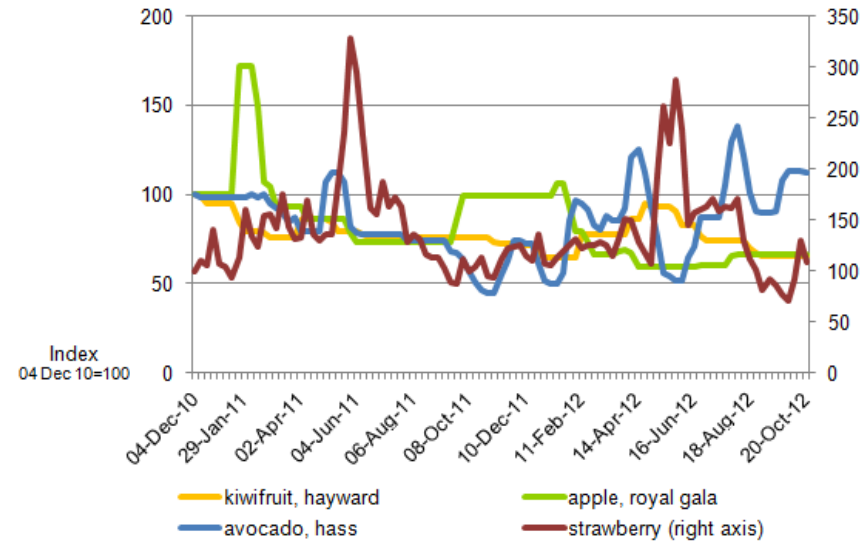
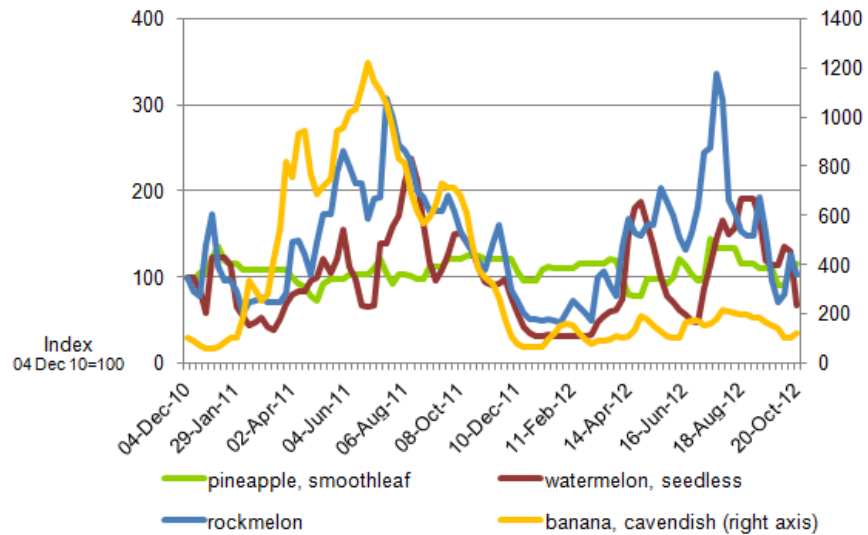
## 3. Commodities

### 3.1. Production and commodities

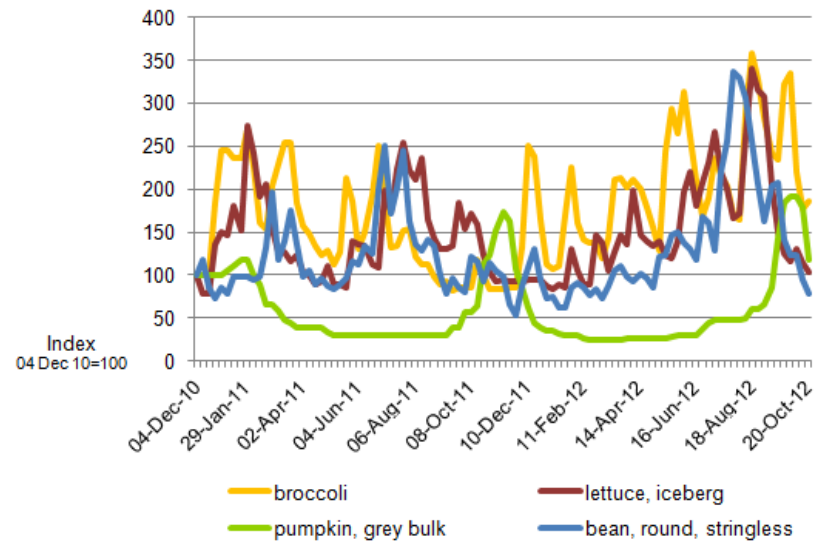
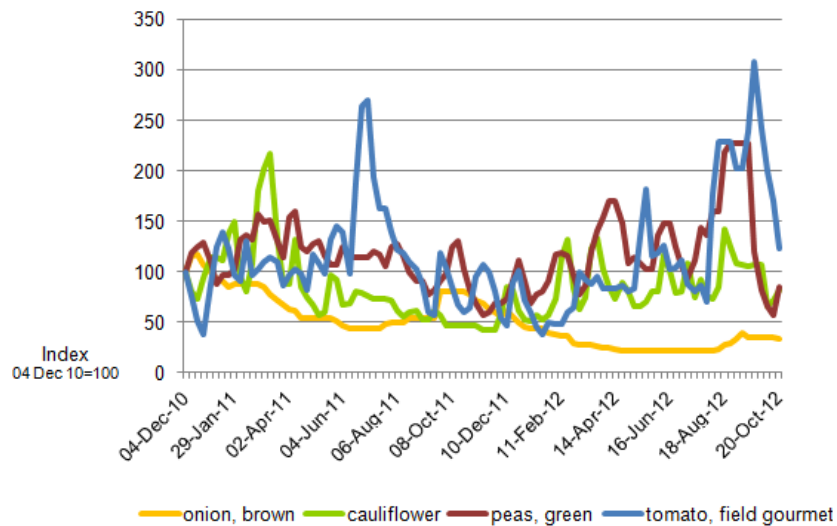
- The world wheat indicator price (US No. 2 hard red winter, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$377 a tonne in the week ending 23 October 2012, compared with US\$373 a tonne in the previous week.
- The government of Ukraine announced that, through cooperation with exporters, wheat exports in 2012–13 could increase from 4 million tonnes to 5 million tonnes.
- The world coarse grains indicator price (US No. 2 yellow corn, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$325 a tonne for the week ending 24 October 2012, compared with US\$321 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world canola indicator price (Rapeseed, Europe, free on board Hamburg) averaged US\$638 a tonne in the week ending 23 October 2012, compared with US\$626 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world cotton indicator price (the Cotlook 'A' index) averaged US84.6 cents a pound in the week ending 24 October 2012, compared with US81.1 cents a pound in the previous week.
- The world sugar indicator price (Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, No. 11 contract) averaged US19.9 cents a pound in the week ending 24 October 2012, similar to the previous week.
- Wholesale prices of avocado (hass), rockmelon, strawberry and watermelon (seedless) were lower in the week ending 20 October 2012, but there were small price increases for banana (cavendish) and smoothleaf pineapple.
- Vegetable wholesale prices were generally lower in the week ending 20 October 2012, with the exception of cauliflower and green pea. Tomato wholesale prices are returning to more normal levels after a period of high prices due to unusually cool weather in key producing regions.
- The Queensland young cattle indicator price (300-400 kg live weight C3) rose by 1 per cent to 340 cents per kilogram in the week ending 19 October 2012, compared with the previous week. In other states, the young cattle indicator rose 4 per cent in South Australia to 334 cents per kilogram while declining in both New South Wales (down 2 per cent) and Victoria (1 per cent) to 364 cents and 356 cents, respectively.
- Saleyard lamb prices fell in all states in the week ending 19 October 2012. The largest decline was in Western Australian where the lamb indicator price (18-22kg fat score 2-4) fell by 11 per cent to 270 cents per kilogram. The fall largely reflects a 54 per cent increase in the number of lambs offered for sale over the previous week and continued weak buyer demand. In other states, the lamb indicator price declined by 4 per cent in both New South Wales and Victoria and by 1 per cent in South Australia.
- The Australian Eastern Market Indicator price for wool rose by 4 per cent in the week ending 18 October 2012 to 1014 cents a kilogram clean. The total number of bales offered at sale was 50 585 bales, 36 per cent higher than previous week and the second largest offering for the 2012–13 season to date.

### 3.2. Recent movements in fruit and vegetable prices

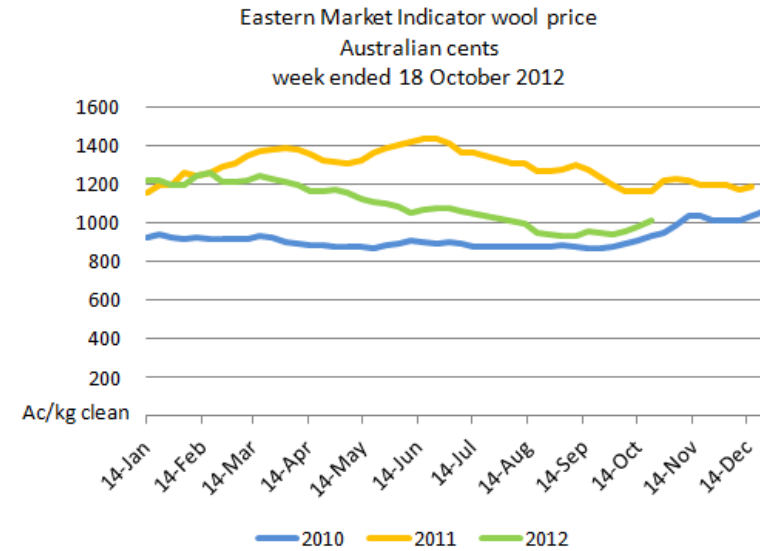
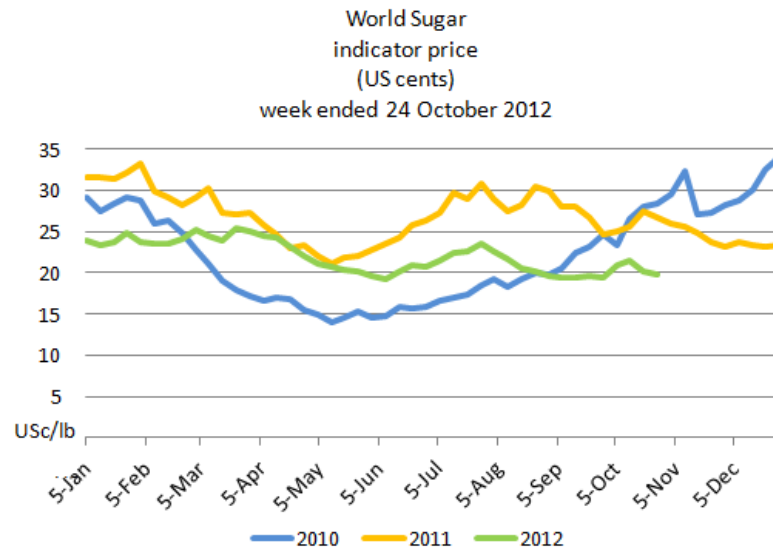
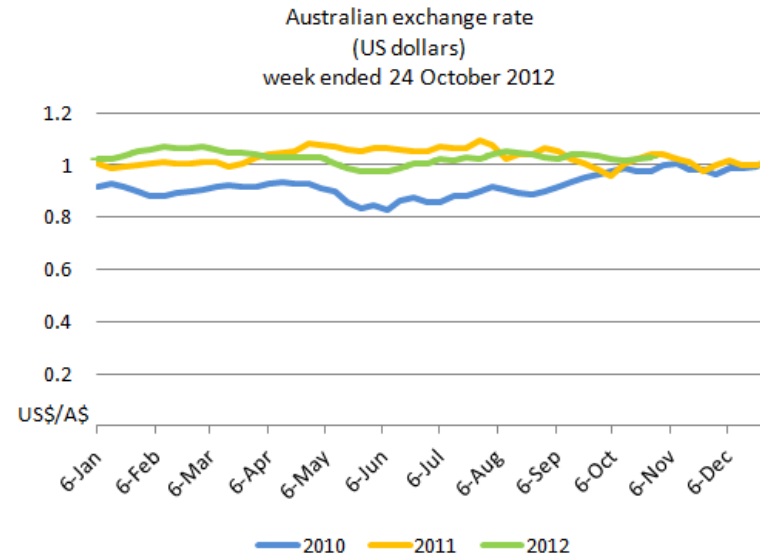
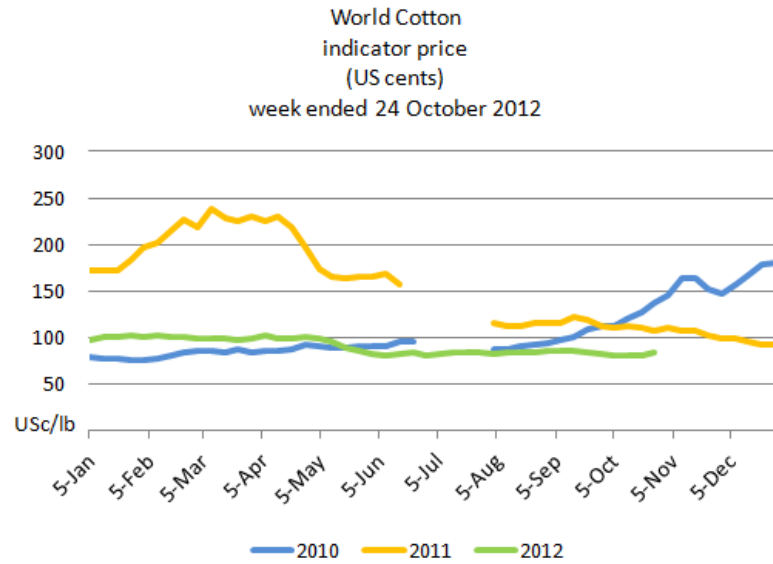
Weekly wholesale prices for selected fruit, Melbourne market



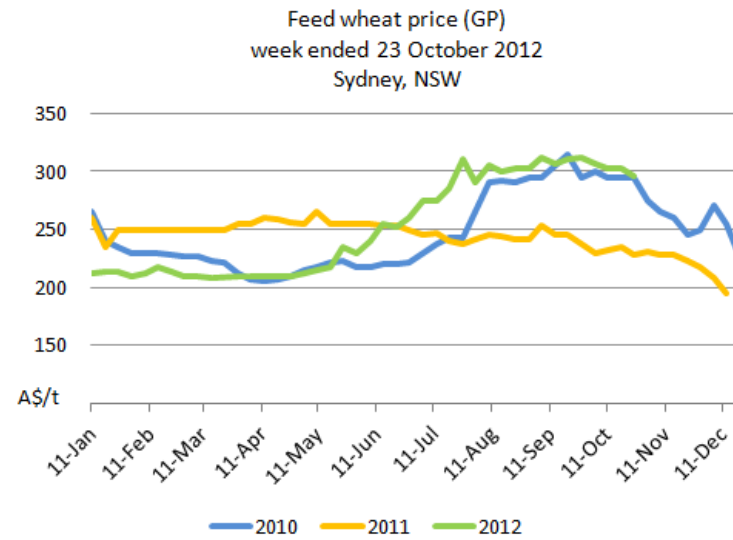
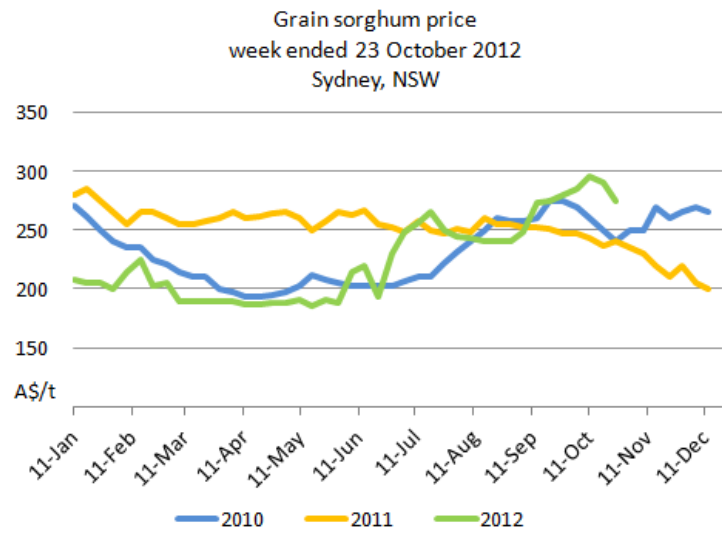
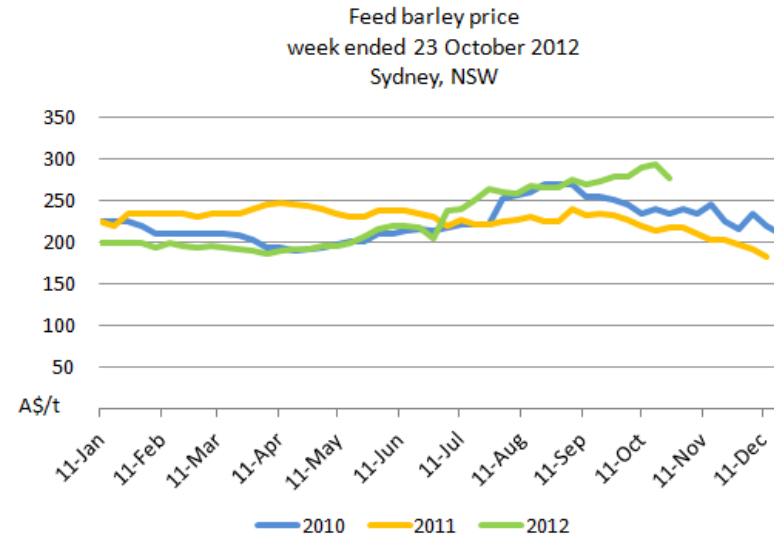
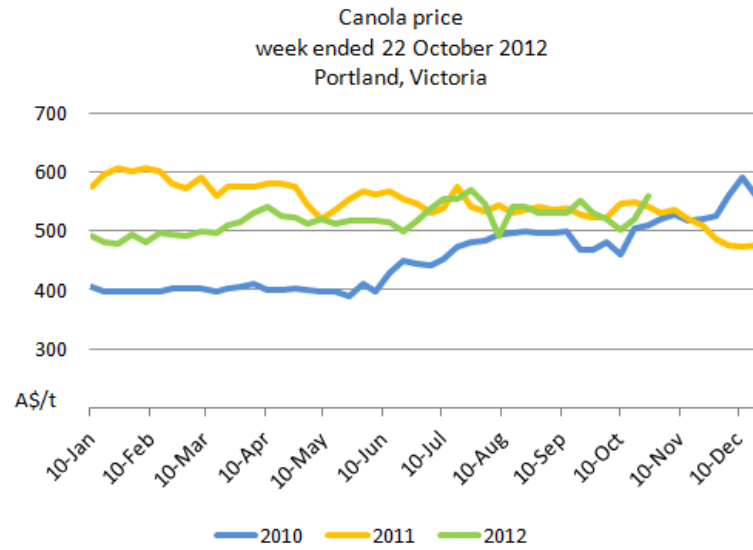
Weekly wholesale prices for selected vegetables, Melbourne market



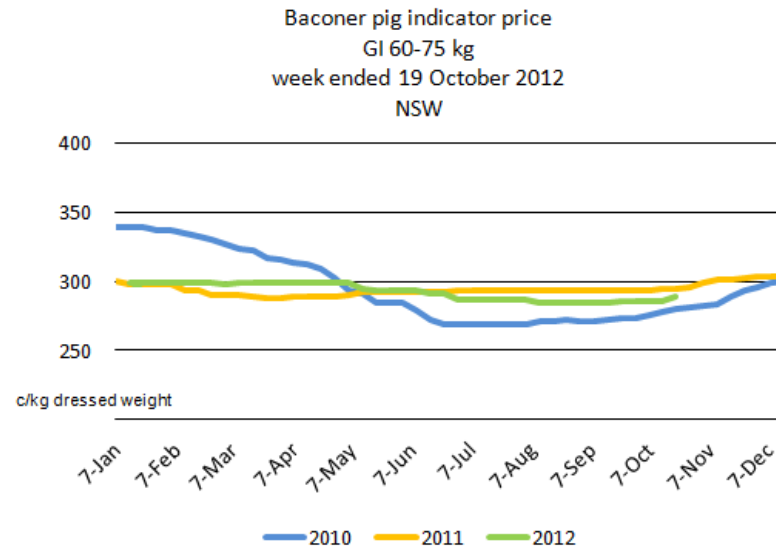
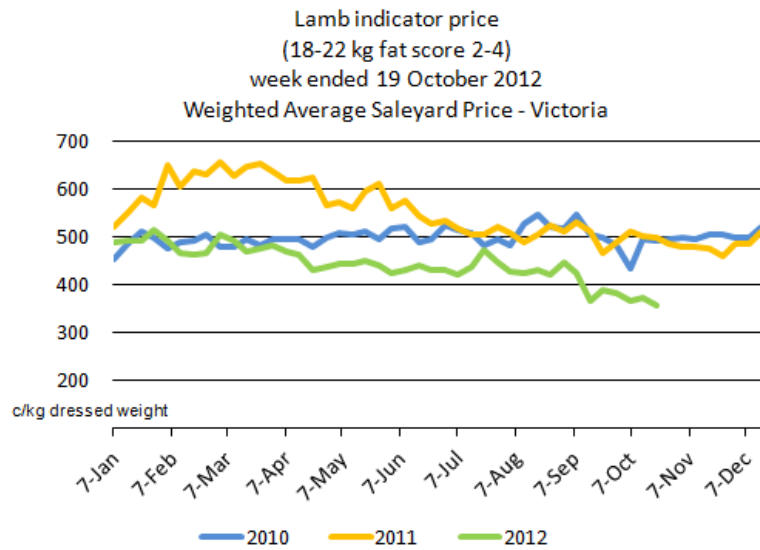
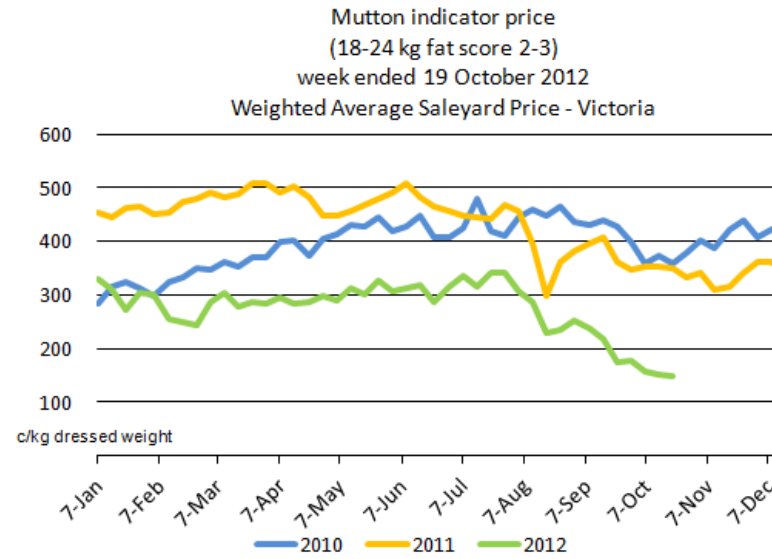
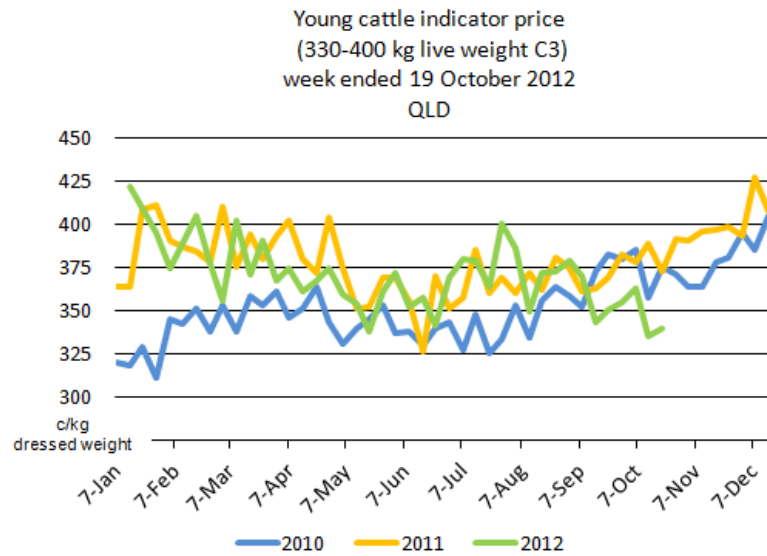
### 3.3. Selected world indicator prices



### 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