



Australian Government

Australian Bureau of Agricultural and  
Resource Economics and Sciences

## Weekly Australian Climate, Water and Agricultural Update

10 November 2011

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

### Summary of key issues

- Storms and widespread rainfall have delayed grain harvesting in parts of Western Australia and Victoria.
- Despite the variable seasonal conditions across cropping areas, a large winter wheat crop is being predicted this year.
- The La Niña event has strengthened over the past fortnight with a peak expected towards the end of 2011 (ENSO Wrap-up, Bureau of Meteorology, 9 November 2011).
- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin decreased this week by 8 gigalitres and have remained at approximately 87 per cent of total capacity.
- Tomato and pumpkin wholesale prices were higher in the week ending 5 November 2011.
- The world cotton indicator price fell by 3 per cent to US107.6 cents a pound in the week ending 9 November 2011.
- The world sugar indicator price eased slightly in the week ending 9 November 2011, to US25.6 cents a pound.
- The world canola indicator price (Rapeseed, Europe, 00, cif Hamburg) average US\$616 a tonne for the week ending 4 November 2011 compared with US\$622 a tonne in the previous week.
- The Eastern Market Indicator price for wool was largely unchanged at 1224 cents a kilogram clean in the week ending 3 November 2011.
- Saleyard cattle price movements in the week ending 4 November 2011 were mixed. Young cattle prices fell in Queensland and South Australia, but rose in all other states. Heavy steer prices fell in the eastern states, but rose in South Australia and Tasmania, while medium cow prices fell in all states.
- Saleyard sheep prices for the week ending 4 November 2011 declined in New South Wales and South Australia by 6 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. In Victoria and Western Australia, prices rose by 3 per cent and 5 per cent respectively.

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[www.abares.gov.au](http://www.abares.gov.au)

Science and economics for decision-makers

# 1. Climate

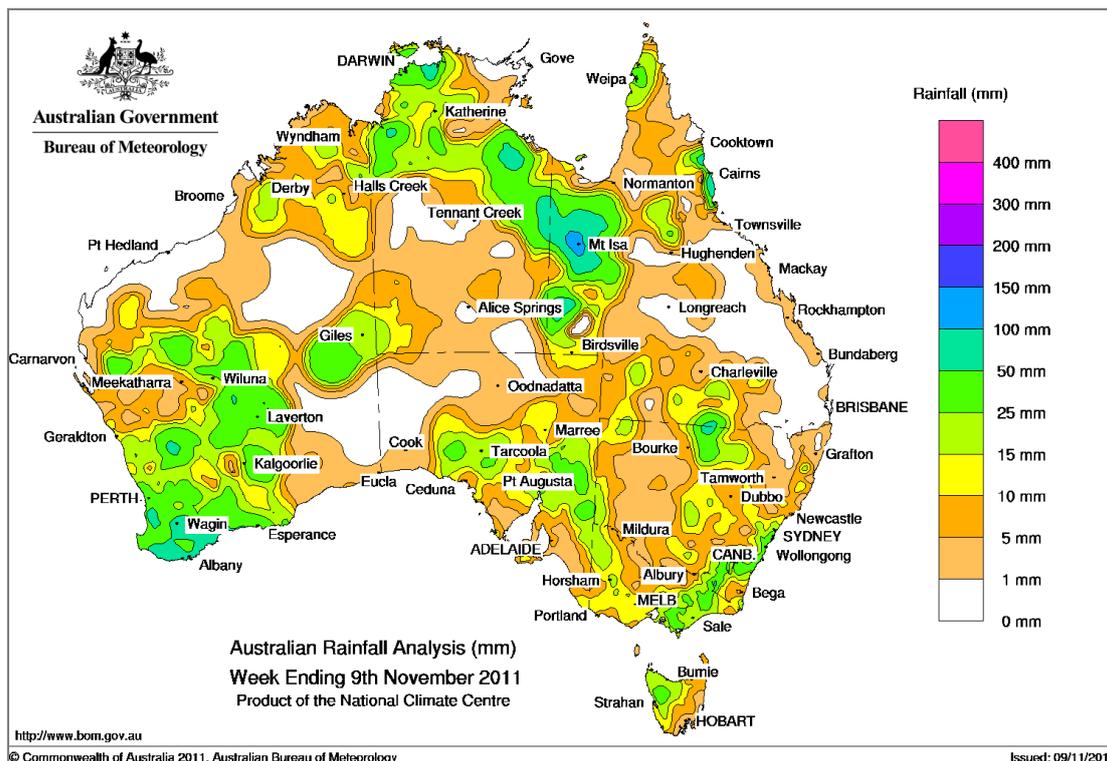
## 1.1. Notable events

- For the week ending 9 November 2011, rainfall was recorded in all states and territories with the highest falls recorded in Western Australia and the tropical north. The highest measured total for the week was 157.4 millimetres at Mount Isa, Queensland.
- Grain harvesting has begun in South Australia. Storm and widespread rainfall over the wheat belts of Western Australia and Victoria have reportedly delayed grain harvesting in some areas.
- Australia's winter wheat crop is predicted to be large this season despite variable seasonal conditions across cropping areas.
- Cherry growers in Young, New South Wales have started picking. Summer rains in southern Queensland is likely to delay pineapple ripening.
- Growers in the Riverina are predicting a lower yield of 'Shiraz' grapes as a result of a botrytis outbreak.
- The La Niña event has strengthened over the past fortnight and is likely to peak towards the end of 2011, persisting into early 2012. The current event is unlikely to be as strong as the La Niña event of 2010- 11. The central Pacific Ocean is likely to remain cool over the next few months with a return to neutral values by autumn (ENSO Wrap-up, Bureau of Meteorology, 9 November 2011).

## 1.2. Rainfall this week

For the week ending 9 November 2011, rainfall was received in all states and territories. For further information, go to [www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml).

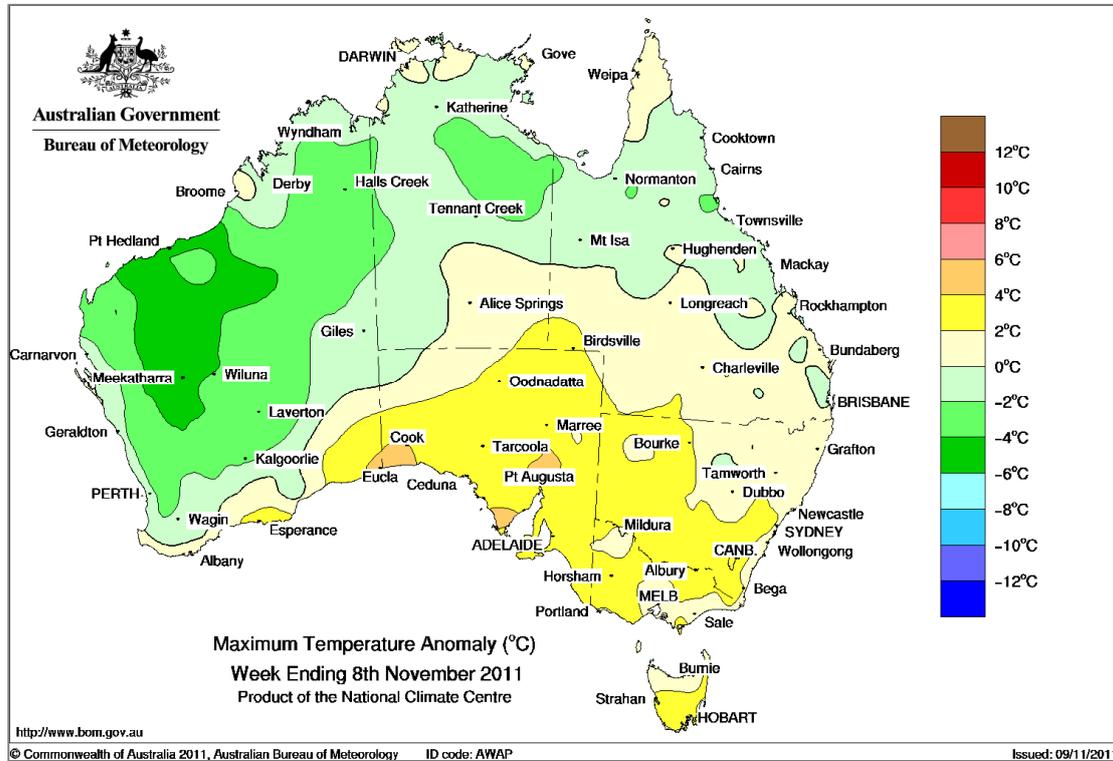
**Rainfall for the week ending 9 November 2011**



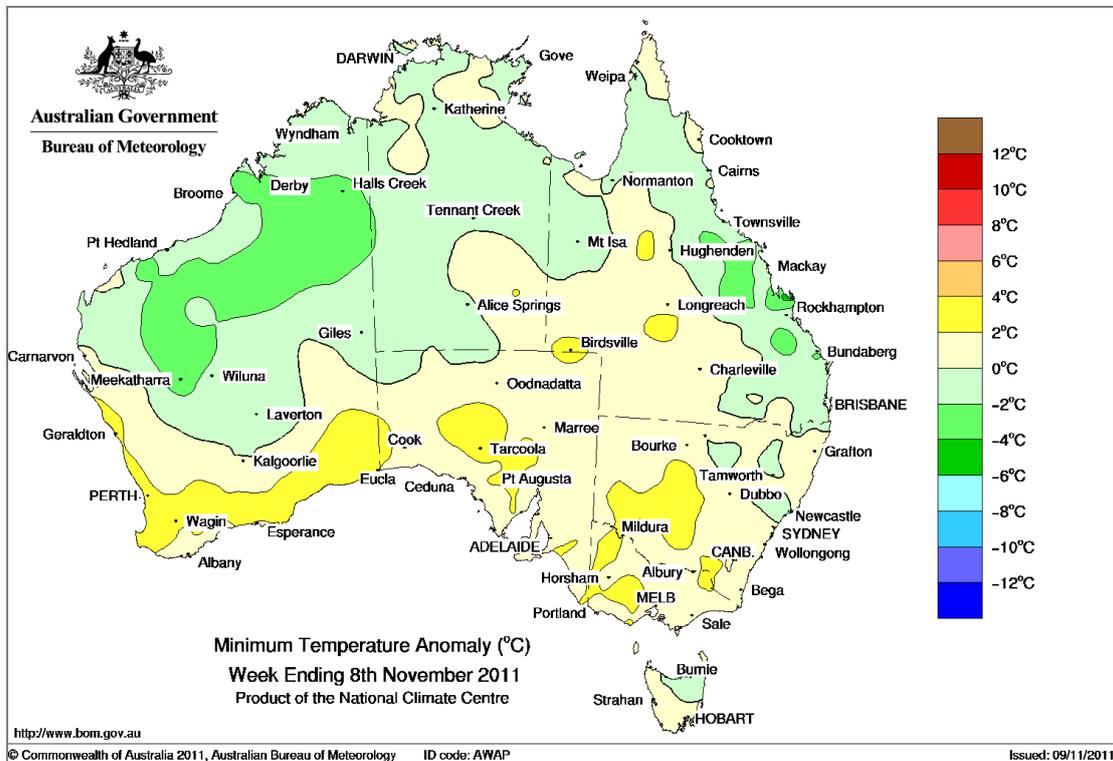
### 1.3. Temperature anomalies this week

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 8 November 2011**

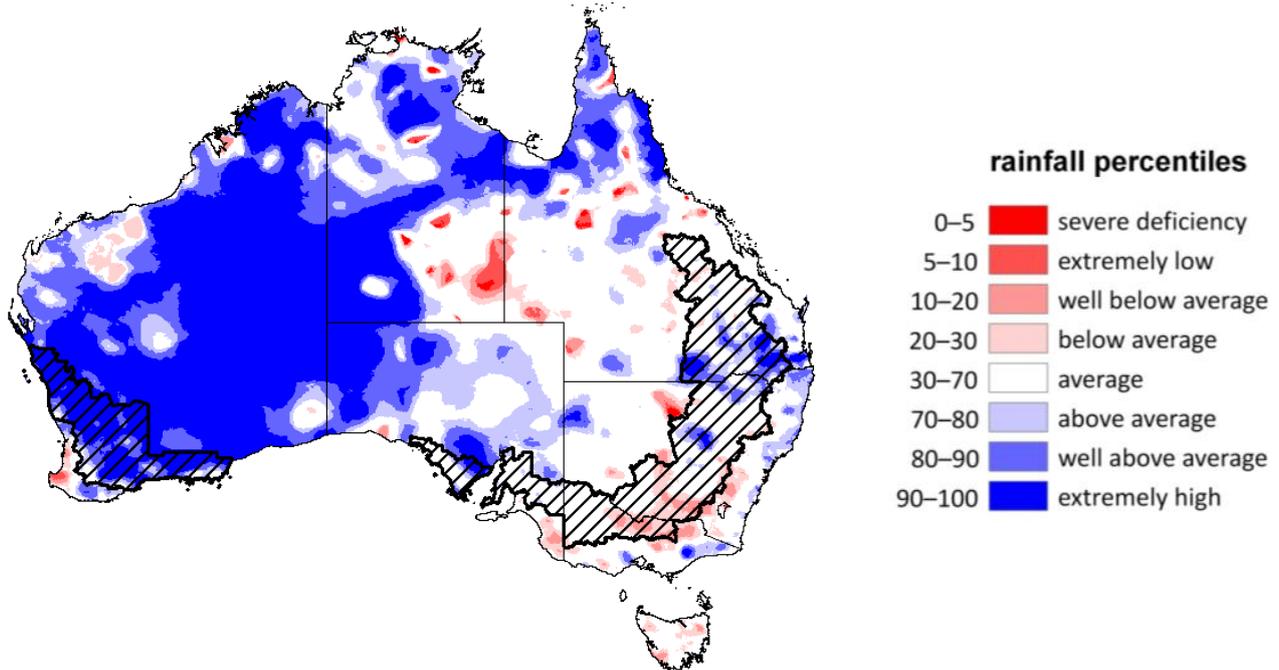


**Minimum temperature anomalies for the week ending 8 November 2011**



## 1.4. October 2011 rainfall

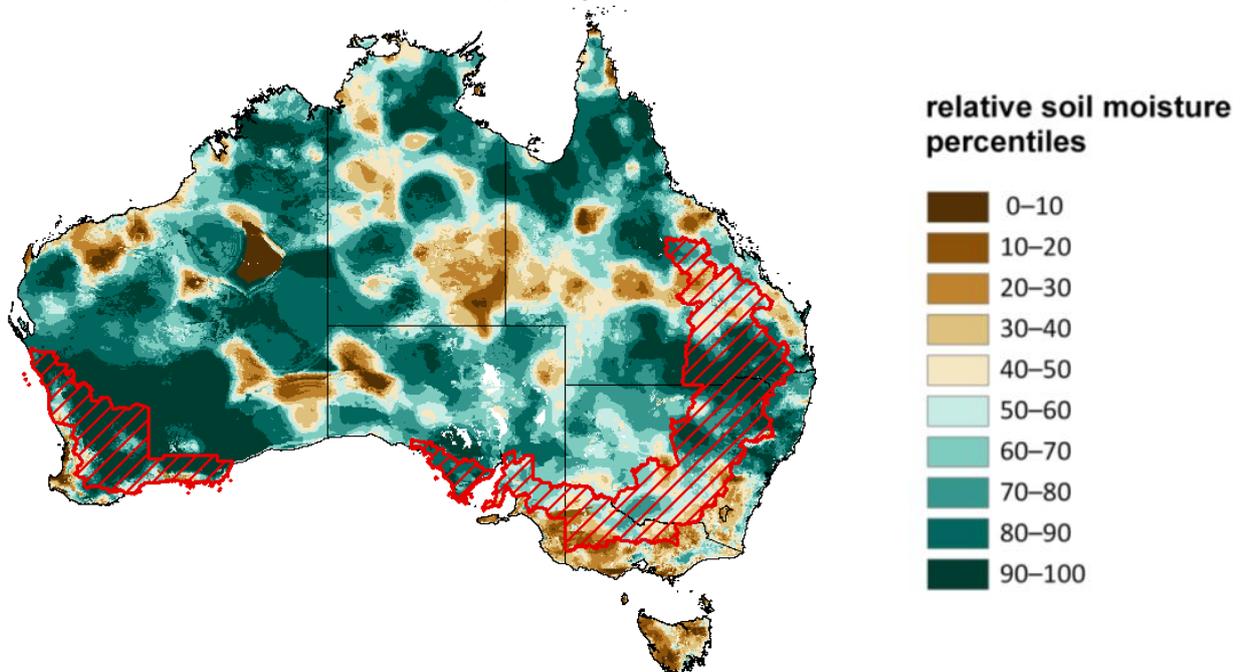
Rainfall percentiles for October 2011



## 1.5. October 2011 relative soil moisture

The maps show the relative levels of modelled upper (0 to ~0.2 metres) soil moisture and lower (~0.2 to ~1.5 metres) soil moisture at the end of October 2011. These maps show soil moisture estimates relative to the long-term average with respect to the reference period 1961 to 1990.

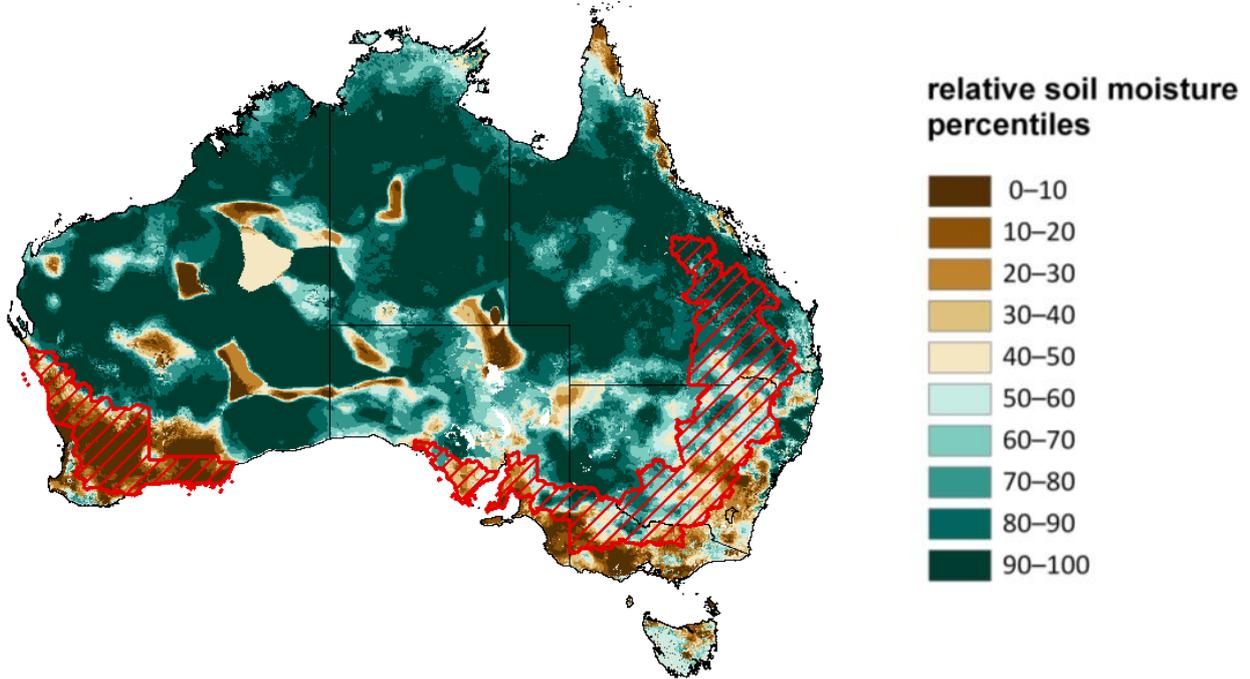
Upper layer soil moisture



The bulk of plant roots occur in the top 0.3 metres of the soil profile and soil moisture in the upper layer of the soil profile (0.2 metres) is the most appropriate indication of the availability of water, particularly for

germinating plants. The lower layer soil moisture is a larger, deeper store that is slower to respond to rainfall and tends to reflect accumulated events over seasonal and longer time scales.

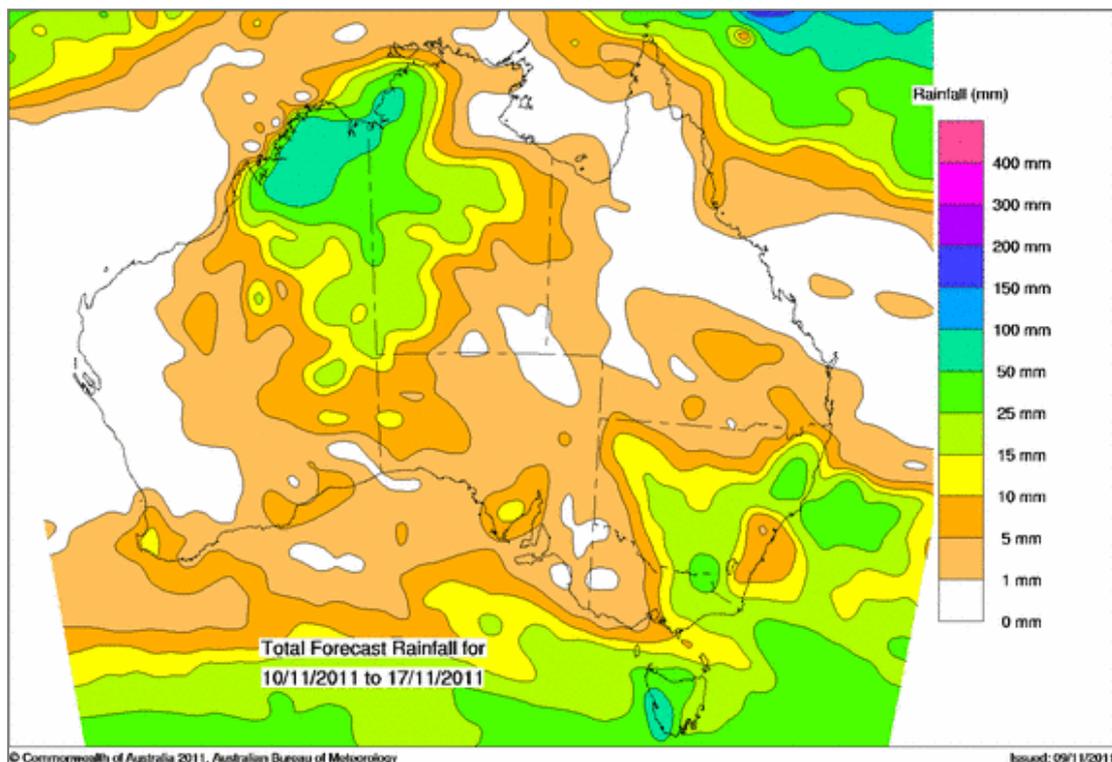
### Lower layer soil moisture



## 1.6. 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 10–17 November 2011



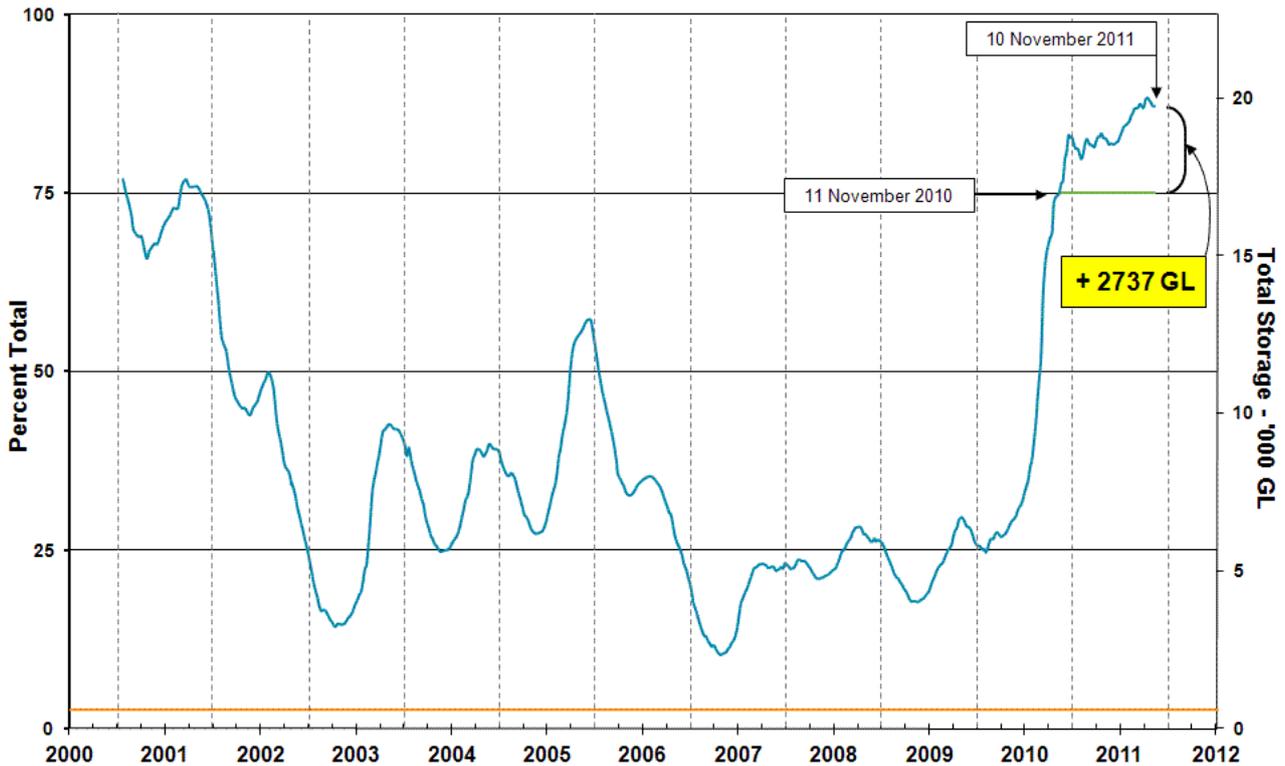
## 2. Water

### 2.1. Water availability

- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin decreased this week by 8 gigalitres (GL) and has stayed at approximately 87 per cent of total capacity. This is 12 percentage points or 2737 GL more than this time last year.

### 2.2. Water storages

Water storages in the Murray–Darling Basin (New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland)



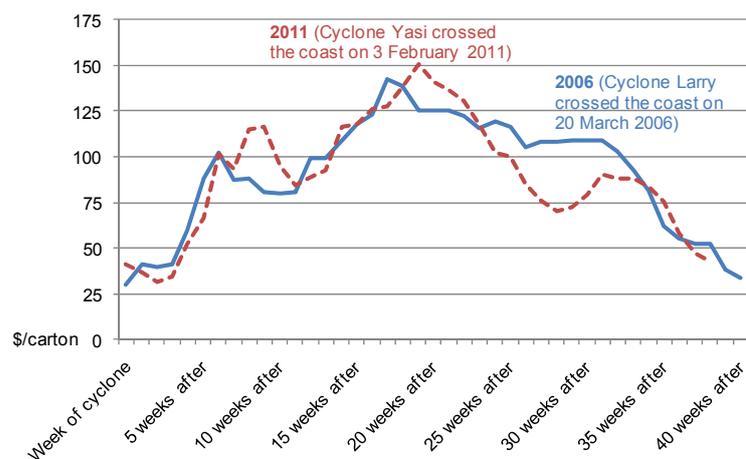
Information on irrigation water available in the Murray–Darling Basin from 1 January 2001 to 10 November 2011 is shown above. The green line indicates the storage level at the same time last year. The orange line indicates the amount of 'dead' or unusable storage.

## 3. Commodities

### 3.1. Production and commodities

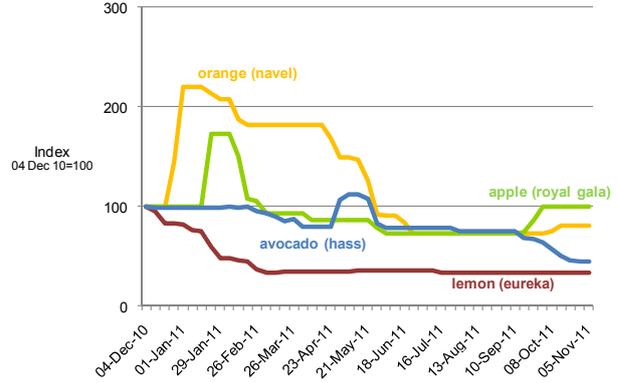
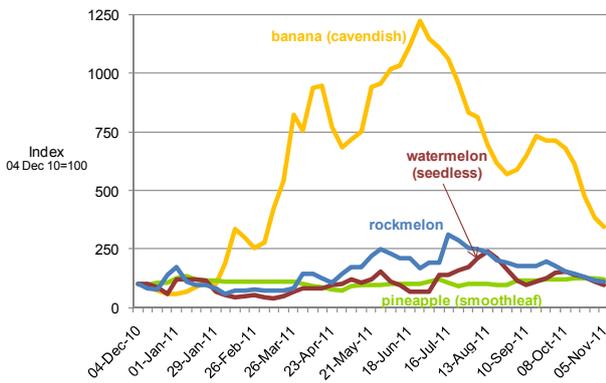
- Wholesale prices of avocado, banana and melons were lower in the week ending 5 November 2011. Banana wholesale prices (Cavendish variety) fell another 9.5 per cent and continue to follow a similar path to that after Cyclone Larry in 2006 (figure A).
- Wholesale prices of tomato and pumpkin were higher in the week ending 5 November 2011, but bean, lettuce and onion prices were lower.
- The world cotton indicator price (the cotlook 'A' index) fell by 3 per cent to US107.6 cents a pound in the week ending 9 November 2011, compared with US110.9 cents a pound in the previous week.
- The world sugar indicator price (Intercontinental Exchange, nearby futures, no. 11 contract) fell a further 1 per cent to average US25.6 cents a pound in the week ending 9 November 2011, as the 2011-12 sugar cane crush in India gets underway.
- The Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) price for wool was largely unchanged at 1224 cents a kilogram clean in the week ending 3 November 2011, following a 5 per cent increase in the EMI price in the previous week. The number of bales offered at auction this week was about 12 per cent lower than the average offerings for the 2011-12 season to date.
- The world canola indicator price (Rapeseed, Europe, 00, cif Hamburg) average US\$616 a tonne for the week ending 4 November 2011 compared with US\$622 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world coarse grains indicator price (US no. 2 yellow corn, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$284 a tonne in the week ending 9 November 2011, compared with US\$281 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world wheat indicator price (US hard red winter, free on board Gulf ports) averaged US\$309 a tonne in the week ending 8 November 2011, largely unchanged from the previous week.
- Saleyard cattle price movements in the week ending 4 November 2011 were generally mixed. Young cattle prices fell in Queensland and South Australia, but rose in all other states. Heavy steer prices fell in the eastern states, but rose in South Australia and Tasmania, while medium cow prices fell in all states.
- Saleyard lamb prices across Australia mostly eased in the week ending 4 November 2011. Lamb prices rose in South Australia and Western Australia, but fell in all other states.
- Saleyard sheep prices were mixed for the week ending 4 November 2011. In New South Wales and South Australia, prices declined by 6 per cent and 1 per cent respectively, to 374 cents per kilogram and 293 cents per kilogram. In Victoria and Western Australia, prices rose by 3 per cent and 5 per cent respectively, to 342 cents a kilogram and 372 cents per kilogram.

**Figure A: Banana (Cavendish) prices, Melbourne wholesale market, 2006 and 2011**

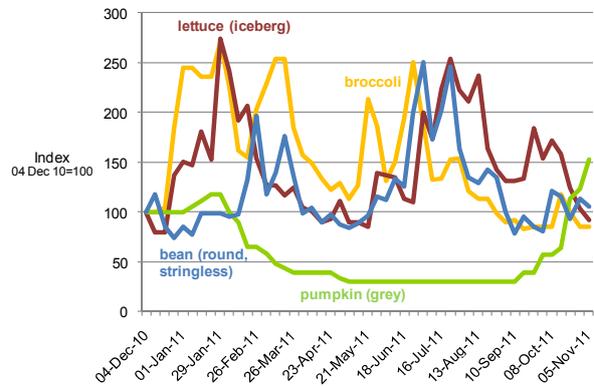
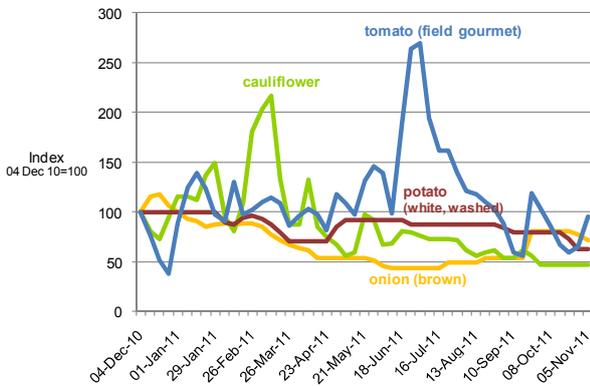


### 3.2. Recent movements in fruit and vegetable prices

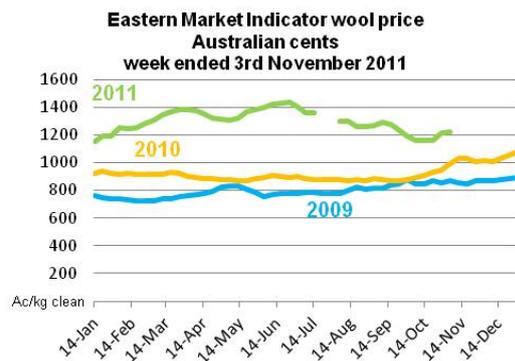
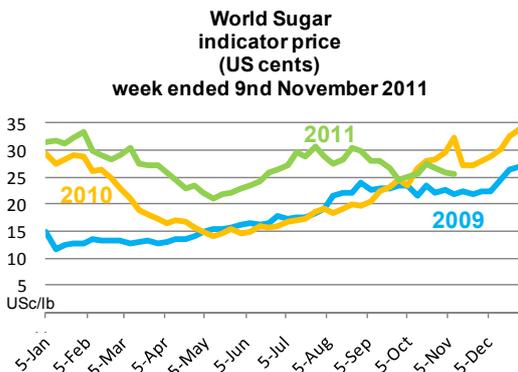
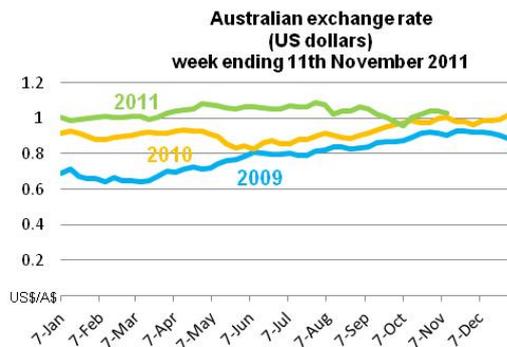
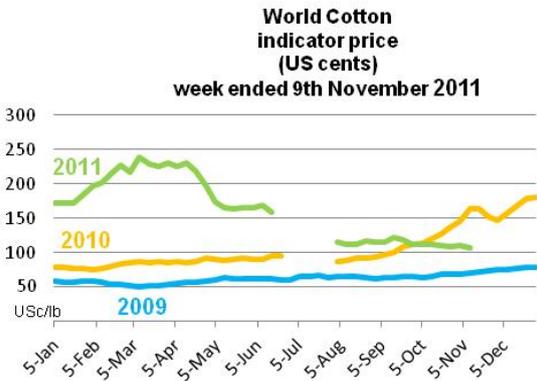
Weekly wholesale prices for selected fruit, Melbourne market



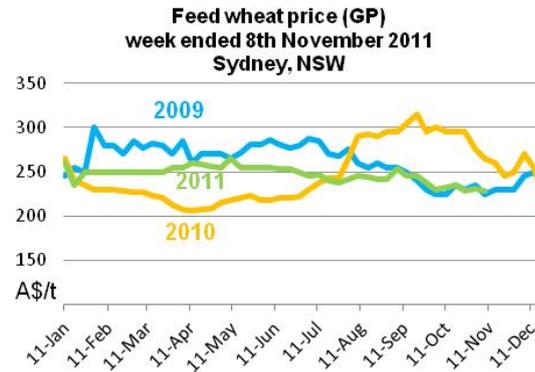
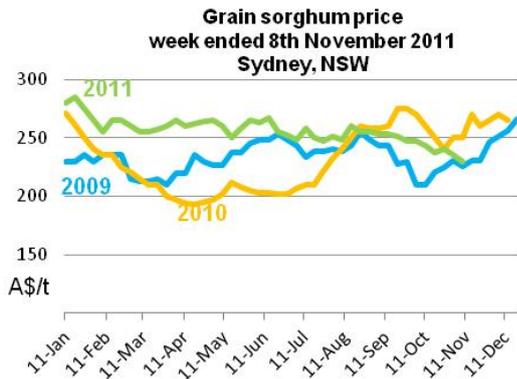
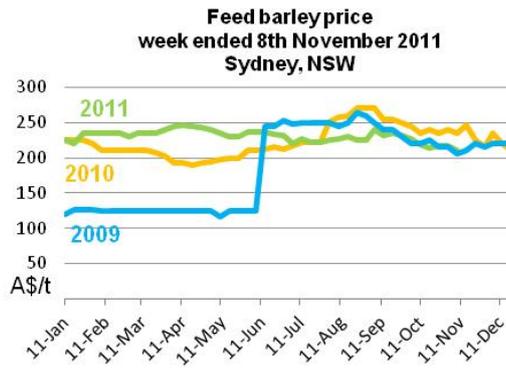
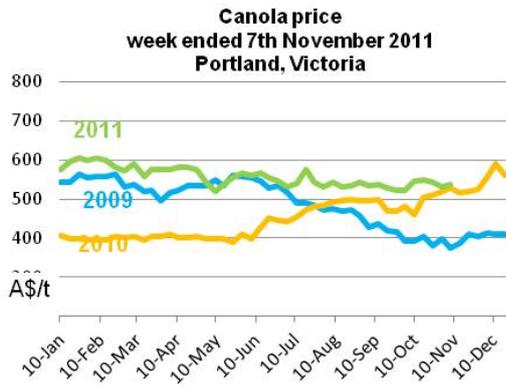
Weekly wholesale prices for selected vegetables, Melbourne market



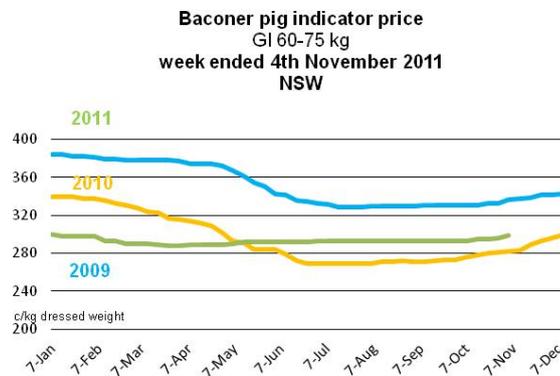
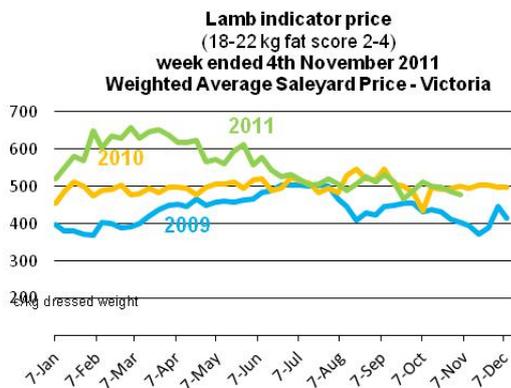
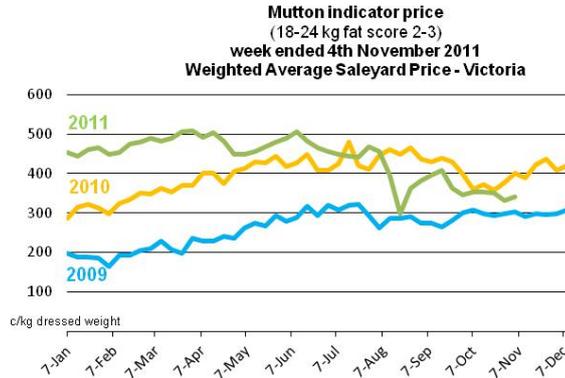
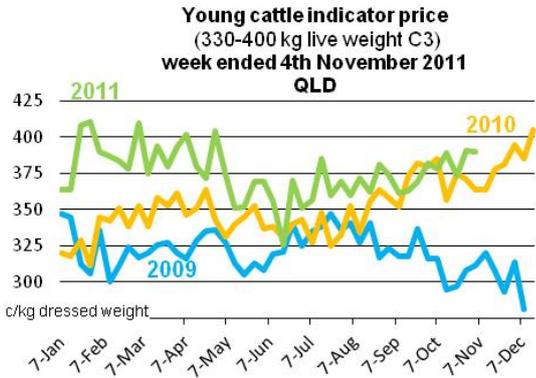
### 3.3. Selected world indicator prices



### 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

#### Murray–Darling Basin

- Murray–Darling Basin Authority: [www.mdba.gov.au/water/waterinstorage](http://www.mdba.gov.au/water/waterinstorage)

#### 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