



Australian Government

Australian Bureau of Agricultural and  
Resource Economics and Sciences

## Weekly Australian Climate, Water and Agricultural Update

11 August 2011

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

### Summary of key issues

- Rainfall received this week over winter cropping regions in southern Australia will assist crop growth leading up to spring and may help alleviate short-term rainfall deficiencies that have emerged in many regions.
- A lack of rainfall in central and northern New South Wales during July 2011 has resulted in soil moisture deficiencies in these areas, contributing to moisture stress in some crops.
- Due to a lack of soil moisture in parts of New South Wales and Western Australia, producers will be more reliant on in-crop rainfall throughout the remainder of the season.
- Rust has been detected in cereal crops in southern Australian cropping regions, leading to calls for producers to implement monitoring and control strategies.
- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin increased this week by 174 gigalitres to approximately 86 per cent of total capacity.
- Most fruit and vegetable prices were steady or lower in the week ending 6 August 2011, but most vegetable prices remain higher than at the same time in 2010.
- The world wheat indicator price (US Hard Red Winter, free-on-board Gulf ports) averaged US\$315 a tonne for the week ending 9 August 2011 compared with US\$318 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world corn indicator price (US no. 2 yellow corn, free-on-board, Gulf ports) averaged US\$301 a tonne for the week ending 8 August 2011, compared with US\$303 a tonne in the previous week.
- In 2010–11, Australian exports of butter fell by 24 per cent while exports of skim milk powder and whole milk powder rose by 23 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively. Exports of cheese declined by 3 per cent for the same period.

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

Science and economics for decision-makers

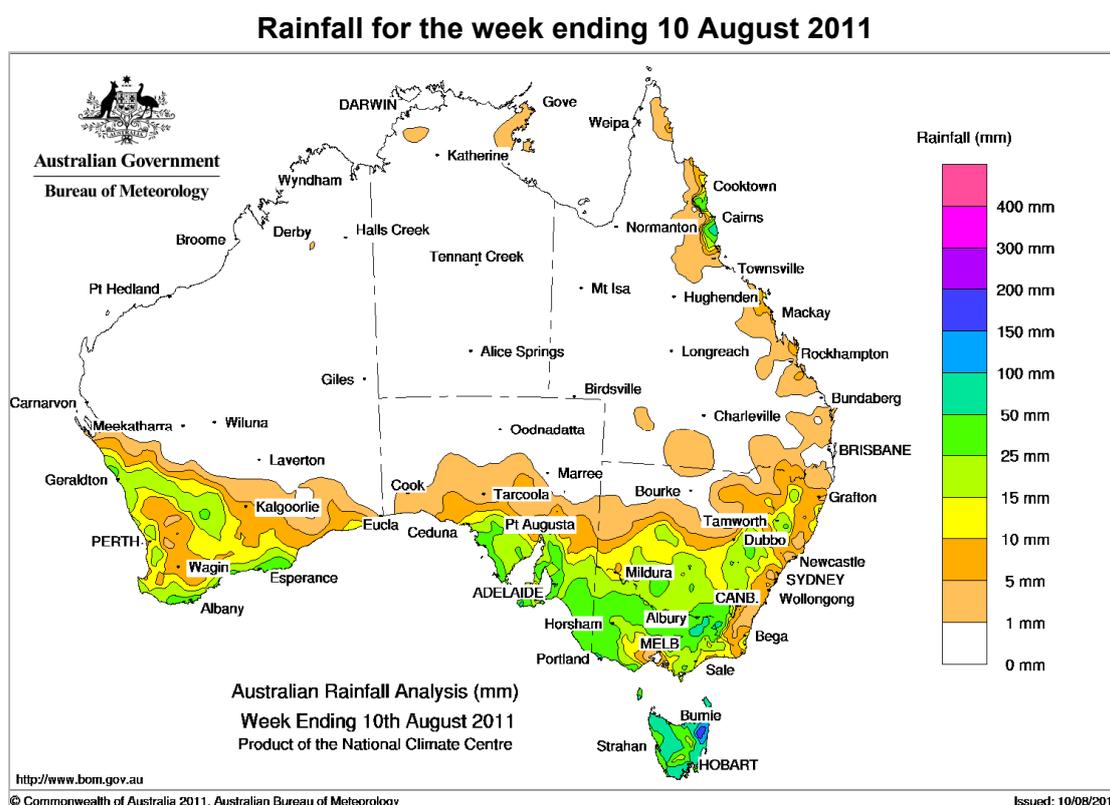
# 1. Climate

## 1.1. Notable events

- For the week ending 10 August 2011, rainfall was mostly recorded across south-east and south-west Australia. The highest measured total for the week was 219 millimetres at Mount Victoria in Tasmania.
- Light to moderate rainfall received this week over southern Australian winter cropping regions will assist crop growth leading up to spring and may help alleviate short-term (monthly and three-monthly) rainfall deficiencies that have emerged in many areas.
- Below average rainfall in central and northern New South Wales during July 2011 has resulted in soil moisture deficiencies in these areas, contributing to moisture stress in some crops.
- Because of the lack of upper and lower layer soil moisture in parts of New South Wales and south-west Western Australia, producers will be more reliant on in-crop rainfall throughout the remainder of the season.
- Stem, stripe and leaf rust have been detected in cereal crops in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia, leading to calls for producers to implement monitoring and control strategies.
- Grain growers in Victoria's Wimmera region have reported ideal conditions for crop growth following recent rainfall.
- Warm and damp conditions in some sheep producing regions of Western Australia have led to predictions of above average numbers of blowflies this year.

## 1.2. Rainfall this week

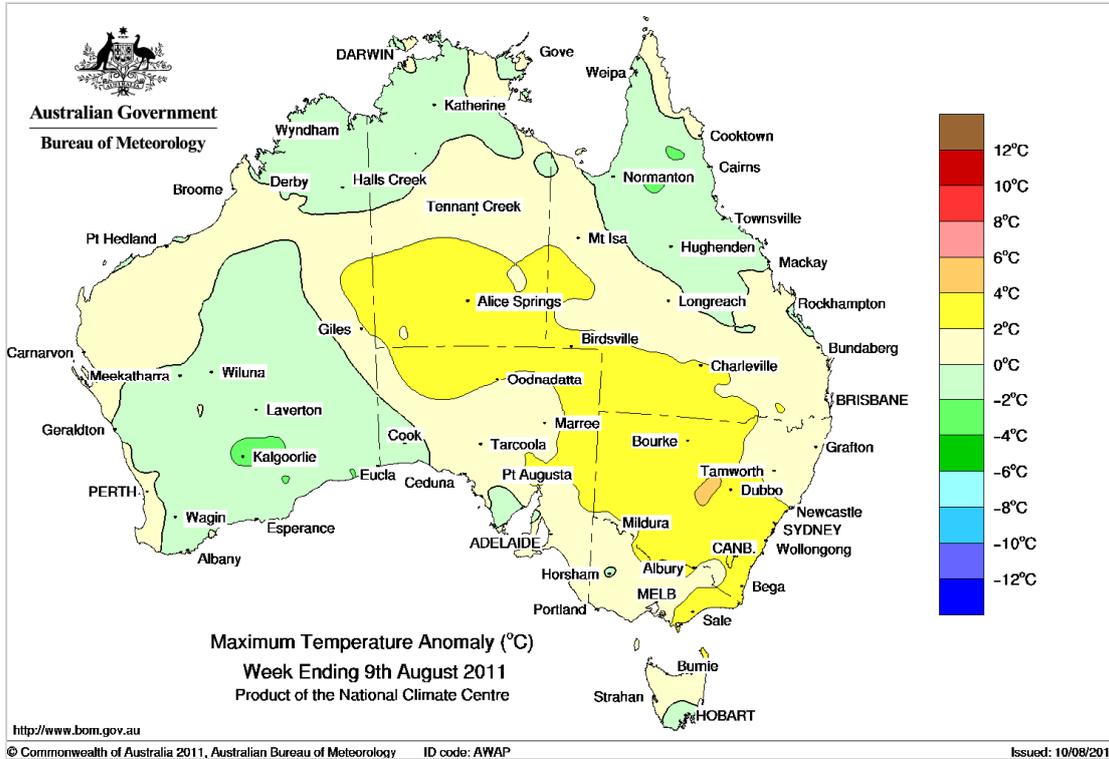
For the week ending 10 August 2011, rainfall was mostly received across south-east and south-west Australia. For further information, go to [www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/weeklyrain.shtml).



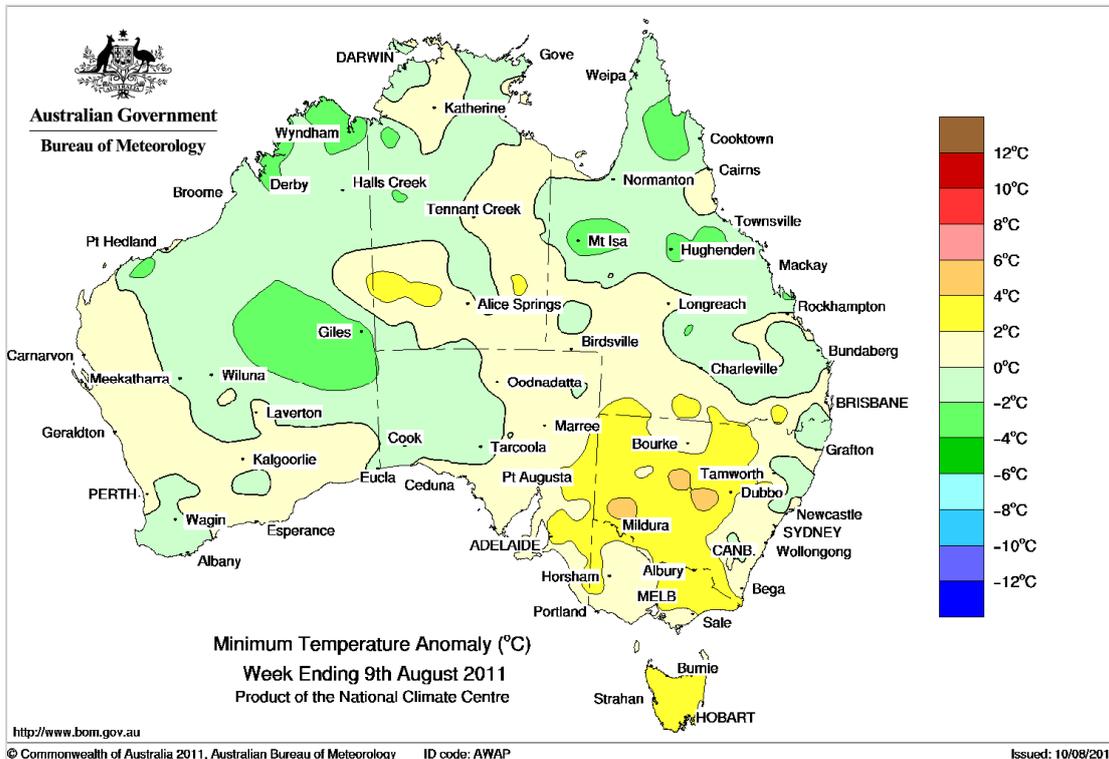
### 1.3. Temperature anomalies this week

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 9 August 2011**

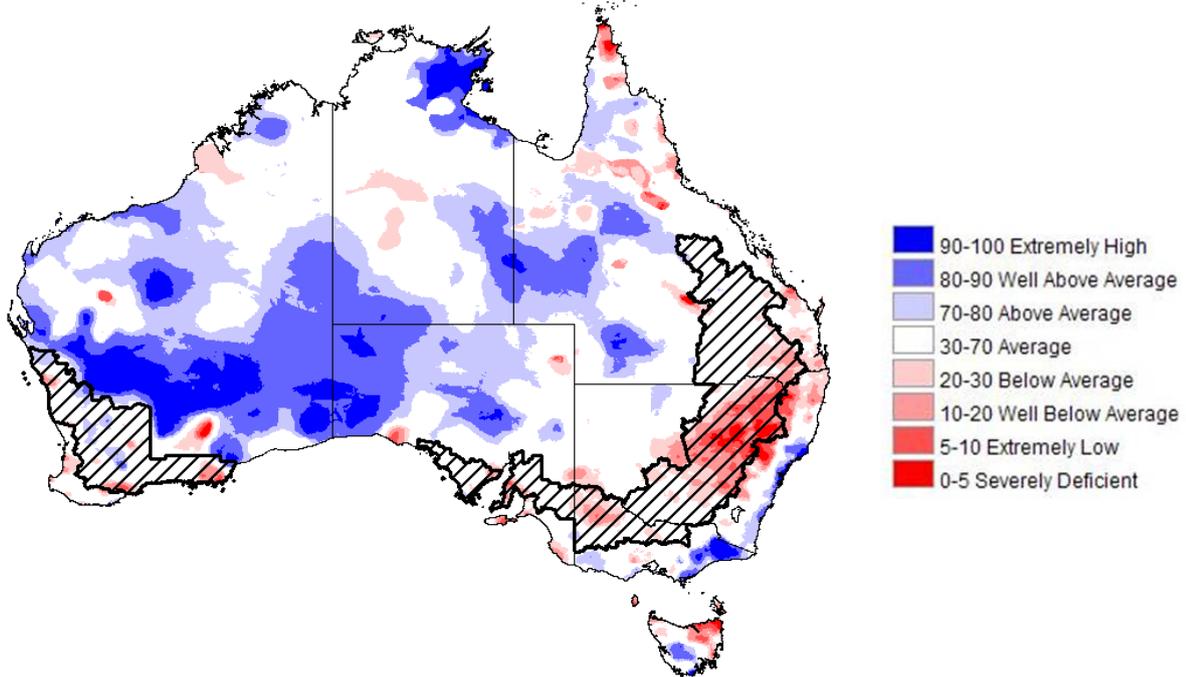


**Minimum temperature anomalies for the week ending 9 August 2011**



## 1.4. July 2011 rainfall

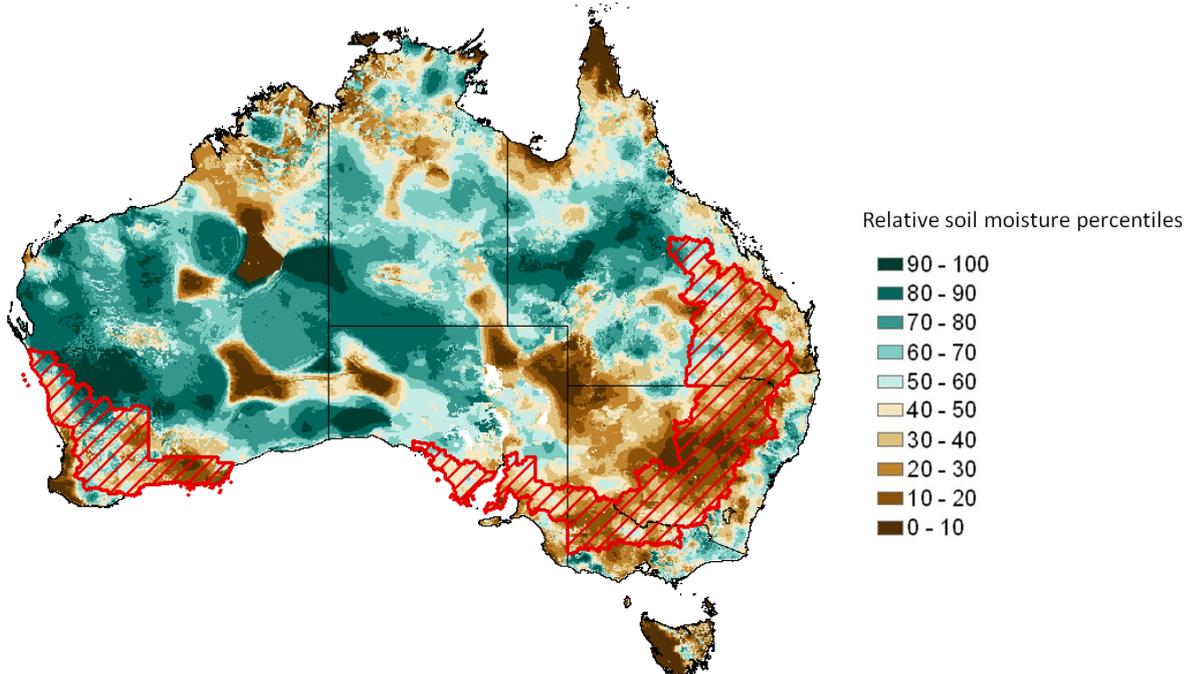
Rainfall percentiles for July 2011



## 1.5. July 2011 relative soil moisture

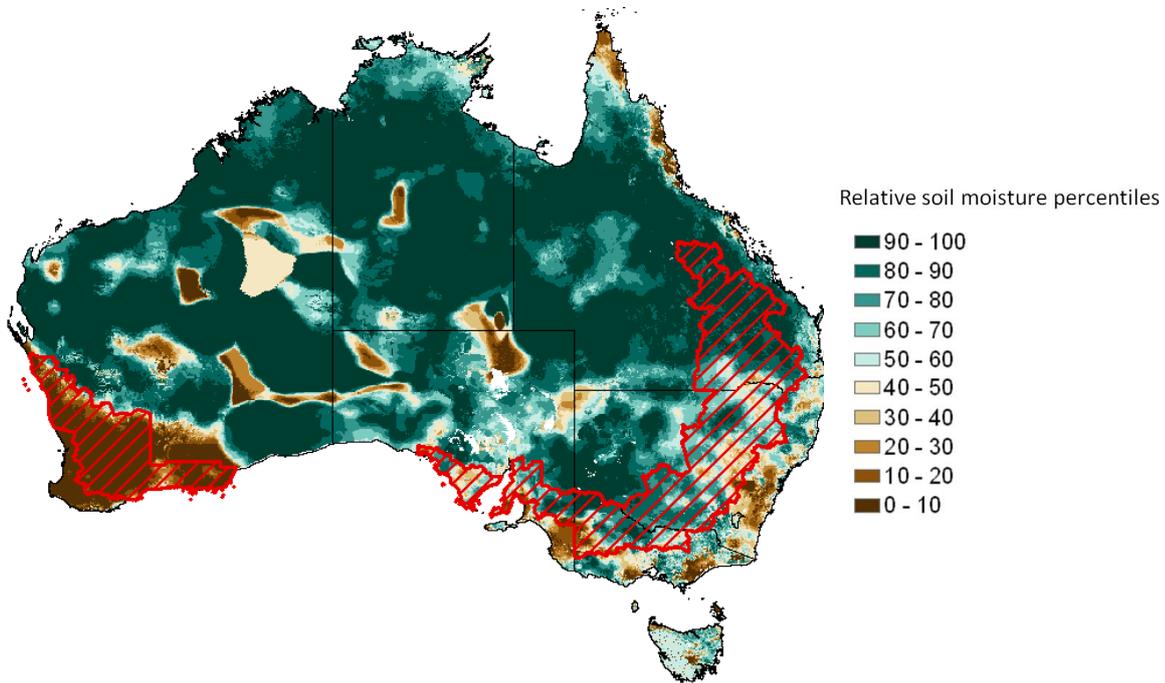
The maps show the relative levels of modelled upper (0 to ~0.2 metres) soil moisture and lower (~0.2 to ~1.5 metres) soil moisture at the end of July 2011. These maps show soil moisture estimates relative to the long-term average with respect to the reference period 1961 to 1990.

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.

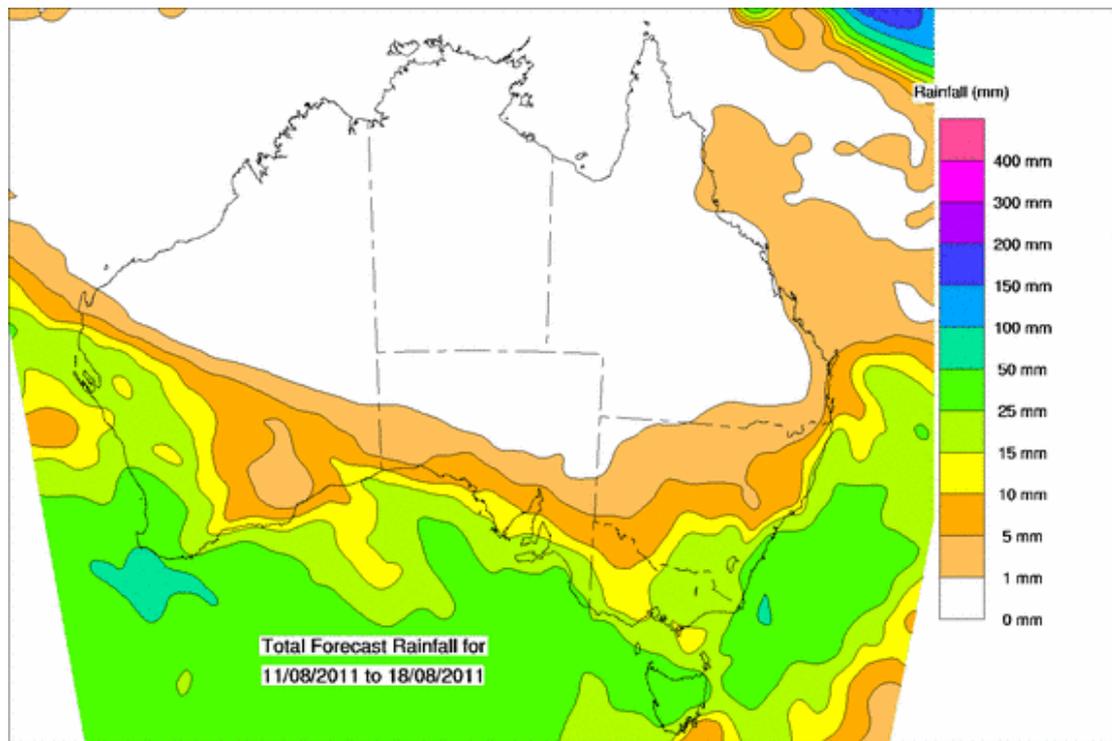
### Lower layer soil moisture



### 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 11–18 August 2011



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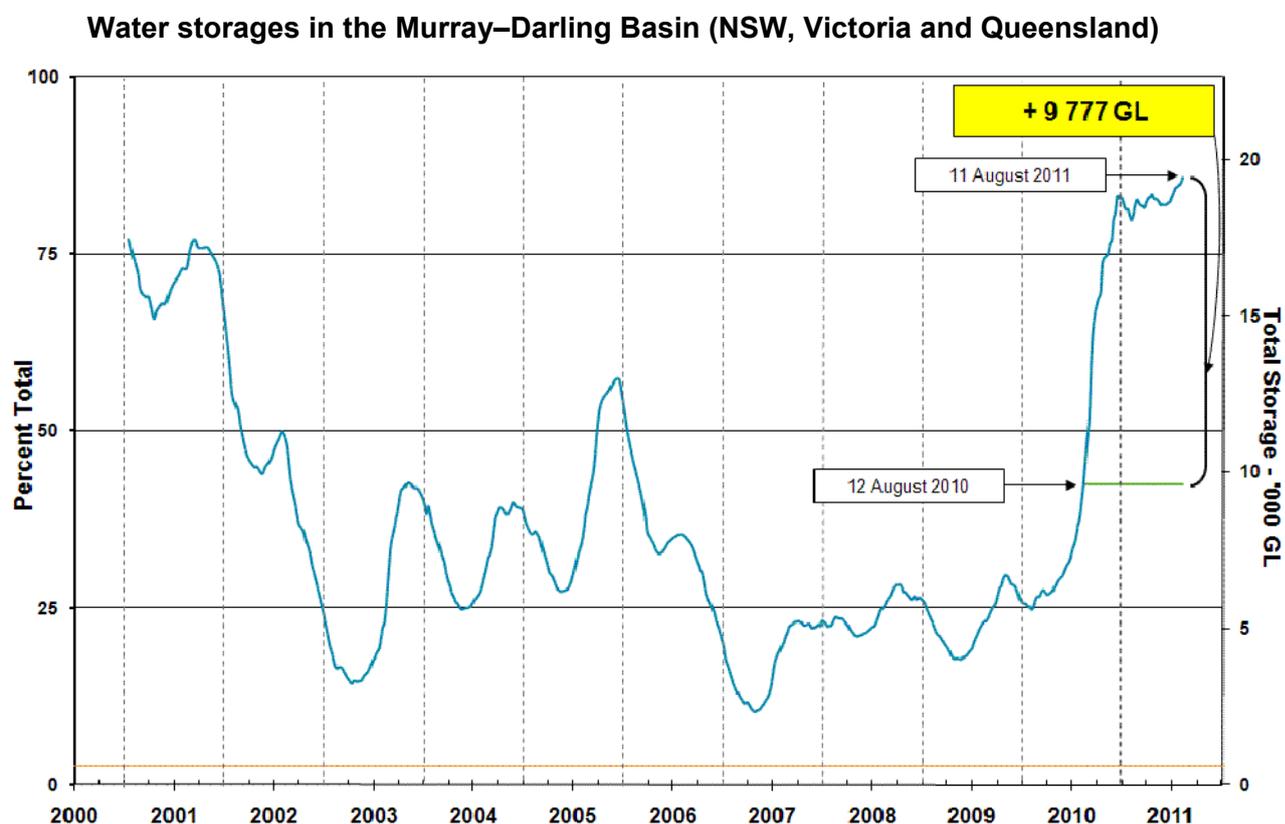
Issued: 10/08/2011

## 2. Water

### 2.1. Water availability and trading

- Water storage levels in the Murray–Darling Basin (MDB) increased this week by 174 gigalitres (GL) to approximately 86 per cent of total capacity. This is 43 percentage points or 9777 GL more than this time last year.

### 2.2. Water storages



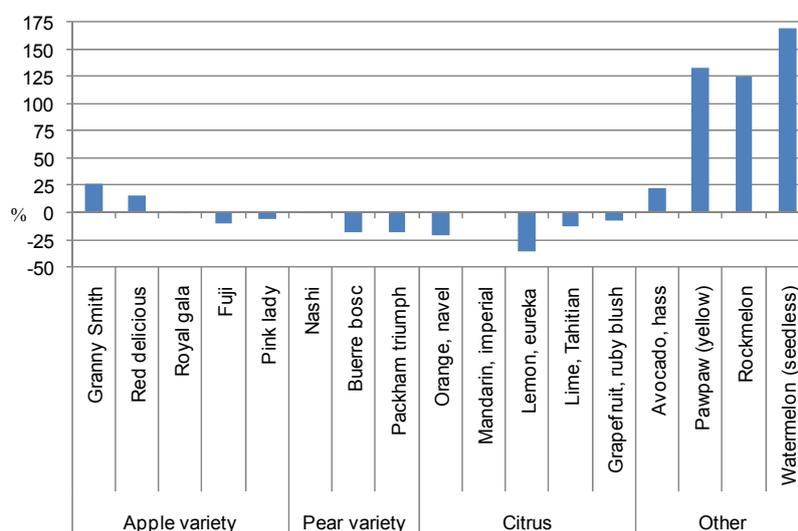
Information on irrigation water available in the Murray–Darling Basin from 1 January 2001 to 11 August 2011 is shown above. The green line indicates the storage level at the same time last year. The orange line indicates the amount of 'dead' or unusable storage.

## 3. Commodities

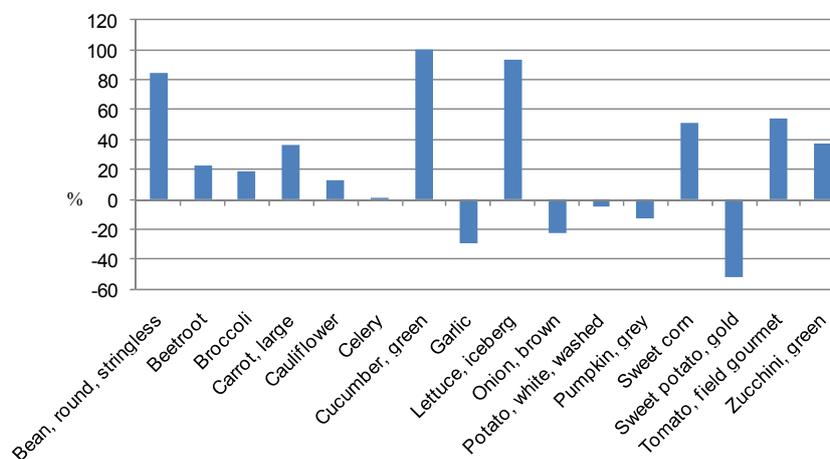
### 3.1. Production and commodities

- Banana prices were slightly lower in the week ending 6 August 2011, but prices of most other fruits were unchanged. Prices of melons, avocados and some varieties of apples are higher than at the same time in 2010. Citrus prices are lower, reflecting a larger Australian harvest in 2011 and lower returns in export market due to the strong Australian dollar.
- Bean, capsicum, lettuce and tomato prices continued to decline in the week ending 6 August 2011. However, most vegetable prices remain higher than at the same time in 2010, with the important exceptions of potatoes and onions.
- The world wheat indicator price (US Hard Red Winter, free-on-board Gulf ports) averaged US\$315 a tonne for the week ending 9 August 2011 compared with US\$318 a tonne in the previous week.
- The world corn indicator price (US no. 2 yellow corn, free-on-board, Gulf ports) averaged US\$301 a tonne for the week ending 8 August 2011, compared with US\$303 a tonne in the previous week.
- In 2010–11, Australian exports of butter fell by 24 per cent while exports of skim milk powder and whole milk powder rose by 23 per cent and 19 per cent, respectively. Exports of cheese declined by 3 per cent for the same period.

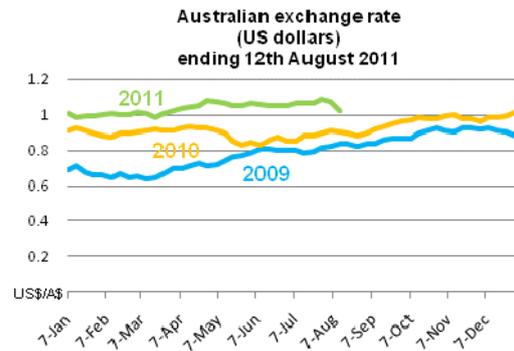
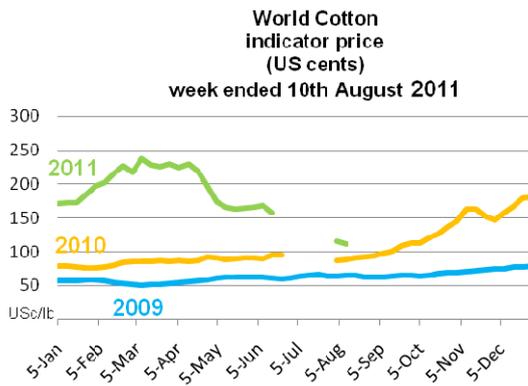
**Figure A. Changes in selected fruit prices, 6 August 2011, compared with the same time in 2010**



**Figure A: Changes in selected vegetable prices, 6 August 2011, compared with the same time in 2010**

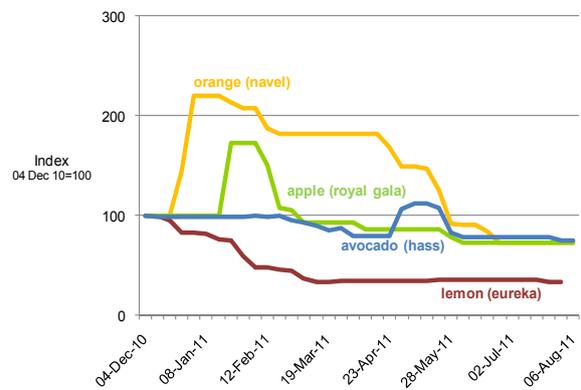
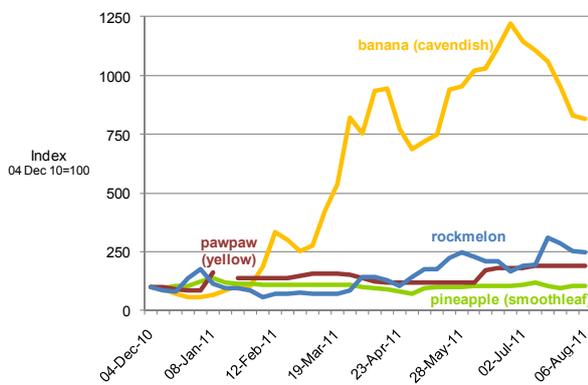


### 3.2. Selected world indicator prices

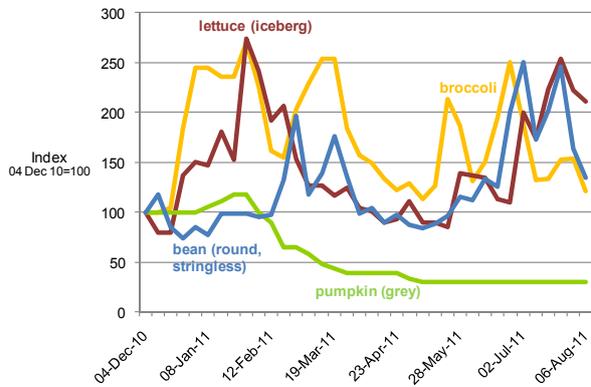
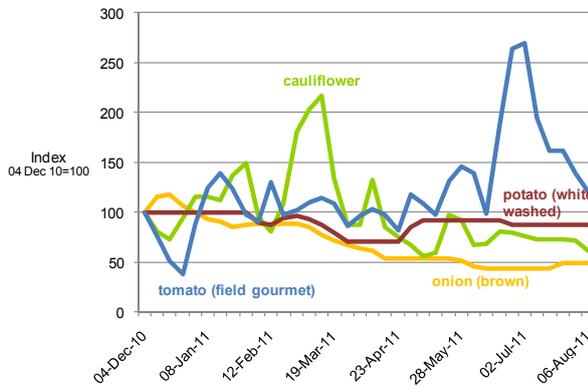


### 3.3. Recent movements in fruit and vegetable prices

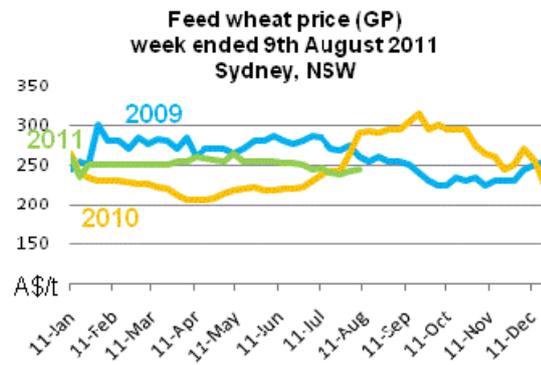
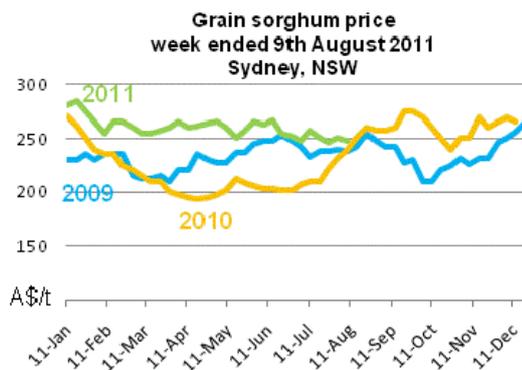
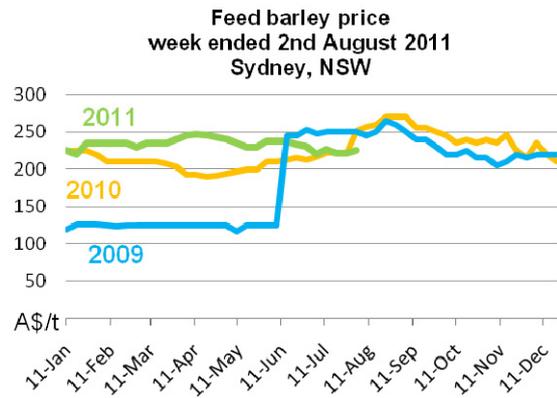
#### Weekly wholesale prices for selected fruit, Melbourne market



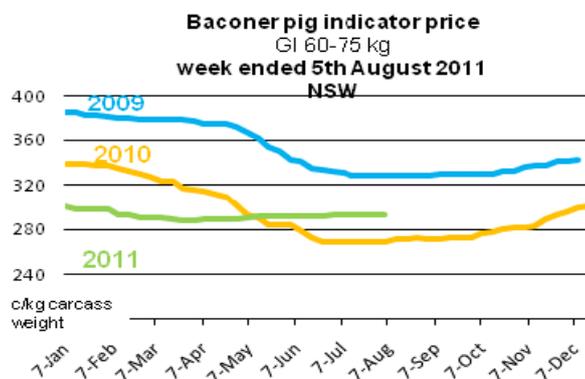
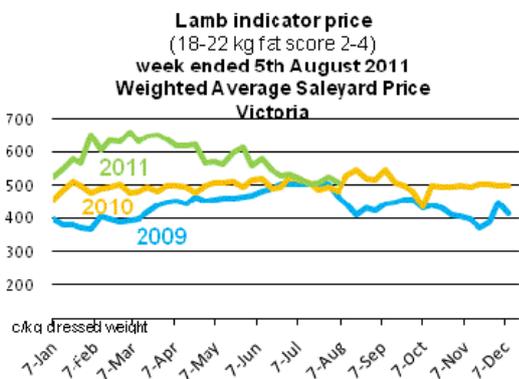
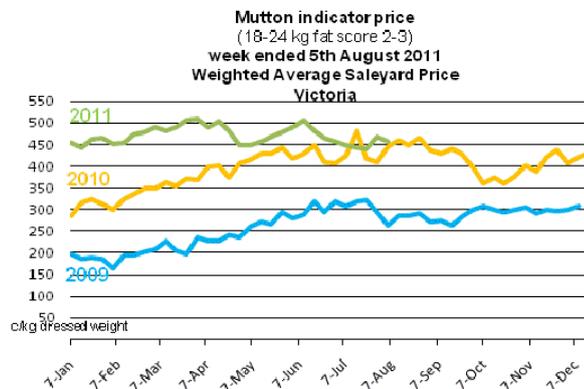
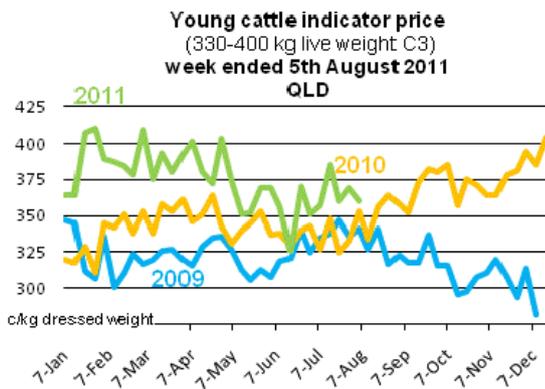
#### Weekly wholesale prices for selected vegetables, Melbourne market



### 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: <http://www.bom.gov.au/jsp/awap/>
- Temperature anomalies: <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