



Department of Agriculture



Seasonal Update

This report provides an update on the impacts on grain and livestock production such as rainfall, temperatures, frost, disease and pests, and a Regional Update for the month to the beginning of June. For a full report, refer to www.agric.gov.au and follow the "Farm Management" link.

June 2005

Seasonal Prospects for 2005

The potential exists for an excellent grain harvest in Western Australia following significant break-of-season rains across the wheatbelt over the past two months. The Department of Agriculture currently predicts a total grain production of between 13 and 15 MT.

Farmers have completed most of their seeding programs, with the exception of those areas susceptible to waterlogging, particularly in the South West.

Much of the wheatbelt received average or above average rainfall for May (and year-to-date), while most of the Great Southern experienced well above-average rainfall. The rain and warmer weather has provided an early boost to pasture growth which is significantly ahead of stock requirements. The rains have also benefited pasture growth in the western Gascoyne-Murchison, providing a welcome break to the run of dry seasons.

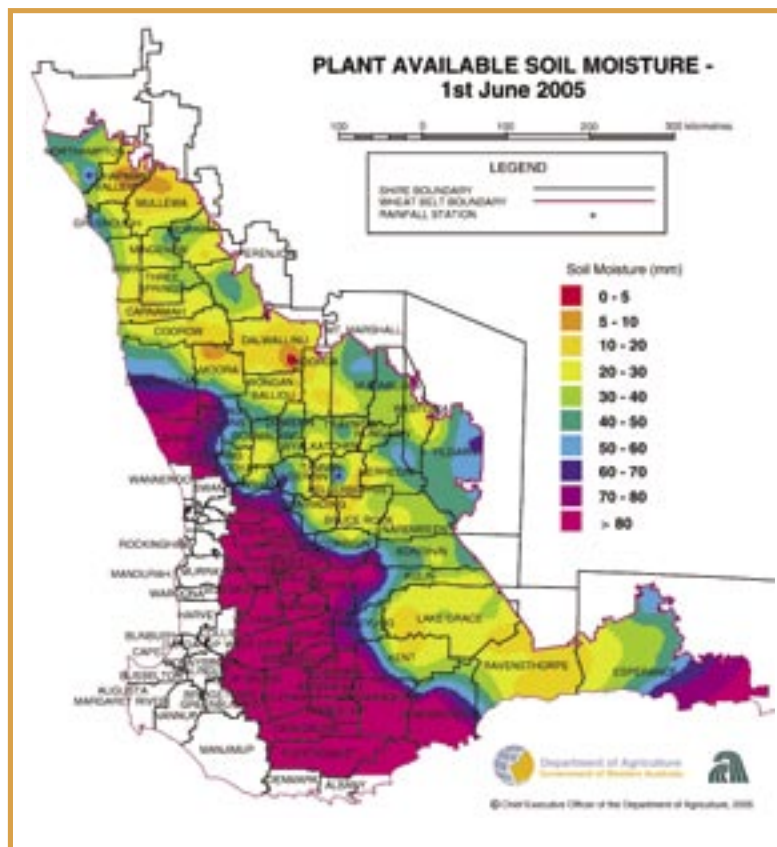
El Niño/Southern Oscillation Conditions:

Computer projections (10 out of 12 models) largely favour the continuation of the current neutral conditions into spring and summer of 2005. However, a trend toward El Niño conditions could develop. Further detailed information and updates on the climate outlook can be found on the Department's website

at www.agric.wa.gov.au/climate on the link to the 'Growing Season Outlook'.

Soil Moisture Profile:

The Plant Available Soil Moisture Map for the South West of WA (pictured below) shows good soil moisture across all the grain growing areas, with some areas in the South still predisposed to waterlogging.



Rainfall – May 2005:

Significant rainfall was experienced in most western parts of the State, however, it did not extend to the eastern Pilbara, interior or Kimberley regions which have been generally dry, as is customary for May.

For detailed information on rainfall (see next page), or refer to Rainfall Deciles for May 2005 Maps for both the whole State, and the South West, at www.agric.wa.gov.au on the web version of this report.

Agricultural, South West and Pastoral Regions Update Southern Agricultural Region

Esperance District:

The rainfall events during May have provided a good start to the season and replenished farm water supplies in the district. The fire-affected soils to the west of Esperance, are showing some well-needed germination and pasture cover.

The cropping outlook is positive with ideal sowing conditions throughout the region. Early sown crops are emerging well, with few weeds and insect problems. A larger area has been sown to canola than previously expected (about 120,000 hectares in the Esperance Port Zone).

Pastures are growing rapidly, although later germinating clover is under pressure from red legged earth mite (RLEM). Feed is currently well above the immediate needs of livestock, while the lambing and calving percentages have been high. Potential problems maybe anticipated with enterotoxaemia (pulpy kidney) in lambs where inadequate vaccination programs have been carried out.

Jerramungup and Ravensthorpe Districts:

Warm temperatures and above-average rainfall continued throughout May.

Wet and boggy conditions held up seeding programs west and south of Jerramungup, while the remainder of the district have been able to complete operations. Most farmers have sown an area similar to or slightly less than the five-year average. RLEM are hatching earlier than expected and could provide a problem for pasture growth.

Pasture growth is in abundance in the western areas of the district, while the eastern half is much slower.

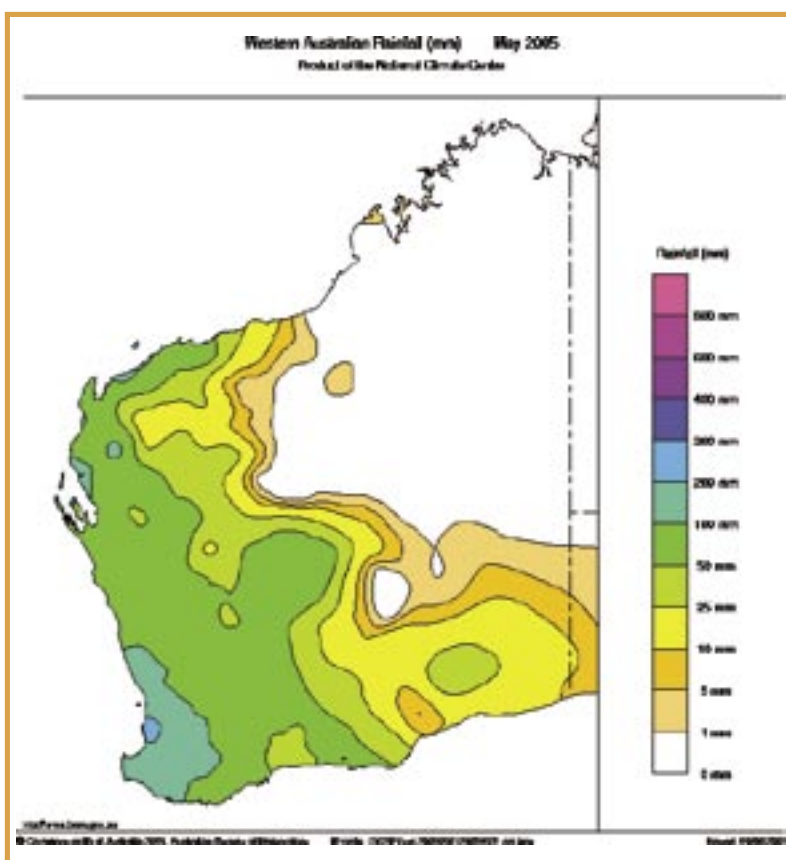
While the warm and wet conditions have extended the flystrike activity, ewes are in good condition with early reports of slightly higher-than-average lamb-marking percentages. If feed intake is not managed there will be a higher risk of pulpy kidney and lambing problems.

Albany District:

Rainfall has been above-average for May with warm weather over the last half of the month drying out waterlogged soils in the district.

Seeding programs have been delayed by the wet conditions, with many farmers down to 20-30 per cent of the original planned area. Dependent on June rainfall, farmers may be forced to delay planting until July or August.

Pasture growth rates of 40-50 kilograms per hectare per day are being recorded in the district, which is closer to spring growth rates. Current pasture growth is outstripping stock requirements, while lamb numbers are at 120 to 140 per cent of the average lambing rate.



Katanning District:

Extensive rainfall across the western parts of the district has resulted in several Shires recording their wettest May on record (most sites recorded more than 100 millimetres), which has led to extensive waterlogging across the district. Warmer than-average temperatures have provided ideal growing conditions for pastures, weeds and

crops in those drier areas.

Early planted canola and lupin crops are showing good vigour and cereal crops are starting to emerge. Most pastures are well-established and ahead of livestock requirements.

The condition of sheep across the district has improved markedly with rapid pasture growth. Early lambing has showed good results, however there is an increased risk of pulpy kidney with the excess of green feed. Sheep prices at market continue to improve.

Bryobia and RLEM are beginning to cause problems in crops and pastures, and are proving to be difficult to control due to the wet conditions.

Central Agricultural Region

Lake Grace District:

Most areas in the district have completed seeding programs. Warm conditions have assisted crop and pasture growth, however, pasture weeds are becoming an increasing issue. Sheep are generally in good condition.

Self-sown cereals are prevalent throughout the district and pose a rust risk. The possibility of wind erosion has been reduced with the increased weed cover in paddocks.

Narrogin District:

Widespread soaking rains fell throughout the district in the first week of May and were followed by lighter rain for the rest of the month. Nearly all dams in the area are full or well on the way to full, with some cases of seepage causing problems.

Seeding operations have been slowed by the wet conditions. Post-emergent weed control could be very restricted in the western areas due to boggy conditions. Early planted canola is well advanced and growing well, while the area planted to canola appears to be up this year compared to previous years.

Pasture growth is excellent in all areas and sheep condition is good as a direct result of abundant feed, allowing farmers to stop supplementary feeding. Lambing is continuing well in the region.

Northam District:

Good rains have fallen throughout the district filling most of the dams. There are no major waterlogging issues in the area.

Some shires have reported slight increases in wheat and canola plantings with good emergence being reported. Pasture growth rates are solid, although Capeweed has begun to dominate many clover pastures. There is some concern about the size of lambs as a result of the good feed and reports of an increase in the twinning rate.

Cutworm, web worm and RLEM problems are emerging, while Lucerne Flea and Bryobia mite appear widespread. For more information and the latest disease forecast visit www.agric.wa.gov.au and click on 'Plant Disease Forecast 2005'.

Merredin District:

The rainfall average has been exceeded in each of the major towns in the Merredin District.

Pasture growth is good and supplementary feeding of livestock has ceased for most farmers. Lambing has begun in the district, while sheep numbers in saleyards are low, forcing up the market price. The Eastern Districts Abattoir is scheduled to close on 24 June after 30 years of operation.

Northern Agricultural Region

Geraldton District:

Most growers have completed their seeding programs with strong and vigorous emerging crops. Some growers have taken the opportunity to sow field peas and chickpeas in the last week of May to reduce the risk of disease.

Pasture establishment is excellent, however the composition is poorer due to lost sub-clover, while grasses have recently germinated.

Livestock in the district are in excellent condition and farmers anticipate a five per cent higher lambing percentage than in previous years. The current conditions may result in higher risks to livestock from Barber's pole, pulpy kidney and scour worms.

Three Springs District:

Rainfall has been consistent throughout the district. Most growers commenced seeding programs early, with additional paddocks being sown to wheat. Seeding programs are now complete, with field peas being sown early to reduce the risk of disease.

Early rains have regenerated pasture paddocks, which will present grass and broad leaf weed problems in late June. Intervention will be required to control the weeds in the absence of sufficient grazing pressure.

Moora District:

Most seeding programs have been completed in ideal conditions. However, high levels of herbicides have been required to control the weed problem.

Pastures growth rates are high in the district, but decline towards the Dalwallinu area. As a result, supplementary feeding has been reduced, but livestock will still require some level of fibre while the pastures have such a high water content.

Prime lambs are beginning to enter the feedlots for finishing.

South West Agricultural Region

Bunbury District and Surrounds:

Rainfall was above-average over the South West region, resulting in good runoff and filling of water storage facilities.

The poor prices being paid for export cauliflower has resulted in the majority of growers in the district shifting their production focus to the domestic market.

Harvesting of navel oranges and mandarins began in the South West during the month. While domestic prices are currently good, US imports could influence future prices.

Some vignerons in the region have top-worked vines to other varieties such as Sauvignon Blanc. Silvereyes became a major problem after the first season rains, however prior to this, there was very little bird activity in the wine growing areas.

It is anticipated that table grape exports will be higher than 2003/04 figures, with almost 700 tonnes (\$1.7 million) exported to the end of March.

General growing conditions in the region north of Harvey have been very good with pasture growth rates high.

The widespread follow up rains in mid-May across the State's dairy regions has ensured an excellent break to the season for the dairy industry. Most dairy farmers are taking advantage of the strong pasture growth rates to maintain production, while reducing supplementary feeding.

Rangelands

Kununurra District:

The dry season is fully underway with adequate quantities of rangeland pasture but limited quality. Fodder has hayed off early compared to the previous few years and livestock condition is generally good.

Karratha District:

Good rainfall was recorded on the coastal portion of the West Pilbara area early in the month, followed by a more general rain event that covered most of the West Pilbara, up to Port Hedland. Conditions in the East Pilbara and a pocket on the Ashburton, continue to experience limited or no rainfall this season.

Rainfall early in the month in the West Pilbara coastal areas resulted in a good germination of pasture species

and good growth from existing feed. The follow-up rains at the end of the month will ensure adequate pastures for the season in these areas.

The condition of cattle is improving, although it varies, dependent on rainfall. Mustering continues throughout the district, with most animals turned off to properties in the southern regions. Many properties are weaning early and culling stock to reduce grazing pressure on existing pasture, and to alleviate pressure on wet cows.

Wind erosion has occurred on the Roebourne plains area during the month, however recent rainfall should alleviate this problem.

Derby District:

No rains and cooler conditions prevailed throughout the West Kimberley. Pasture is less abundant than normal for this time of year, but has reasonable nutritional value. Livestock are generally in fair to good condition, with most managers selling early to reduce pressure on pasture and water supplies.

Carnarvon District:

The rainfall for the area has been progressively more positive since late April. About 180 millimetres of rain was received in the district and has forced many of the table grape vines into regrowth.

Meekatharra District:

Good falls of rain were experienced throughout the District in early May. Higher rainfall was received in the southern end of the District, with reports of up to 150 millimetres being received during the month. Surface water is still evident in most areas. Lake Nallan is currently at full capacity.

A range of regrowth is occurring in areas that have received rainfall.

Kalgoorlie District:

Rainfall was received in the Kalgoorlie district during the first week of May, however falls varied considerably. Sandstone and Leinster both recorded in excess of 80 millimetres during the first week, which has resulted in germination and forage production. The situation in other areas is less favourable, with the 'drought' for the majority of the Kalgoorlie district continuing.

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The next issue of Seasonal Update is scheduled to be released in July 2005.

Disclaimer

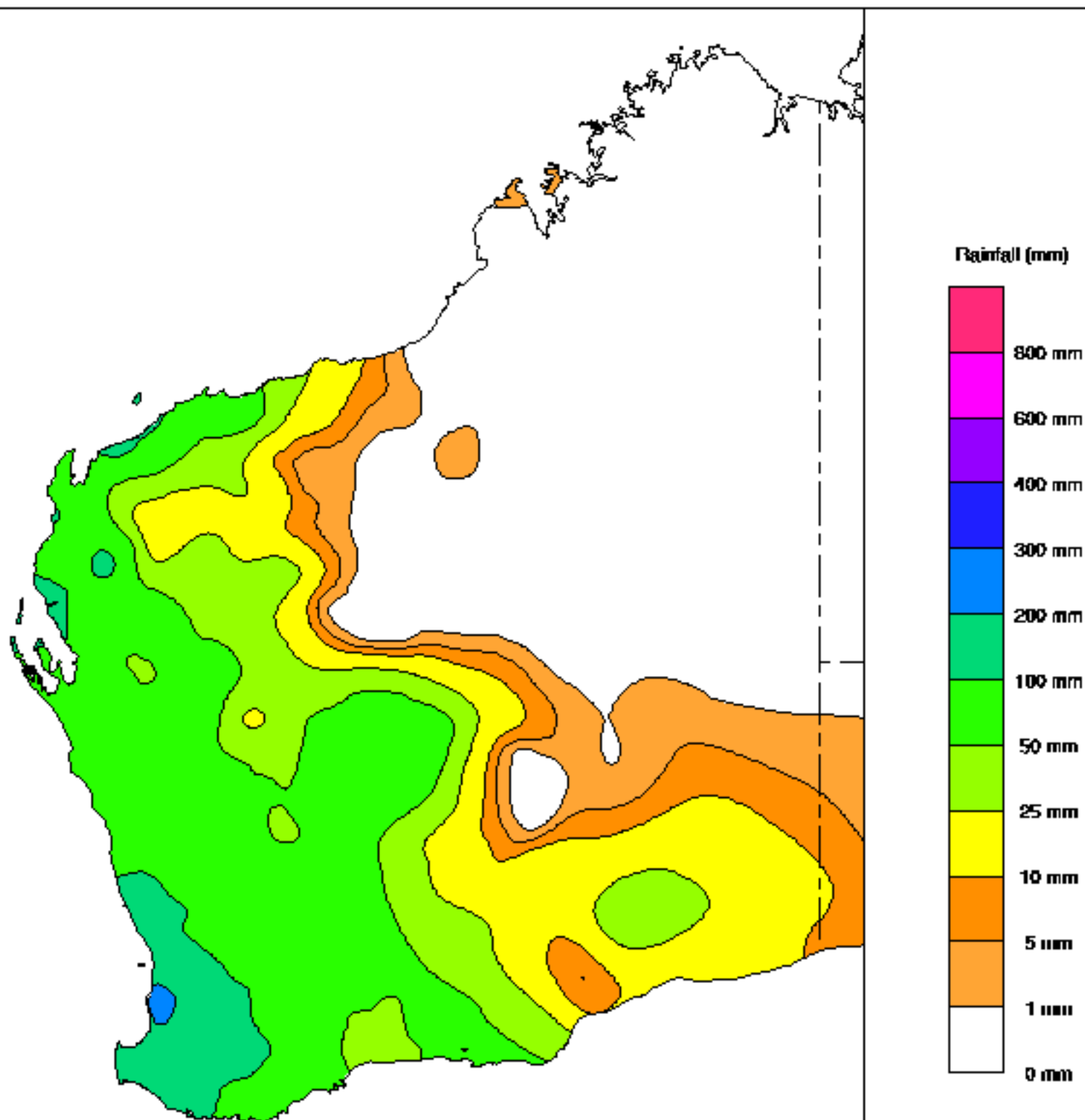
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Crop Estimates 2005

DAWA estimates As at: **June 1**

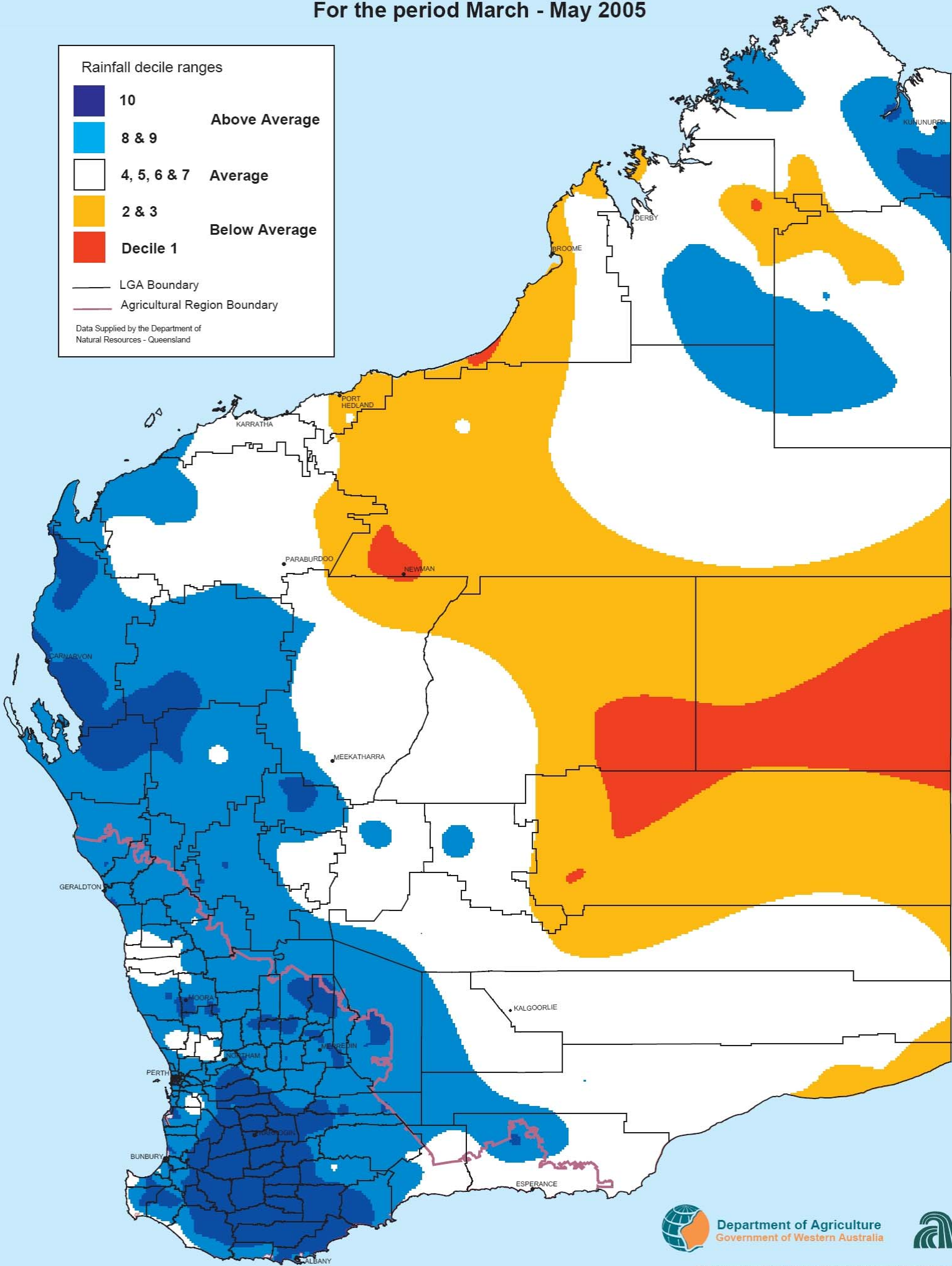
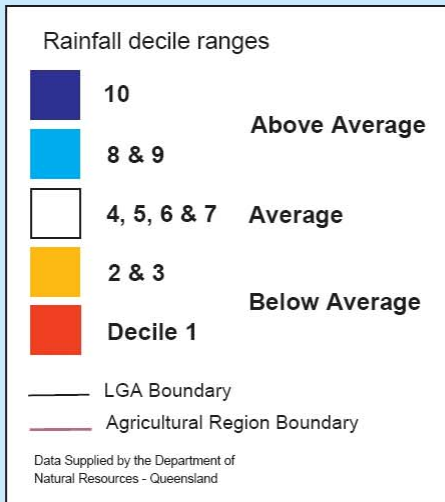
Shire	Wheat			Barley			Lupins			Canola			Oats			Field Peas		
	Area	Yield	Prod'n	Area	Yield	Prod'n	Area	Yield	Prod'n	Area	Yield	Prod'n	Area	Yield	Prod'n	Area	Yield	Prod'n
Geraldton:																		
Chapman Valley	95,000	2.00	190,000	14,000	1.80	25,200	37,000	1.40	51,800	4,000	1.40	5,600	400	2.00	800	0	0.00	0
Geraldton	3,000	2.50	7,500	500	2.00	1,000	1,000	2.00	2,000	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0
Greenough	36,000	3.00	108,000	2,500	2.50	6,250	13,000	2.00	26,000	9,000	1.60	14,400	170	2.00	340	0	0.00	0
Inwin	11,000	3.20	35,200	1,000	2.50	2,500	7,000	2.50	17,500	1,000	1.60	1,600	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0
Mingenev	75,000	2.50	187,500	9,000	1.80	16,200	39,000	1.80	70,200	4,000	1.50	6,000	100	0.00	0	200	1.50	300
Morawa	110,000	1.70	187,000	10,000	1.60	16,000	7,000	1.00	7,000	1,000	1.00	1,000	2,000	1.00	2,000	200	1.20	240
Mullewa	170,000	1.70	289,000	13,000	1.80	23,400	30,000	1.60	48,000	4,000	1.50	6,000	2,000	0.00	0	100	1.00	100
Northampton	92,500	2.00	185,000	10,000	1.90	19,000	45,000	1.30	72,000	7,000	1.20	8,400	800	2.00	1,600	0	0.00	0
Three Springs:																		
Carnamah	50,000	3.00	150,000	5,000	3.00	15,000	6,000	1.80	10,800	5,000	1.50	7,500	500	3.00	1,500	0	0.00	0
Coorow	55,000	3.00	165,000	6,000	3.00	18,000	14,000	1.80	25,200	4,000	1.50	6,000	1,000	3.00	3,000	0	0.00	0
Perenjori	140,000	2.20	308,000	8,000	2.00	16,000	9,000	1.20	10,800	2,500	1.00	2,500	2,000	2.00	4,000	1,500	1.00	1,500
Three Springs	51,000	3.00	153,000	4,000	3.00	12,000	22,000	1.70	37,400	2,600	1.50	3,900	500	3.00	1,500	500	1.50	750
Moora:																		
Chittering	4,500	3.00	13,500	1,600	3.00	4,800	1,000	1.20	1,200	1,700	1.50	2,550	800	0.00	0	0	0.00	0
Daiwallinu	240,000	1.80	432,000	15,000	1.80	27,000	40,000	1.00	40,000	4,000	0.80	3,200	600	1.20	720	0	0.00	0
Dandaragan	22,000	3.50	77,000	4,000	2.00	8,000	10,000	3.00	30,000	6,000	2.20	13,200	2,000	4.00	8,000	0	0.00	0
Gingin	800	2.00	1,600	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	100	0.00	0	0	0.00	0
Moora	10,000	2.50	25,000	8,000	2.50	20,000	20,000	1.20	24,000	8,000	1.50	12,000	2,800	2.10	5,880	600	1.00	600
Victoria Plains	60,000	3.30	198,000	7,000	3.00	21,000	10,000	1.40	14,000	10,000	1.50	15,000	3,000	2.10	6,300	400	1.00	400
Wongan-Ballidu	130,000	2.50	325,000	19,000	2.20	41,800	26,000	1.30	33,800	8,000	1.20	9,600	300	0.00	0	0	0.00	0
Northam:																		
Beverley	28,382	1.90	53,926	15,414	2.00	30,828	5,589	1.00	5,589	2,500	1.00	2,500	7,640	1.90	14,516	0	0.00	0
Cunderdin	66,703	2.00	133,406	9,929	2.00	19,858	21,186	1.20	25,423	1,200	0.90	1,080	2,222	2.40	5,333	100	1.00	100
Dowerin	60,379	2.80	169,061	9,852	2.00	19,704	8,738	1.30	11,359	1,110	1.60	1,776	390	2.00	780	250	1.50	375
Goomalling	42,373	2.48	105,085	8,313	2.12	17,624	6,268	1.32	8,274	3,500	1.30	4,550	1,463	2.00	2,926	1,000	1.32	1,320
Northam	15,599	2.30	35,878	2,018	2.20	4,440	4,826	1.20	5,791	600	1.10	660	868	2.50	2,170	500	1.40	700
Quairading	57,000	1.60	91,200	13,000	1.80	23,400	7,760	1.00	7,760	1,200	1.00	1,200	350	1.80	630	700	0.90	630
Tammin	27,862	3.42	95,288	6,567	3.44	22,590	4,709	1.70	8,005	550	1.10	605	547	3.00	1,641	0	0.00	0
Toodyay	6,646	2.80	18,609	2,198	2.80	6,154	2,501	1.80	4,002	3,000	1.80	4,800	455	2.50	1,138	300	1.40	420
Wyalkatchem	55,000	2.20	121,000	7,400	2.50	18,500	3,500	1.20	4,200	500	0.80	400	712	1.50	1,068	800	1.30	1,040
York	24,689	2.40	59,254	4,523	2.20	9,951	3,149	1.50	4,724	2,500	1.50	3,750	3,000	1.90	5,700	2,000	1.40	2,800
Merredin:																		
Bruce Rock	115,000	2.30	264,500	22,500	2.80	63,000	8,000	1.00	8,000	3,000	1.00	3,000	200	2.50	500	400	1.30	520
Kellerberrin	70,000	2.50	175,000	13,500	3.00	40,500	6,000	1.00	6,000	2,000	1.20	2,400	300	2.00	600	800	1.30	1,040
Koorda	102,000	1.70	173,400	7,500	2.20	16,500	2,000	1.00	2,000	300	1.00	300	1,000	1.50	1,500	800	1.00	800
Merredin	119,000	2.00	238,000	14,000	2.50	35,000	3,000	1.00	3,000	900	1.20	1,080	1,000	2.00	2,000	700	1.10	770
Mount Marshall	164,000	1.80	295,200	9,000	2.30	20,700	5,500	1.00	5,500	400	1.00	400	1,500	1.50	2,250	100	1.00	100
Mukinbudin	150,000	2.00	300,000	9,000	2.50	22,500	3,000	1.00	3,000	400	1.00	400	600	1.50	900	1,700	1.00	1,700
Narembeen	140,000	2.00	280,000	18,000	2.50	45,000	5,000	1.00	5,000	2,000	1.00	2,000	1,400	2.00	2,800	2,000	1.30	2,600
Nungarin	56,000	2.00	112,000	6,000	2.50	15,000	500	1.00	500	100	1.00	100	300	2.00	600	500	1.10	550
Trayning	114,000	2.00	228,000	7,800	2.50	19,500	500	1.00	500	500	1.00	500	150	1.75	263	200	1.20	240
Westonia	90,000	1.80	162,000	13,000	2.30	29,900	1,000	1.00	1,000	2,000	1.00	2,000	1,600	1.75	2,800	700	1.00	700
Yilgarn	200,500	2.00	401,000	10,500	2.50	26,250	4,000	1.00	4,000	1,000	0.80	800	4,500	1.75	7,875	700	1.00	700
Lake Grace:																		
Kondinin	125,000	2.20	275,000	35,000	2.30	80,500	15,000	1.20	18,000	10,000	1.20	12,000	2,500	2.30	5,750	4,000	1.20	4,800
Kulin	100,000	2.20	220,000	22,000	2.30	50,600	7,000	1.20	8,400	3,000	1.20	3,600	2,000	2.30	4,600	2,000	1.20	2,400
Lake Grace	270,000	2.20	594,000	120,000	2.30	276,000	25,000	1.20	30,000	8,000	1.20	9,600	8,000	2.30	18,400	4,000	1.20	4,800
Narrogin:																		
Boddington	600	2.50	1,500	2,000	3.00	6,000	400	1.50	600	950	2.00	1,900	1,400	3.00	4,200	500	1.00	500
Brookton	27,000	1.75	47,250	5,300	2.00	10,600	5,000	1.50	7,500	1,600	1.00	1,600	4,500	2.50	11,250	1,000	1.00	1,000
Corrigin	78,000	1.75	136,500	22,000	2.00	44,000	10,000	1.00	10,000	3,000	1.00	3,000	500	2.00	1,000	1,500	1.00	1,500
Cuballing	11,000	2.50	27,500	7,000	2.00	14,000	1,500	1.50	2,250	3,500	1.00	3,500	5,000	2.50	12,500	50	1.00	50
Narrogin	21,000	2.00	42,000	8,500	2.25	19,125	2,000	1.50	3,000	5,000	1.50	7,500	9,000	2.50	22,500	100	1.00	100
Pingelly	28,500	2.00	57,000	11,000	2.00	22,000	6,000	1.50	9,000	4,000	1.50	6,000	3,500	2.00	7,000	50	1.00	50
Wandering	3,000	2.75	8,250	5,000	3.00	15,000	700	1.50	1,050	3,500	1.50	5,250	5,500	2.50	13,750	1,000	1.00	1,000
Wickepin	58,000	1.50	87,000	10,500	2.00	21,000	2,000	1.25	2,500	4,000	1.25	5,000	3,000	2.00	6,000	200	1.00	200
Williams	6,000	2.75	16,500	10,000	2.50	25,000	1,000	1.50	1,500	7,000	2.00	14,000	9,000	2.75	24,750	100	1.00	100
Katanning:																		
Boyup Brook	2,500	4.00	10,000	4,000	4.00	16,000	0	0.00	0	5,200	2.00	10,400	250	4.00	1,000	400	2.00	800
Broomehill	20,000	3.00	60,000	9,000	3.00	27,000	1,000	1.50	1,500	7,700	1.50	11,550	4,000	3.00	12,000	800	1.20	960
Dumbleyung	70,000	2.50	175,000	23,100	3.00	69,300	5,500	1.70	9,350	5,500	1.50	8,250	3,500	3.00	10,500	1,200	0.80	960
Gnowangerup	76,000	3.00	228,000	39,600	3.00	118,800	10,000	1.70	17,000	25,000	1.30	32,500	3,500	3.00	10,500	1,500	1.00	1,500
Katanning	25,000	3.00	75,000	13,200	3.00	39,600	2,000	1.70	3,400	10,000	1.50	15,000	3,000	3.00	9,000	1,000	1.20	1,200
Kent	100,000	2.75	275,000	41,800	3.00	125,400	10,000	1.70	17,000	10,000	1.30	13,000						

Western Australian Rainfall (mm) May 2005
Product of the National Climate Centre



RAINFALL DECILE RANKINGS

For the period March - May 2005



RAINFALL DECILE RANKINGS For the period March - May 2005





100 0 100 200 300 kilometres

LEGEND

SHIRE BOUNDARY 

WHEAT BELT BOUNDARY 

Rainfall decile ranges

	10	Above Average
	8 & 9	
	4, 5, 6 & 7	Average
	2 & 3	Below Average
	Decile 1	

