

Australian Oilseeds Federation

Crop Report



February 2009

Canola 2008/09

Canola production estimates have been finalised for the 2008/09 season. The crop finished better than expected with the variable conditions on the east coast not impacting yields as significantly as expected. The good finish to the Western Australian crop has seen production revised up also. Overall production for the national crop has been revised up to 1.88 million tonnes.

	2007/08	2008/09	
	Production (tonnes)	Area Planted (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
NSW	44,000	195,000	262,000
VIC	200,000	185,000	251,000
SA	155,000	165,000	227,000
WA	670,000	620,000	1,138,000
Total	1,069,000	1,165,000	1,878,000

Source: Industry Estimates, 16/01/09

Sunflower 2008/09

Harvesting of early planted mono crops has commenced in all areas except Liverpool Plains. Yields are reported as ranging between 1.2 to 1.8 tonnes/Ha and early oil results are indicating 40 to 41%. The effect of the hot dry conditions across northern NSW and southern Queensland on late crop yield potential is still to be realised. The proportion of the crop on irrigation is expected to hold up average yields. Almost 80% of the crop is mono-unsaturated type, with poly around 20% and balance in birdseed/confectionary types.

	2007/08	2008/09 Estimates	
	Production (tonnes)	Area Planted (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
QLD	31,950	23,700	31,900
NSW	41,050	30,200	47,300
Total	73,000	53,900	79,200

Source: Industry Estimates, 16/02/09

The **Liverpool Plains** has experienced very hot and dry conditions for most of January and February. This has placed all crops under stress and depleted remaining soil moistures to critical levels. Rainfall of 30-50 mm on 14-15 February was received across most of the region and this will benefit the crop going forward. The early planted crops are ranging from mid grain fill through to harvest ready. Current yield estimates are for the crop to average 2.0 t/ha, with better crops possibly realising 2.5 t/ha.

Rutherglen bug pressure has been minimal, although most growers have sprayed at least once for Rutherglen bug and/or heliothis.

Harvest is now underway in the **Moree** district for early planted crops, about two weeks behind usual practice. The rainfall in mid February will delay harvesting for a further week. Yields have been variable ranging from 1.2-2.0 t/ha. Oil yields are averaging around 38%, but some crops have yielded in the low 40% range. The late planted crops are varying from budding through to flowering, with the mid month rainfall providing a well needed boost to these crops.

Soybean 2008/09

January and February have seen a mixed bag for the national soybean crop, with extremely heavy rainfall in northern Queensland causing flooding and water logging combined with hot dry conditions in southern Queensland and NSW. Overall, the national crop prospects are still positive at this stage although favourable conditions for the remainder of the season are required to realise potential.

	2007/08	2008/09 Estimates	
	Production (tonnes)	Area Planted (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
QLD	20,930	33,750	78,800
NSW	13,800	24,200	57,300
VIC	0	0	0
Total	34,730	57,950	136,100

Source: Industry Estimates 13/02/09

Planting has been finalised in **Queensland**, with heavy rainfall in early February preventing the possibility of further planting reported last month. Overall there are no changes to last month's area predictions. The effects of the heavy rainfall in northern and central Queensland are still to be determined and it is too early to account for the effect on potential crop yields. Crops in southern Queensland have continued to experience stress due to the hot, drier conditions. This is expected to impact yields in these regions, but the prospect of rain in mid to late February could counteract this effect and thus, estimates have been left unchanged at this stage. The Burnett, Lockyer and Fassifern areas received small rainfall events in early February which have help to sustain crop growth and potential.

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Crops in the Darling Downs and Western Downs areas are in early flowering and are under stress from the dry conditions and without significant rain in the next week, some crop failure could be expected as soil moisture levels become inadequate.

The **NSW** north coast received over two inches of rain on 12th February which has helped struggling crops however the hot, dry conditions earlier in month have resulted in a slight decrease in yield potential. More rain is expected in latter half of month which should see the crops in this area maintain performance. The dryland sown crops on the northern slopes and plains have also been affected by the drier conditions. There has been a reduction in yield estimates, combined with a small area cut for hay. Rainfall is required before end of month to avoid further reduction in yield and an increase in hay or grazing of the crop. The north-west irrigated crop is experiencing a historically high impact by Silverleaf white fly and also some incidence of other insect pests. Yield reductions are expected as a result. Additional rainfall in the next couple of weeks is needed to secure yield estimates. Due to some late plantings in the central area of the state, the NSW area planted has increased slightly, but the recent hot weather has caused stress to many crops, including those under irrigation. The Riverina crop also suffered the very hot weather in late January/early February, although this is not expected to impact yield at this stage.

Upcoming events

Australian Grains Industry Conference, 27-29 July 2009, Melbourne – www.ausgrainsconf.com

World Congress on Oils & Fats and 28th ISF Congress, 27-30 September 2009, Sydney – www.isfsydney2009.com

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