

Australian Oilseeds Federation Crop Report



October 2018

Canola 2018/19

('000t)	2017/18 Final		October 2018 Month Estimate	
	Harvested Area (hectares)	Production (tonnes)	Area to Harvest (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
NSW	600	618	160	140
Vic	450	750	187	250
SA	250	375	150	150
WA	1,347	1,900	1,090	1420
TOTAL	2,647	3,643	1,587	1,960

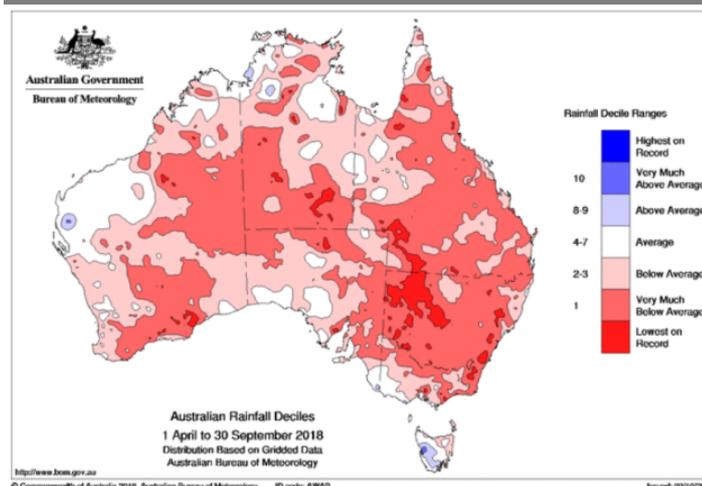
Source: Industry Estimates, GIWA; PIRSA; NSW DPI

Current estimates are indicating the national canola crop to be the smallest since the drought year of 2009 in eastern Australia, and similar to that year Western Australia will produce more than 50% of national production; as much as 70% in 2018. Due to the patchy and late establishment of the crop and the dry season, crops have not grown the biomass they would normally, so yield expectations are lower. The map below indicates how dry the growing season has been through most of the growing regions.

There is a higher level of uncertainty for production in the eastern states due to varying estimates of the amount of area sprayed out, grazed or cut for silage and hay, in a very dry season where severe and widespread frosts reduced yield potential even further in many areas. In addition the variability in yield potential across paddocks, farms and regions is huge depending on whether crops could access deep subsoil water and/or the timing of an extra 20–30 mm from storms. There has been no heat shock stress on crops this season. Any rainfall over the next 2–3 weeks will be critical to determine yield outcomes.

Rainfall

Growing Season April–September rainfall deciles



NSW has lost around 65% of the canola crop due to drought and spring frosts which has resulted in large areas cut for silage and hay. Production is uncertain and will depend on rainfall to fill seed and pods over the coming few weeks. Greater than 95% of the remaining crop for harvest is in the South West Slopes, Southern and Central Tablelands, and eastern Riverina.

Following a patchy and delayed crop establishment, rainfall has been on average decile 1 (April–September) through most of the growing season, with small pockets closer to decile 2. September rainfall was generally well below average (decile 2–3) and October rainfall to date has been patchy but useful to crops where it fell. For the second consecutive year severe frosts from 28–30 August followed by more frosts in mid-September, made decisions easier for growers to cut crops that might otherwise have been kept for grain.

Late season pest pressure has been high and most crops will be sprayed for aphids and/or heliothis. The green peach aphid is widely present in crops and has been observed feeding on the underside of pods which is unusual. Its presence could serve as a notice for next year's crop should conditions be favourable for survival over summer.

Grain quality is expected to be highly variable with lower oil contents and smaller grain anticipated.

For **Victoria**, the area for grain is estimated at around 188,000 ha, a reduction of 55% on the area sown. Dry seasonal conditions and some moderate to severe frosts in August and September have followed a similar pattern to NSW and parts of SA, the exception being the South West that has recorded a rainfall decile 4-7 (April-September). However, September and early October was very dry and 20-30 mm rain is urgently needed to achieve current yield potential.

Large areas of crop in the Mallee failed altogether, and the majority of the crop in the north and north-east were cut for hay. About half the crop in the Wimmera has been cut for hay, and the remaining area in the south has low yield potential.

South Australia had an estimated 240,000 ha sown , however the crop area for harvest is now estimated to be about 150,000 ha, and similar to NSW there is some uncertainty about the area cut for hay and the potential yield of the remaining crop.

Seasonal conditions have been generally good in the Lower Eyre Peninsula and Lower South East regions where average yields are expected. Rainfall for April to September has been decile 4-7, which is about average, but September rainfall has been well below average in these areas (decile 1-2) and October is currently below average as well.

The Mallee and Upper Eyre Peninsula will produce little, if any grain, whilst the Upper Mid North and the Upper York Peninsula have sustained frost damage in late August and again in mid-September resulting in significant areas cut for hay.

The season in **Western Australia** has been challenging, but not as much as the drought or frost affected eastern states. Following a late start and slow emergence that reduced plant stands the overall crop is set to achieve close to average yields overall. Current production estimates have 15% in the Geraldton zone, 25% in the Esperance zone and 30% in both the Kwinana and Albany zones.

Despite conditions being generally drier than normal in many areas through September, there have been no real heat stress events and this has allowed crops with reasonable soil moisture to continue filling pods.

The frosts in mid-September have taken the top off yield potential across areas of the southern grainbelt,

in particular the Lakes region, with low lying areas suffering significant damage.

Windrowing/swathing has commenced on early sown crops in coastal areas of the Geraldton zone, and is about to start further inland. Many crops in southern areas have or will be sprayed for heliothis and/or a combination of aphids and diamondback moth.

Grain quality is expected to be good.

Upcoming Events

AOF Annual Dinner:	24 October 2018 Melbourne
AOF Forum 2018:	25 October 2018 Melbourne

AOF Crop Report is provided free due to the support of the following Oilseed Development Fund (ODF) contributors

Alba Edible Oils	GrainCorp Oils	Ridley Corporation
Cargill Australia	MSM Milling	Riverina Oils (ROBE)
Goodman Fielder	Peerless Foods	Upfield Foods