

# Australian Oilseeds Federation

## Crop Report



April 2007

### Canola 2007/08

Our first estimates for the 2007/08 canola crop are for a 1.39 million tonne crop. However, this is dependent on a wide spread seasonal break in late April/early May.

	2006/07	2007/08 Estimates	
	Production (tonnes)	Area Planted (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
NSW	30,000	210,100	295,000
VIC	42,000	217,000	415,000
SA	75,000	150,000	215,000
WA	365,000	390,000	470,000
Total	512,000	967,100	1,395,000

Source: Industry Estimates, 13/04/07

The forecast for NSW is for a significant recovery on last year, although this is still well below production levels of the late 1990s. However, this is dependent on an early break to the season and a substantial quantity of rain is needed by early May to see the estimated area planted. Reflecting the mood across eastern Australia, growers would like to grow canola, but are unlikely to take the risk if it is a late season. While prices are good, growers are feeling the impact of the poor season in 2006/07, lack of subsoil moisture and high fertilizer prices. This will see growers be risk adverse and see reduced levels of dry sowing. Across the state, sub soil moisture levels are virtually nonexistent except where there has been storm rain.

While Victorian growers are also waiting for opening rain, given the winter dominant rainfall pattern, this may not need to be as substantive as NSW to kick-start planting. April has been dry, with periods of high temperatures. Growers are looking to put canola into the rotation, which should see canola area maintained at levels of previous years. Like NSW, rotation and prices are supporting factors, but lack of cashflow and high costs are limiting this. Rain is needed by mid May to see estimated area planted realised. There may be some upside if there is good rain by mid May.

Parts of South Australia such as the Eyre Peninsula and mid North have received good rain in March, although this has been followed by high temperatures in April. There is good interest in canola in the lower rainfall regions, with growers looking to plant in April. The south east is more uncertain following crop failures last season. Overall, estimates have been left in line with previous years.

The positive price outlook for canola prices based on forward contracts is supportive of canola plantings in Western Australia. Sub soil moisture is reasonable along the south coast and very good immediately around Esperance. It is expected that planting will commence shortly along the South coast, while the rest of the state is relatively dry and waiting for opening rains. Northern and Eastern growers who experienced a hard time last year are likely to plant less canola in favour of cereals, while Western, Great Southern and South Coast growers may plant similar or more hectares compared to last year mainly due to the price. Overall, area is estimated at slightly below (down 2.5%) on last year however an early break could see upside to this estimate.

### Soybeans 2006/07

Estimates for the soybean crop have been revised down slightly, reflecting the continuing dry conditions.

	2005/06	2006/07 Estimates	
	Production (tonnes)	Area Planted (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
QLD	14,710	5,160	13,300
NSW	40,688	8,525	23,955
VIC	900	0	0
Total	56,298	13,685	37,255

Source: Industry Estimates, 13/04/07

The Queensland crop is pretty much unchanged from last month, with exception of area being revised down in the Darling Downs region. Harvest has just commenced.

The NSW crop is dominated by production on the north coast. Harvest has commenced and crops are showing good yields. The inland areas continue to suffer from lack of water and both area and yield has been revised down. The small crop in the Riverina is looking good and with harvest having commenced, yields have been revised up.

Virtual soybean site -

[http://www.australianoilseeds.com/agronomy\\_centre/the\\_virtual\\_soybean\\_crop](http://www.australianoilseeds.com/agronomy_centre/the_virtual_soybean_crop)

## Sunflowers 2006/07

Sunflower estimates have been revised down from the February estimate as the projected late crop was not realised. Despite some good rainfall, very little late crop eventuated in Central Queensland. This will see one of the smallest sunflower crops on record.

	2005/06	2006/07 Estimates	
	Production (tonnes)	Area Planted (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
QLD	2,400	4,100	2,960
NSW	92,500	13,900	15,380
Total	94,900	18,000	18,340

Source: Industry Estimates, 13/04/07

There is very little late planted crop in northern NSW and continued drought stress has seen some of the small area planted, sprayed out. There is a small area of confectionary sunflower planted under irrigation. This crop is currently at grain fill stage and yield potential is high.

The main area for late plant sunflowers is on the Liverpool Plains where there is a mix of dryland and irrigated crops, with the majority being dryland. These crops range from early grain fill back to early flowering. The presence of powdery mildew at low levels has been noted. However the presence of high numbers of heliothis has been more concerning and around half of the crops have been sprayed once or are near to being sprayed. The high yield potential of these crops has made spraying a reasonable option. Many of the crops have received between 160 and 190mms of in crop rainfall during their vegetative growth stages. However, additional rain to assist in finalising grain filling will be required to maximise yield potential in many cases. While the potential of the best crops is approaching 3t/ha, yields are more likely to average around 1.8-2.0t/ha. However, there is still a way to go before harvest.

## Cottonseed 2006/07

Estimates have been revised down again for the cottonseed crop to around 280-300,000 tonnes. The crop has struggled and has depended on rain to top up irrigation.

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

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