

Australian Oilseeds Federation

Crop Report



August 2006

Canola 2006/07

The Australian canola crop hangs in the balance as production estimates are revised down by over 10%.

	2005/06 production (tonnes)	2006/07 Estimates	
		Area (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
NSW	253,750	180,000	234,000
VIC	337,500	213,000	285,000
SA	217,500	150,000	210,000
WA	630,000	400,000	290,000
Total	1,438,750	943,000	1,019,000

Source: Industry Estimates, 11/08/06

The **NSW** crop remains in a precarious situation. Compared to last year the crop is later, has less sub soil moisture and has experienced colder ground temperatures. As a result the crop is well behind in development and varies across the state from flowering in parts of the north to 4-5 leaf stage in some parts of the south. The crop has in the order of 10-15 days moisture and thus, a significant rain event before the end of August will be critical to securing the crop and average yields. Once again, a good spring will be a key determinant of the crop. Red legged earth mite, and in the south, lucerne flea have been a problem, as has weed control. Currently, there has been little top dressing by farmers and this can be expected to impact yield and quality. Area has been left unchanged at this stage, but if there is not rain in the next few weeks, some loss is expected. Yields have been revised down to 1.3 t/ha giving production of 234,000 tonnes.

Victoria has only seen one significant rainfall event for the winter and the crop is now looking for more rain. This is expected to be too late for the Mallee, and yield is being lost in the Wimmera. Good rainfall in the next week or so would turn prospects around in the Wimmera and other parts of Victoria. Crops in the western districts are holding up okay at this stage. Crop development is variable and in the Wimmera and Mallee crops have started to run up. Rain is needed in the very near term to see Victoria back on track to achieving its early potential. Area has been left unchanged, but yields have been revised down by 15% to give production of 285,000 tonnes.

Conditions are variable across **South Australia**. Conditions have been reasonable in the southern Eyre Peninsula and mid north and crops are looking good. They are currently flowering, however, require moisture to continue this development. In the South East, conditions have not been as favourable. The area only received 10-15mm in the July rain event and while this was sufficient to germinate dry sown crops, the crops are a long way behind and need follow up rain to catch up. Thus, like NSW and Victoria, rain is need in the next 2-3 weeks to avoid further downside. Area has been left unchanged, with yields reduced and production estimated at 210,000 tonnes.

Conditions have not improved in **Western Australia** and have probably slipped a little on last month. Recent rainfall has not provided the moisture expected, and hence optimism is diminishing. A small crop is predicted and the crop is hanging on good August rainfall and kind conditions in September if it is to reach full potential. The considerable rainfall event that was predicted earlier this week was nowhere near as good as forecast. Combined with this, some districts have experienced higher daytime temperatures that have moisture stressed some eastern wheatbelt crops. The Northern areas are still patchy between districts and within crops. The Great Southern from Williams down to Mt Barker is a little better than earlier estimates, but will still be below average. East of the Great Southern to the Lower Lakes district is around average. The area from Madden to Esperance along the south coast is above average and is the "hope of the state". There are no significant pest or disease issues. Reports of Rutherglen bugs need to be watched and the Department of Agriculture is continuing to monitor plague locust egg beds due to high numbers reported in autumn. Small pointed snails have been reported in late sown crops in the south. The WA crop has been reduced to 290,000 tonnes on the back of lower than expected rainfall received during July. This would be the lowest yield since 1997/98 i.e. lowest in 10 years, given an implied 400,000 sown hectares.

Watch the canola crop progress at the Virtual Canola Crop site.
http://www.australianoilseeds.com/info/virtual_canola_crop

Upcoming Events

AOF Forum and AGM 10-12 October 2006. For further details go to www.australianoilseeds.com

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