

# Australian Oilseeds Federation

## Crop Report



March 2009

### Sunflower 2008/09

February has been relatively kind to the sunflower crop, with most areas receiving adequate rainfall in late February and early March. Overall crop predictions have not altered from last month's crop report.

	2007/08 Production (tonnes)	2008/09 Estimates	
		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, 13/03/09

Planting in **Central Queensland** is all but complete. Conditions have been ideal and expectations are very good at present.

Harvesting of early planted mono crops is a bit more than 80% complete on the **Darling Downs**. The late planted crops have commenced flowering and would benefit greatly from rain.

Harvesting commenced in late February on the **Liverpool Plains** for early planted sunflowers. Yields to date have been favourable with yields up to 2.7t/ha and are expected to average of around 2.0t/ha. Oil contents have been averaging around 40-41% from early deliveries with some oil contents in the mid 40's. While the early plant saw an unusually high incidence of a variety of sunflower diseases, the impact has generally been negligible. This included the presence of charcoal rot, powdery mildew and rhizopus head rot. Isolated cases of high Rutherglen bug numbers have also been reported, although the majority of the focus has been on helioverpa control.

The late planted crop is ranging from flowering through to seed fill. Whitefly numbers have risen to concerning levels over the last few weeks. The late plant benefited greatly from the rain received in mid February and further rain in the coming weeks will cement yield potential for the latest of these crops.

In the **Moree** district, late planted sunflower growth stage is variable from flowering through to physiological maturity. Good rains have been of great benefit to the late plant crop, except where excess rain was received after sowing resulting in a patchy plant stand.

### Soybean 2008/09

The soybean crop has also benefited from rainfall in late February and early March. There has only been a slight change to estimates from last month.

	2007/08 Production (tonnes)	2008/09 Estimates	
		Area Planted (hectares)	Production (tonnes)
QLD	20,930	33,750	78,800
NSW	13,800	24,855	57,310
VIC	0	500	1,250
Total	34,730	59,105	137,360

Source: Industry Estimates 13/03/09

In **North Queensland**, excessive rain and flooding has seen some crop damage due to water logging. In addition the excessive rain halted further opportunity for late planting and thus, area planted estimates have reduced slightly. The coastal crops in **Central Queensland** are looking very good and performing well. Inland there have been some reports of whitefly, but these are currently not at sufficient numbers to affect crop performance and yield potential.

Yields on the **Darling Downs** are expected to come back, with available water for irrigation, irrigation expertise and the need for rainfall limiting potential. Crops are under some stress and grain set has not been totally achieved.

The NSW **Northern Rivers** crop has experienced ideal conditions and is looking very good. Area planted has been increased and yields are still expected to be around 2.5t/ha. There has been a small area of the **Northern Tablelands** crop cut for hay. Irrigated crops are expected to perform well, but further rain is required to secure potential. There has been some crop loss in the **Macquarie Valley** due to lack of water. There could be further failure of dryland crops if rainfall in March is not forthcoming. In **Southern NSW**, crops planted in mid to late November are looking very good and are in final stages of seed fill. Most are receiving the final watering and harvest is expected to commence by first week of April.

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