

Crop Outlook

Soybeans 2003/04

Despite good yields throughout many parts of Queensland and the north coast of NSW, hot weather conditions in February and March have taken their toll. Disappointing yields in northern NSW dry land crops and in the Riverina have been the main reason for the lower estimates.

Harvest is 80% complete and quality in most regions has been good. Green Vegetable Bug damage in the Atherton Tablelands and Burdekin has resulted in lower production in northern Queensland, but other parts of the sunshine state are reporting good yields and above average quality. North Coast NSW harvest is well advanced and crops are yielding well with production estimates up slightly. However, damage from hot conditions in the early months of 2004 has been realised as harvest has commenced with production estimates down in northern NSW and the Riverina. Harvested area in the Riverina has been revised down with yields also down slightly.

Victorian production has also been slightly reduced.

Soybean processors in southern Queensland are reporting sightings of Bruchid beetles for the first time. Previously the beetle had only been present in central Queensland. They are considered a common insect with stored pulses. Tell tale signs are when beetles are leaving perfectly rounded holes from where they emerge from the grain. More information can be found at <http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/fieldcrops/3936.html>

State	Area Planted (Ha's)	Production (Tonnes)
Queensland	15100	32725
NSW	17765	40140
Victoria	546	819
Total	33411	73684

Source: Industry Estimates, 16/4/04

Sunflowers 2003/04

	Area Planted (ha's)	Production (tonnes)
Monounsaturated sunflower		
Queensland	10,000	11,500
NSW	16,200	23,500
Polyunsaturated sunflower		
Queensland	15,000	14,800
NSW	4,950	8,200
Total	46,150	58,000

Source: Industry Estimates, 19/4/04

Heat stress has severely affected some sunflower crops in Central Queensland reducing March production estimates by 2,000 tonnes. Large numbers of white fly are also appearing on seedling crops but it is too early to say if this will impact yields.

Market Comment

A degree of uncertainty has crept into the soybean complex with talk of imports of Brazilian soybean and doubts relating to the economics of soybean crushing in China which has resulted in a significant price correction in soybeans and canola over the past week.

World weather conditions has 2004/05 canola production edging higher. Heavy rainfall in Western Canada in recent weeks was beneficial to the Canadian canola crop. Above average precipitation in Europe during April has assured a large canola crop from the EU 25.

Dry conditions through much of Australia's canola growing region has meant a slow start to plantings. Recent falls in WA over the weekend will allow canola planting to progress in that state. Victoria received light falls but is in need of follow up falls to progress. The major canola planting regions of southern and central NSW are still predominately dry although some dry planting has occurred.

Upcoming Meetings

Agriculture Australia 10 and 11 August, 2004 Sydney. For further information contact Liz Walker 03 9573 9816

AOF Industry Forum & AGM 6 & 7 October 2004, Melbourne. For further information contact AOF 03 9533 2623

Soybean Tour - Canada

The Northern Australian Soybean Industry Association is organising a tour of the Canadian soybean industry for September 2004. The tour will include visits to soybean processing companies for feed and food purposes, commercial and research farms, the University of Guelph, Canadian Grain Commission, Chatham and Ontario Soybean Growers Association. **Anyone wishing to participate in tour, should contact Catherine Brodie on 07 4630 1944 for details.**

Canola Blackleg guide

The CAA Blackleg ratings for 2004 and National Recommendations in relation to the Blackleg Resistance Breakdown are now available on the CAA website. The Blackleg ratings are based on ACAS protocols and compiled from data supplied by all canola breeding programs and associated pathologists throughout Australia.

The CAA website can be found www.canolaaustralia.com or hard copies can be obtained from CAA on 03 9573 9816.

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