

GIWA Crop Report

September 6 2012

WA Planting area estimate (hectares)

Port zone	Wheat	Barley	Canola	Oats	Lupins	Field pea	State total
Kwinana	2,268,000	397,000	272,000	117,000	82,000	15,000	
Albany	630,000	331,000	252,000	94,000	20,000	6,000	
Esperance	446,000	250,000	245,000	3,000	20,000	40,000	
Geraldton	932,000	40,000	143,000	5,000	180,000	1,000	
Totals	4,276,000	1,018,000	912,000	219,000	302,000	62,000	6,789,000
<i>2011</i>	<i>4,501,000</i>	<i>1,098,000</i>	<i>749,000</i>	<i>197,000</i>	<i>333,000</i>	<i>60,000</i>	<i>6,938,000</i>

WA Grain production estimate (tonnes)

Port zone	Wheat	Barley	Canola	Oats	Lupins	Field pea	State total
Kwinana	3,187,000	729,000	249,000	200,000	77,000	16,000	
Albany	1,271,000	758,000	296,000	225,000	20,000	6,000	
Esperance	754,000	445,000	239,000	4,000	21,000	43,000	
Geraldton	1,365,000	57,000	98,000	6,000	158,000	700	
Totals	6,577,000	1,989,000	882,000	435,000	276,000	65,700	10,224,700
<i>2011</i>	<i>11,082,000</i>	<i>2,805,000</i>	<i>1,182,000</i>	<i>467,000</i>	<i>705,000</i>	<i>70,600</i>	<i>16,311,600</i>

●Note: Estimate is for total farm production, and includes grain retained on-farm for seed and stock feed, and direct private sales to end users and packers.

The rainfall totals for the month of August for most of the WA grainbelt, were about average. Temperatures were generally mild, though the northern regions were warmer than average in the last two weeks of August.

The August rains mostly fell on very dry soils for much of the grainbelt, a consequence of the very dry July, and consequently soil moisture levels did not increase markedly during the month. By the end of August many crops were showing signs of wilting and definitely facing downgraded yields. The exception was the South Coast and Esperance regions which had, and continue to have, very good soil moisture levels.

The planted area estimates for the 2012 crop have been adjusted downwards from last month. Combined with the poor growth of crops in the Geraldton port zone and most of the Kwinana port zone, the total grain production estimate for the State has been reduced by 1.1 million tones to just over 10 million tones.

On the positive side there are optimistic forecasts for rainfall events for spring across the State and this should enable grain quality to improve. Also, if the current higher grain prices hold, most growers should be able to meet budget targets set at the start of the year.

Of particular note this year is the ability of growers to produce potential yields of 1 t/ha with limited summer rain and on a growing season rainfall total of only 80 to 100mm. This is a testament to the management ability of growers in WA to use technology to adapt to dry seasons and still achieve a financial return.

Kwinana: The eastern part of the Kwinana zone is in generally poor condition. Some districts have exhausted stored moisture and crops were wilting before the recent early September rain of 6 to 10mm. This rain will maintain current crop conditions for a further 10 days and provided there is more rain, as is currently forecast for September, yields could still improve.

In the western part of the Kwinana zone, crop conditions are slightly better but still range from poor to below average. Crops in the New Norcia, Bolgart and Calingari areas are the exception and are in average condition with the cooler weather helping to improve potential crop yields.

Barley crops are maintaining yield potential, while a lot of Canola crops have commenced flower drop in response to the lack of soil moisture.

Albany: The north east of the Albany zone received between 10 and 20 mm in the first week of September. Potential yields and crop conditions have not altered greatly in the last month as August rainfall and mild temperatures combined to alleviate the impact of the low rainfall in July.

Cereal crops are at flag leaf to ear emergence. The best crops are in the districts between Mt Madden to Lake King, while crops in the north east Hyden and Kukerin areas have suffered from drier conditions. Crops in the Kulin, Kondinin and Karlgarin areas are in average condition.

Canola crops generally look in good condition but are only expected to yield between 0.7 to 0.8t/ha. This is because of low soil moisture levels in most districts with many crops showing signs of wilting prior to the recent rain.

On the positive side, apart from some aphid control, there have been no significant pests or disease issues.

In the southern and coastal Albany zone, cereal crop development is currently between the Z32-Z39 stages, Canola crops are 10-50% flowering, and lupins have commenced flowering. All crops are generally short, and without great biomass. Early sown canola has much higher yield potential than late sown canola. Lupin crops have established poorly with poor plant numbers and low biomass.

Soil moisture is on a knife edge with sufficient levels to just keep crops progressing, except for areas on the south coast which are still very wet. Crops on gravelly soils have shown the most wilting but the recent rain in the first week of September of 20 to 50mm has alleviated most moisture stress issues.

The impact of pests and diseases has been low. There is some Yellow spot and septoria in wheat to the south and east. Barley diseases are having a low impact. The wet conditions on the south coast have promoted leaf rust and powdery mildew, though not in large enough amounts to cause serious damage. Blackleg can be found in canola, but is having little impact.

Growers in the Albany zone are generally very positive with current prices, and with crops likely to have near average yields, most growers will achieve their budgeted outcomes.

Esperance: August rainfall was close to average across the Esperance port zone. This has continued the average to above average season for most districts in the zone. Overall the zone is on a decile 4 season, with the only exception being the mallee area which is still experiencing a decile 1 season. Waterlogging continues to be an issue for crops in the coastal districts.

Geraldton: The general condition of the crops over the majority of the Geraldton port zone is very poor due to very low levels of soil moisture. All crops have wilted in the last 10 days with crops on the sandier soils falling away to the point that even the recent rain will not improve the yields. However, crops sown early on deeper soils have reasonable potential.

The recent rainfall events at the start of September ranged from 20mm in coastal districts to 10-20mm in the central districts but only light falls of less than 10mm reached the eastern districts.

Wheat sown on well managed fallow country from 2011 has the highest potential and is showing the best growth for crops in the lower rainfall areas. Wheat crops are mostly in ear. Overall, the recent rains may improve the quality of the grain and reduce the risk of low weight and small grain.

The southern portion of the Geraldton port zone is holding up relatively well with crop yield potential for some crops about average but most will be below average.

Many Canola crops in the area are experiencing large numbers of Budworm and Aphids, and most canola crops have started to drop flowers due to the warm winds experienced in August. Crops sown on the deeper loam soils and with early emergence have podded, while later emerged crops are struggling to pod. Yields will vary with early emerging crops on these deeper soils showing very good moisture conversion with yields 0.8 – 1.0 t/ha. Crops sown on shallow soils or the lighter sands will be limited to yields of between 0.2 – 0.5 t/ha. Many poor canola crops have been sprayed out.

Very warm weather over the last week or so has burnt off many flowers in lupins resulting in poor pod retention on primary stem with only the very early emerged crops achieving secondary podding. The low height of most lupin crops is going to reduce harvest efficiency. High numbers of budworm are present with many crops being sprayed. Mice are also present in many of the paddocks that had high numbers earlier in the season. Most farmers have been reluctant to treat mice in paddocks due to the cost and the poor condition of the crops.

Crops around Eneabba have reduced yield potential. Generally, crops in the Midlands road regions are 25% down on average yield potential.

Dandaragan to Badgingarra crops have lost potential on the poorer sands. Crops in the Eastern low rainfall districts such as Pithara, Dalwallinu and up to Perenjori are in very poor condition with virtually no sub-soil moisture prior to the recent rain.

Cereals are at flag leaf to early ear emergence. Canola is starting to drop flowers in advanced crops. Aphids are being sprayed in canola. There is no powdery mildew in barley. More rain is needed to achieve predicted yields.

Crop Condition report September 6 2012
weighted by the production average for each zone

Port zone	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Kwinana	40	40	19	1	0
Albany	0	15	54	31	0
Esperance	0	23	50	23	5
Geraldton	60	31	9	0	0
State Totals	27	28	31	13	1

Kwinana regions	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
East	60	40	0	0	0
North	20	40	35	5	0
Central	40	45	15	0	0
Southern	40	35	25	0	0
Total	40	40	19	1	0

Albany regions	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Northern	0	10	50	40	0
West	0	20	50	30	0
Eastern	0	10	55	35	0
Coastal	0	20	60	20	0
Total	0	15	54	31	0

Esperance regions	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Mallee	0	50	40	10	0
East coastal	0	40	60	0	0
North western	0	0	80	20	0
West coastal	0	0	20	60	20
Total	0	23	50	23	5

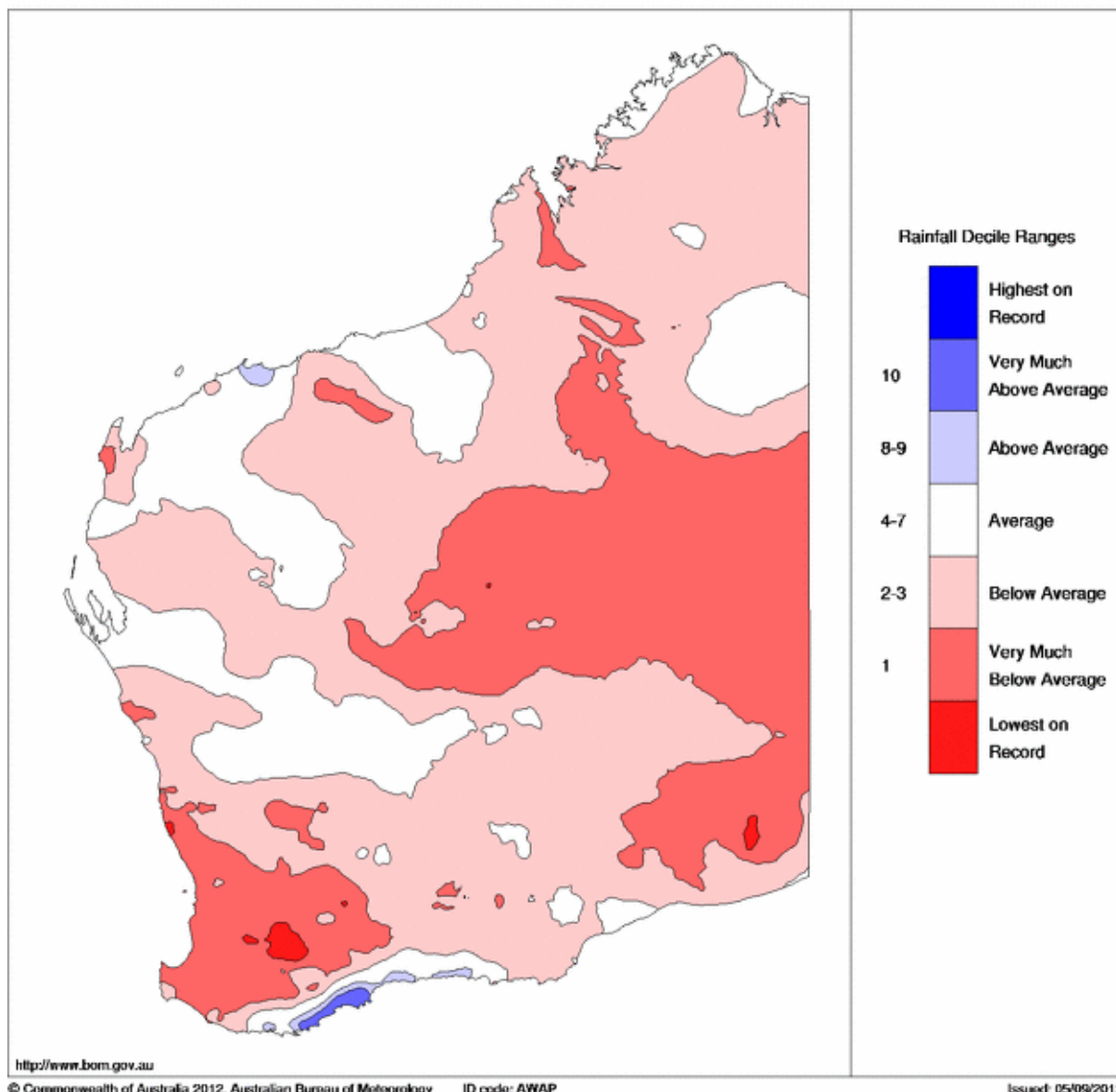
Geraldton regions	Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Northern	80	20	0	0	0
Eastern	80	20	0	0	0
Southern	35	40	25	0	0
South eastern	45	45	10	0	0
Total	60	31	9	0	0

Disclaimer: The information herein has been obtained from sources considered reliable but its accuracy and completeness cannot be guaranteed. Any advice has been prepared without taking into account specific objectives, financial situation or needs. No liability or responsibility is accepted for any errors or for any negligence, omissions in the contents, default or lack of care for any loss or damage whatsoever that may arise from actions based on any material contained in this publication. Readers who act on this information do so at their own risk. Consult your adviser before making crop, marketing or investment decisions.

GIWA would like to acknowledge the support of DAFWA and contribution from industry consultants in the production of this report

Western Australian Rainfall Deciles 1 June to 31 August 2012

Distribution Based on Gridded Data
Product of the National Climate Centre



Additional information can be sourced from:

- **[BoM rainfall deciles for WA August 2012](#)**
- **[BoM rainfall deciles for WA June to August 2012](#)**
- **[DAFWA Statistical Seasonal forecast](#)**
- **[BoM- WA Seasonal Rainfall Outlook: probabilities for September to November 2012](#)**
- **[BoM month to date rainfall for WA](#)**

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