

LUCERNE *Leader*



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LUCERNE AGRONOMY REPORT

by Scott Hutchings, Senior Agronomist, Cox Rural



We move into winter with one of a driest starts in recent history and a high level of uncertainty within the current lucerne seed market. For many the current situation may mean a change in strategy for the current winter cropping and forage season and potentially the next seed production season.

The first point of contact should be with your current seed production companies to gain clarity on future forecast pricing indicators and requirements for current contract commitments. Contact your marketers for comments on public varieties and forecast demand and speculative price indicators moving forward. Once you have this information you can make decisions about the immediate viability of seed production paddocks.

Now would be a good opportunity to take out paddocks that are out of certification, thinning or not performing.

For stands due to be taken out, work with your agronomist to work through gross margins for alternate crops like canola, barley and wheat where soil types are suitable, the gross margin on a high yielding irrigated broadacre crop may be competitive with short term forecast lucerne gross margins or look at specialty small seed crops or contract bulking up of new broadacre grain varieties.

For existing certified or strong stands you may want to consider over sowing with cereals for increased hay production in the first cut or to take through cereals or annual ryegrass for grain production while still maintaining the ability to graze, cut for hay or lock up for lucerne seed over summer. I have regularly looked after barley crops taken through for harvest-overs into certified lucerne stands.

With many hay sheds near to empty there may potentially be reasonable returns from hay production next season while graziers rebuild hay reserves. This can be a profitable alternative to seed production. If you do shift to hay production consult with your advisor about increased crop nutrition and watering

requirements. Also consider increased labour requirements, shedding requirements and marketing strategies.

If you still are planting new crop lucerne be sure to have contracts or your marketing strategy well defined prior to planting. While many have not had stands certified to EU standards due to increased time out of production it may be prudent to have more markets available for future seed production stands and an extra year out may not be the worst strategy in the current market.

This season feed is at a huge premium, to maximise feed on lucerne paddocks consider over-sowing with a cereal. Ryecorn and barley are generally the quickest to produce winter bulk with oats and ryegrass slower but providing high bulk and quality later in the season. Particularly consider this on winter dormant varieties which are now unlikely to produce significant feed until spring. Try not to overgraze highly winter active high crowned lucerne varieties, this can cause significant plant thinning as conditions become cold and damp and crown injury occurs.

Given cold and frosty conditions are already occurring pests such as red legged earthmite will have a significant effect on feed bulk early, treat paddocks as required but particularly focus on paddocks with annual species where they will wipe out emerging clovers before they can establish in a year like this. The use of gibberellic acid will also be of benefit to provide winter feed particularly on ryegrass and perennial grass pasture which are highly responsive especially when combined with UAN or urea.

Once again, I would encourage you to contact your marketers to be informed about future market conditions and make strategic decisions based on market outlook and the place of lucerne in your whole farm enterprise and your own individual risk factors.



Rabobank

TEMPERED' GROWTH FOR AUSTRALIAN FARMLAND PRICES IN YEAR AHEAD

- RABOBANK ANNUAL OUTLOOK



Rabobank

May 31, 2024

by Vitor Cacula Pistoia, Analyst RaboResearch, Australia & New Zealand

Australian farmland prices are set for further growth in the year ahead – but at a slowing pace – Rabobank says in its just-released annual **Australian Farmland Price Outlook**.

The global agribusiness banking specialist says after three consecutive years of “doubledigit” growth, the momentum in agricultural land price increases is expected to further slow in 2024, as farm profitability levels come off record highs.

And the price outlook is mixed across sector types and geographical regions, the bank says.

Rabobank is forecasting a “base case” increase of approximately five per cent in the median price per hectare of all agricultural land types nationally in the year ahead.

“Land prices will maintain their growth trend, but not for all sectors and regions,” the report says.

The bank’s analysis – of a data set sampling commercial sales across the country* – showed while the median price of agricultural land per hectare nationwide grew at a rate of 10.9 per cent in 2023, this was down on the stellar growth rates of 28.6 per cent and 27 per cent seen in 2022 and 2023 respectively.

New cycle

Report author, RaboResearch analyst Vitor Pistoia said this slowing growth trend in agricultural land prices reflected a “maturing land market”, with a less bullish outlook for farm profitability, along with weather challenges and a tighter supply of available properties.

“Australia’s farming sector experienced an unprecedented positive cycle from 2020 to early 2023. Record-high commodity prices and plentiful rainfall supported profitability, which boosted farm business equity and confidence in a brighter future,” he said.

“Outside investors joined this booming sector and turbo-charged competition for land, supported by low interest rates. The land market suddenly had many participants bidding – farmers willing to expand, investors pursuing capital gains and companies looking to invest in the carbon credit sector.”

On the flipside, Mr Pistoia said, farmers willing to exit the industry had used the opportunity to sell at rising prices, adding to the supply of land available for the increased demand.

Now, he said, the agricultural land market is finishing this cycle



Vitor Cacula Pistoia, Analyst RaboResearch

and starting a new one, where the number of farms for sale and bidders is lower than before, and the financial outlook for the sector, while overall strong, is not as positive.

2023 – a tale of two industries

2023 agricultural land prices reflected a “tale of two industries”, according to the report, with the median price for arable (cropping) land rising 20 per cent, while grazing land remained virtually stable, with the median price slipping 0.3 per cent.

“Dairy land prices also showed strong price growth,” the report said, “increasing 22 per cent in 2023.”

Mr Pistoia said the contrasting price movements seen across the different land types reflected the fortunes of the sectors during the year, with cattle and sheep commodity markets suffering a considerable decline.

The data analysed indicated the number of agricultural land deals fell in 2023, with national sales declining 35 per cent. This ranged across states with sales transactions down 43 per cent and 44 per cent respectively in Western Australia and Victoria, but only six per cent in South Australia, according to the analysis.

“Large deals – with sales above the A\$10 million threshold – also declined, down 33 per cent year on year and about in line with the decline in all farm sales,” Mr Pistoia said.

Agricultural land price movements varied across the country in 2023, the report found, with year-on-year growth in the median price per hectare in New South Wales (six per cent), Queensland (four per cent), South Australia (one per cent) and Tasmania (eight per cent).

Western Australia was a stand-out – the only state to surpass national median agricultural land price growth, with a 48 per cent increase in the year.

At the other end of the spectrum though, Victorian agricultural land prices declined overall – by eight per cent – “primarily impacted by the ebb and flow of the sheep and cattle markets,” the report said.

Mr Pistoia said overall agricultural land price growth in 2023 had been “more supported by the equity that had been built in past years than the profitability outlook for the farm sector”.

“Rainfall in a number of areas in the country along with the price of many commodities has not been as good as before, which undoubtedly impacted farmer margins. Farm input prices have come down, but not enough to compensate for the reduction in incomes,” he said.

Outlook

The report says while the outlook for key drivers of agricultural land values – including production volumes, commodity prices and farm income – are still promising for 2024/25, the “upsides are diminishing” compared with recent years. And interest rates remain an elevated cost, with further increases considered likely and no relief in sight.

To find out more about other Rabobank research, contact Rabobank’s Adelaide branch on (08) 8124 2300 or Rabobank’s Mt Gambier on (08) 8726 2500 or subscribe to RaboResearch Food & Agribusiness Australia & New Zealand on your podcast app.

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“Some regions might see a decline in winter crop production on the back of a dry start of the season,” Mr Pistoia said. “But the chance of a La Nina in the second half of 2024 offers a potential tailwind for cropping operations. Beef production is poised to expand on the back of good rains in large swathes of northern Australia.

“Commodity prices are still slightly above historical averages for a number of sectors, albeit down from record highs seen in recent years. Improved cattle prices and a better market outlook also mean grazing land should partially recover its price growth pace.” The longer-term outlook for agricultural land prices – for 2024 to 2029 – indicates a further slowing, the report said, with a gradual reduction in price growth, as buyers seek out the “best value for money”.

“The number of deals based on capital gains rather than economic fundamentals may dwindle as the market matures,” Mr Pistoia said.

But the forecast is still optimistic.

“The long-term view is crystal clear – farmland is in demand,” he said, “The pivotal point for the land market now is how to properly evaluate the ‘risk-reward’ scenario for such a long-term investment.”

And while the growth rate in agricultural land prices is slowing, Rabobank does not foresee a drop in land values in its forecast.

“A drop in land values would require widespread drought, serious economic hurdles and/or disease outbreak – none of which is on the horizon fortunately,” the report says.

*** The report analyses over 1500 sales from 2023 from a data set comprised of over 11,000 sales from across the country since 2019. This high-quality data represents a sample of Australian commercial farm sales.**

BARENBRUG UPDATE

by Daryl Turner, Southern Production Manager



Domestic Lucerne Market

Autumn demand for lucerne has been strong in most key growing areas. There were supply constraints for key products due to delays with harvest, cleaning and testing.

Quality has been variable as well which had to be managed carefully. Minimal rainfall in parts of the southern region has forced some growers to delay planting in autumn and wait until spring, hence we feel demand should be good over this period.

International Lucerne Market

Unlike past years, where lucerne sales were free flowing and buoyant, this season is off to a sluggish start. There has been a significant amount of talk about the Saudi market and what it will/won't do which is being addressed via various industry and government pathways.

The current situation in this region is having a flow on effect in other markets with a lack of interest in Australian seed, but some can be very price conscious, so as a result, we are holding our position for now until the situation becomes clearer.

During this time, we are looking to assess to EU lucerne crop. Last year, there was a significant impact to crops due to flooding. This year, it appears acres are like last year, but the situation will not be clear for the next 6-8 weeks. Indications from the recent ISF congress that EU prices will weaken slightly compared to last season, but anything can happen between now and harvest. There is some interest being shown in Australian material but finding lines compliant to EU regulations is always challenging.

We will also start to see how the US crop is progressing as reports suggest variable production levels, but keep in mind the Saudi market outcome will significantly impact US crops as well, to what level, is unknown at this time.

All that said, we are confident that we have several markets that we can move seed to at fair pricing levels, so it's not all doom and gloom, just a hold position for the moment.

Seed Production Update

The 2024 harvest season saw a large variation of cleanout rates ranging between 10% and 50% with the odd outlier at both ends of the spectrum. It's difficult to pinpoint the exact reason for such a large range, however it is more likely to be a combination of multiple contributing factors including: poor yields, Lucerne Seed Wasp, and weather conditions conducive of weed proliferation. Fat Hen (*Chenopodium album*) seems to be one weed in particular that has not only been common across multiple regions but has also been high in numbers found in purity tests. The positive news to come out of this year's harvest is the quality of germination. Almost all certified seed tests we've received so far have come back with germination results (including hard seed) at 90% or above.

Being a proprietary seed company with a strong market presence, Barenbrug has numerous opportunities for new lucerne sowings in 2024, including Pre-Basic & Basic production, and production of varieties with a strong demand domestically and internationally outside of the Middle Eastern markets.

Please contact your Production Agronomist for more information and to secure your new sowing requirements.

Aaron Keane -	0408 851 411	(Upper South East/Mid-North)
Alan Gowers -	0427 152 145	(Western Vic/NSW)
Michael Birks -	0456 437 976	(Lower South East)

AgCAREERSTART

courtesy of AgCareerStart



AgCAREERSTART Start is a unique gap-year program for 17-25 year olds, which matches a young person with a passionate farmer. Sign-up your business to become a host-farm and introduce a young Australian to a rewarding career in agriculture, whilst accessing a workforce for your farm.

The AgCAREERSTART team works with you to identify suitable applicants for a placement in your business and will continue to support you through the 10-12 month journey on-farm.

Benefits for the farm business include:

- Contribute to the future agricultural workforce.
- Access a new labour market.
- Support a young person as they start their career in agriculture.
- Develop skills as an employer and mentor.

The Program offers a matching process, where you will get to see applicants skills, culture and aptitude, and meet them online. You will both then be involved in an on-boarding process, to ensure everyone is on the same page and ready to go once the participant reaches the farm.

When you participate as a host farmer you will:

- Receive a \$2,000 grant.
- Get support from the AgCAREERSTART team to mentor and train your participant.
- Benefit from AgCAREERSTART's national recruitment strategy accessing keen new talent for your business.
- Gain access to industry events and the broader National Farmers' Federation network.
- Benefit from the program's community of experienced Host employers.

Throughout the year, participants will get the opportunity to attend training activities and events. Each participant gets a \$4500 training bursary, and as an employer you will get the opportunity to recommend industry-specific training to your young person.

In 2025 Lucerne Australia is willing to work with host farmers in the Upper South East to ensure participants get full-exposure to the lucerne seed industry, its career opportunities and build the skills required.

For more information, and to register your interest to host a gap-year student in 2025 – go to - <https://agcareerstart.com.au/>



FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL

by Danielle Lannin England, Lucerne Australia



Welcome to season 2024.

This is the season that has thrown everything at us and will test our patience and resilience. Our dryland crops have gone in dry; we're still feeding livestock; and we've had major market declines with sheep; and now the potential reduction in export tonnages.

Daily I'm reminded to **focus on things inside my control**.

I can't control the markets. But I can control the quality of my lucerne seed to ensure I get the best possible price at the time of harvest. I can control the enterprise mix on my farm, how much hay, seed, grains and/or sheep I turn-off.

I can't control the weather. But I can control when I sow (which dictates how I use what available soil moisture I have). I can control the health of my livestock and my lambing percentage by making sure my sheep are being fed enough.

While I can't control the prices, I can control my finances. I can control my spending, and how I work with the bank to ensure adequate cash flow for 2024.

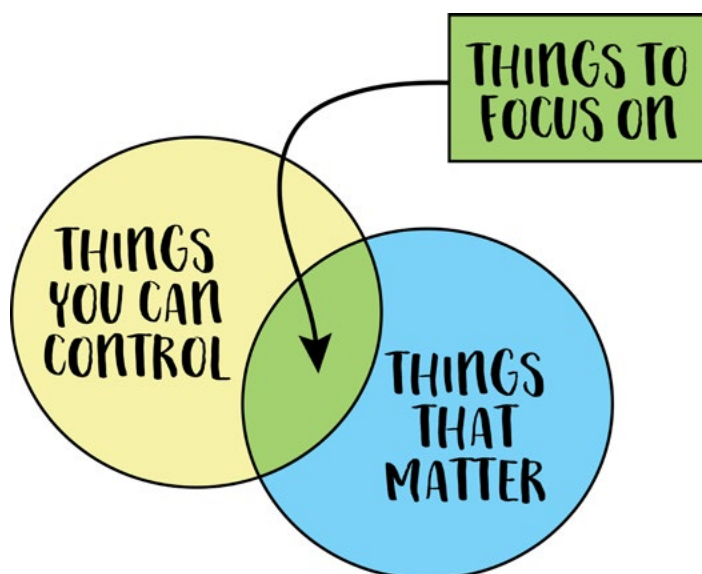
One of the many quotes by the New Zealand All Black coach Steve Hansen is "Worry is a useless emotion". Worrying is normal. It's what we do with that emotion that either moves us forwards or backwards in years like this. We need to focus on the future, focus on the things we can control, and enjoy the little things that our farms, our families, and our communities give us. We really are lucky to be able to do what we do, and to produce what we produce.

It is just one season. And our farms, our lucerne stands, our livestock and our crops are all doing OK.

I look forward to meeting you at the Lucerne Australia Information Session – Trials Review Breakfast in Keith on Wednesday 24th July starting at 8am. Your coffee will be waiting!

Registration link -

<https://events.humanitix.com/2024-lucerne-australia-trials-review-breakfast>



DAIRY OPTIMISTIC DESPITE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CHALLENGES



by Eliza Redfern, Analysis and Insights Manager, Dairy Australia

Australian dairy farmers have been largely insulated from global dairy market pressures throughout the 2023/24 season, as discussed in Dairy Australia's latest Situation & Outlook report. Relatively strong milk prices, improved weather conditions and overall stable input costs all provided grounds for profitability.

Confidence in the Australian dairy industry is currently in its most stable period in a decade, as outlined by the 2024 National Dairy Farmer Survey. Despite increased climate and market volatility over the last four years, the proportion of farming businesses feeling positive about the industry's future has remained relatively steady (68 per cent in 2024) over that time. Farmers are also feeling positive about their own businesses (83 per cent) and the vast majority are expecting to make an operating profit this season. Back-to-back profitable seasons have led to a growing number of farming businesses reporting they are in a "stable and happy" position.

Australia's total milk production for the 2023/24 season is now likely to exceed Dairy Australia's previous forecast. Larger-than-expected growth in February of 5 per cent year on year (leap year adjusted), further milk recovery in March despite conditions drying out in many regions, and a return to more average weather will propel national production 2 to 3 per cent higher than the 2022/23 season. Looking ahead to next season, early indications from processors of lower farmgate milk prices may lead to more conservative production decisions, especially in the southern export focused regions, while existing challenges around labour and farm exits limit growth more broadly. As such, Dairy Australia is expecting volumes produced over the 2024/25 season to drop slightly, between 0 to 1 per cent, maintaining a national milk pool around 8.3 billion litres.

The stabilisation of farm input costs may help mitigate pressures during the 2024/25 season. Rainfall over eastern Australia has subdued demand for feed and water (and their respective prices) with hay and grain values remaining below last year in most regions. In parts of Western Australia, South Australia, and

Western Victoria however, conditions have become much drier, with demand and prices for supplementary feed rising above long term averages.

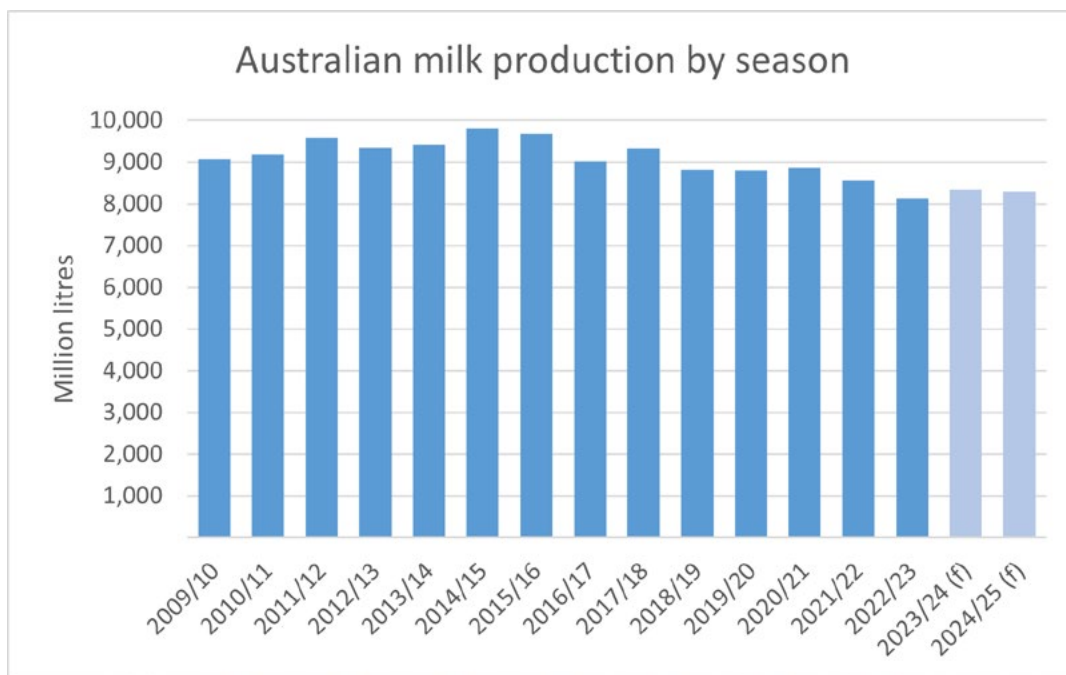
At the consumer end of the supply chain, dairy continues to perform well in retail despite the now-entrenched cost-saving shopping behaviours of Australian households. The volume sold of cheese, dairy spreads and yoghurts continues to grow, each increasing between 1 to 2 per cent in the 12 months to 24 March†.

Australian dairy markets may still be under pressure from international product both globally and domestically, but Australia's imports of overseas dairy products are slowing. Season-to-date (July to February 2024) import data shows 7.4 per cent less product has crossed the border compared to the same period last season. Australian buyers have imported similar volumes from NZ this season (+0.2 per cent), but shipping challenges around the Red Sea and inflated costs have likely deterred purchasing from northern hemisphere exporters (-28.6 per cent from the United States and -10.8 per cent from Europe).

After some initial recovery leading into 2024, global dairy commodity markets are still searching for balance between supply and demand pressures. Lacklustre demand for dairy continues to limit commodity price increases - especially as importer inventories remain stocked and consumer demand is dampened by economic challenges. Stagnant global supply will therefore likely provide underlying support for dairy export commodity prices in the near term.

Global dairy markets treading water and receding weather challenges for most Australian dairy regions have provided a mild backdrop to a profitable season and sustained farmer confidence. As new season prices begin to be announced, linkages to international market realities will re-emerge; a tighter outlook for margins on farm will impact farmer confidence and ultimately milk production.





Source: Dairy manufacturers, Dairy Australia

DLF SEEDS UPDATE

by Jess Nottle, Seed Production Agronomist



Production Update

Let's not beat around the bush here...The season could've been off to a better start however the weather radar now looks promising – let's hope it stays that way and we roll into a strong spring! So far, all dryland lucerne sowings have been delayed until spring as farmers are desperate to provide any green pick in their paddocks to hungry stock. We've had some new irrigated lucerne stands sown after watering up to get a knockdown however most seed growers are focused on keeping their stock fed and getting the winter crop in.

The seed cleaning sheds have done an excellent job at getting seed processed in a timely manner this year, with good test results. I'm sure some of the harvest samples would've looked fairly ugly! Overall, we are pleased with the tonnages produced from last harvest despite the challenging season, with dryland production propping up some of the lower yields on irrigated paddocks.

We're now starting to see plenty of lucerne seed tests come rolling into our inboxes. Feel free to give Jess a call to discuss marketing options for your seed, or forward your purity & germination test to jnottle@dlfseeds.com.au

We've again sold good tonnages of our range of grazing tolerant lucerne varieties. As a result, we've shared the premiums we

receive for these varieties with our trusted seed growers and thank them for their continued stable & reliable production results.

We have a few opportunities to plant our lucerne seed varieties in 2024 on either dryland or irrigated paddocks, including 'AR-245' a proven seed yield performer as demonstrated in the LA irrigation trial and across paddocks in South-East SA. We also have some domestic lucerne contracts available with attractive minimum pricing, to bring some stability to your business. Call Jess or Anthony to discuss further.

International update

Our businesses somewhat conservative approach to international market risk, has us well placed to stride through these challenging international lucerne market conditions. Our Export Trading Manager, Daniel Steadman is overseas now visiting customers in Saudi Arabia and abroad.

For up-to-date market information, to enquire about a new lucerne sowing, or to market your public lucerne seed, please contact our Seed Production Advisors (Jess & Anthony) on the numbers listed below.

Seed Production & Purchasing

Jess Nottle – 0438 302 148

Anthony Quilter – 0427 572 125

SYNERGY SEEDS UPDATE

by Craig Myall, Managing Director



After an extremely dry period over the last 4 months, the region has finally started to receive some much-needed rainfall, albeit to date at a low level.

In my last report in March, I wrote about the uncertainty surrounding Australia's largest export Lucerne seed market in Saudi Arabia. The recent information that the Saudi ministry has put a halt on import permits points to a fundamental change in their demand for the importation of Lucerne seed in the short term and possibly the longer term, although there is still no "official" information at the time of writing this report.

At present we should only deal with the facts as speculating what this market will do in the longer term is a complete unknown. Saudi does have a carryover of seed from both Australia and the USA currently, and those local companies that already had import permits for seed are having them honoured, whilst sales of seed in the market there have increased of late (no doubt due to the lack of incoming supply). The large dairies that operate in Saudi should therefore have internal supply of fodder for the upcoming season, and this demand for fodder should continue, however it will depend on whether it is grown locally or imported from abroad.

The Australian Seed Federation in conjunction with Austrade are working behind the scenes to provide clarity on the situation, and as soon as they have some official information, I am sure it will be shared industry wide.

Exports of Lucerne seed for the first quarter of calendar year 2024 are basically in line with the average over the last few years with almost 900mt departing our shores. Argentina (281mt), USA (178mt), Italy (96mt) and China (80mt) were the largest importers of seed during this period.

The last of the 2024 harvested crops are currently being conditioned and tested. Yields are down across the board on average however seed quality is excellent, in fact I have never seen so many 100% pure tests and germinations in general are very good. New season plantings are currently underway although it seems the area planted will be down on years previous.

If you are planning a new Lucerne seed site in 2024, Synergy Seeds have attractive seed contracts for its growing Proprietary Lucerne range. Please feel free to contact Ian, Wayne, Nathan or myself on the numbers listed below to discuss our options.

CONTACTS

Craig Myall	Managing Director
Nathan Smith	Sales & Supply Manager
Ian Freebairn	Production & Procurement
Wayne Heading	Production & Procurement
Adam Davies	National Forage Sales & Marketing Manager

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0487 655 220
0427 241 448
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0498 632 496

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adam@synergyseeds.com.au

2024 Trials Information Breakfast

Wednesday 27th July 2024

Keith Bowling Club

8 - 10am

Coffee available from 7.45am

Join Lucerne Australia members and associates for an informative breakfast meeting and workshop.

Breakfast provided
Coffee van available

Free registration
RSVP by 9am Monday
25th July

[Register HERE](#)

More Information
Danielle England
0439 538332
info@lucerneaustralia.org.au



LUCERNE EXPORT STATISTICS FROM AUSTRALIA

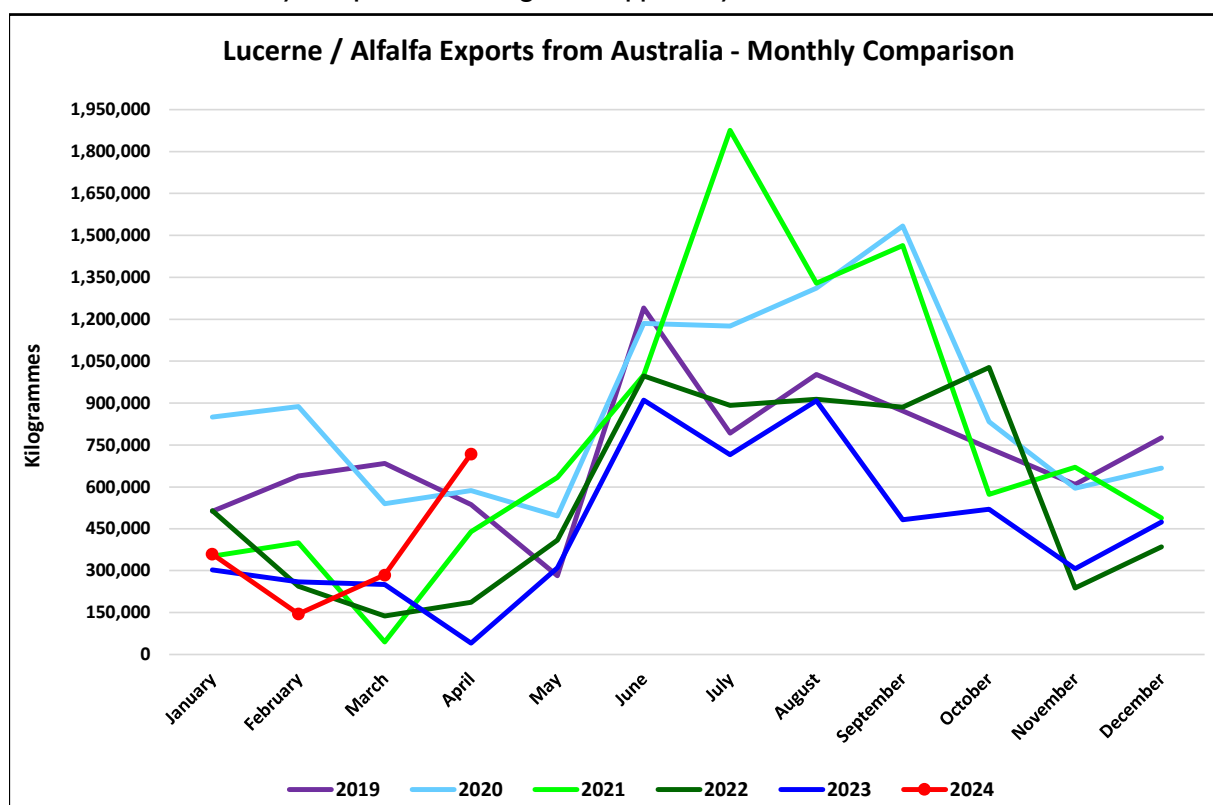
- January 2014 to April 2024

courtesy of Teague Australia

Quantities below are in kg.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Year to date Difference 2020 & 2021
Jan	687,172	698,895	374,150	266,596	307,530	512,692	850,518	352,056	515,246	302,936	359,725	+56,789
Feb	518,553	1,099,252	148,919	108,988	57,008	639,425	887,613	400,125	243,786	258,837	145,333	-56,715
Mar	334,033	582,929	227,050	127,000	321,205	684,044	539,525	44,500	137,329	249,852	284,060	-22,507
Apr	171,816	549,340	784,031	143,025	123,100	536,501	482,194	439,500	186,064	40,819	717,636	+654,310
May	495,472	940,000	644,704	363,023	355,575	281,335	495,875	633,571	409,715	310,224		
Jun	1,029,000	2,176,805	2,942,685	1,018,477	794,995	1,239,461	1,286,579	1,000,145	996,989	910,183		
Jul	1,260,782	1,649,080	786,450	1,214,352	303,288	792,380	1,205,927	1,875,361	891,632	715,121		
Aug	1,217,121	834,178	1,339,684	767,256	721,730	1,002,472	1,443,626	1,329,201	914,012	908,522		
Sep	1,516,965	770,857	388,207	882,195	698,665	871,762	1,533,097	1,463,717	885,058	482,480		
Oct	1,356,922	667,503	588,199	364,673	472,480	738,090	832,925	573,749	1,026,920	520,252		
Nov	810,704	543,246	409,700	649,318	615,285	609,028	595,095	670,850	237,888	307,116		
Dec	829,293	511,127	623,560	443,729	664,134	775,684	667,771	488,544	385,212	474,742		
Total	10,227,833	11,023,212	9,257,339	6,348,911	5,434,995	8,682,874	10,661,226	9,271,319	6,829,851	5,481,084	1,506,754	

This summary was produced using data supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.



We thank Teague Australia, an associate member of Lucerne Australia, for supplying these figures.

LIMESTONE COAST SEEDS UPDATE

by Greg Excell, Limestone Coast Seeds



In what feels like the blink of an eye we have made it through our busiest months of the year, and another lucerne harvest has been completed. As reported in the last Lucerne Leader publication, the addition of a second site at the beginning of this year's season was extremely beneficial for us and we have welcomed many new clients who have chosen to use our services.

We had cleaning plants set up for lucerne at both sites and it was wonderful to be able to share deliveries between the two locations. With our increased storage capacity, we were able to easily accommodate the many varieties that our industry now has. Last year's average seed lots were approximately 15 ton each, however, this year we saw an average of 11 ton, and most growers have reported that their seed production was down by approximately 20% in comparison to last year. In saying that, the quality of the seed that has been delivered to us has been impressive, with good colour and excellent purity and germination results.

One thing that we did experience this season was higher than usual clean out rates. The early summer rains that we encountered caused heavier plant material to be present, and

we have also seen some lines damaged by seed wasp. We had no trouble with any wax build-up through our machinery during the cleaning process, but it was evident that the yields were impacted by the seed wasp. With PCR tests conducted on every delivery, we found that the lucerne seed wasp was higher in number than last year, but we also noticed that the *Idiomacromerus Perplexus* Parasitoid count was sometimes twice as high as the seed wasp count.

We are continuing to upgrade and modernise our Stirling Road site, making gradual improvements as time permits. We have a number of projects currently in the planning stages and look forward to implementing them in the near future.

There has been low demand for lucerne seed at this early stage in the year, and it is one of the lowest harvests that I have seen since 2012, when the harvest was damaged by seed wasp. Having been in the industry for more than three decades, I have seen the market like this before and believe that given our low inventory, there should still be enough markets for our lucerne seed.

LUCERNE AUSTRALIA Members

Allen's Warrawee Park	Dinyarrak Farms	Kelvale Emu Flat	McWimay Pty Ltd
Altus, TJ & JL 'Moonmera'	Farmer, BL & RE	Kenwyn Proprietors	Nalang Pastoral Co
Bergan Park	Florando Partners	Kester, RJ & J	Newton Pastoral Pty Ltd
Berry, S & J Family Trust	Forster, SA & KA	Kinyerrie Partnership	Nupey Pty Ltd
Brecon Proprietors	Fry, AL & JE & Son	Kuchel, DJ & CE	Sanders, DE & FM
Brown, DC & DG	Glendoon Pastoral Co	Lake Ellen Pastoral	Sanders, GE & LM
Cacia Downs Farming Co	Graetz, S & H	Leach, PJ & Co	Sanders, SN & DA
Colara Farms	Harvey, M & K Family Trust	Loller, B & L	Scottswell Partners
Connor Pastoral Co Pty Ltd	Hawkins, MM	Makin Nominees	Simpson Farming
Corlinga Partners	Hunt, DB & JS	Maluka Partners	Twynem Partners
Crawford, CJ Pty Ltd	Hutchings, SC & CA	Maroona Proprietors	Vandeleur Rural Holdings
Creston Partners	Hyfield Pastoral Pty Ltd	Martin, JP & SGP	Vowles, BJ & SM
Crouch, RJ & Co	Jarra Farm Trust	McMurray, BJ & CB	Wilsdon, RE & TK
Darwent Agriculture Pty Ltd	Jesse, Cameron	McMurray, JA & KA	
	Keller Partners		

LUCERNE AUSTRALIA

Gold



Rabobank

Silver



Associate/Bronze

AJ Cotton & MA McDonald	Gibbs Agricultural Consulting	SA Apiarists Association
Alpha Group Consulting	Imperial Valley Milling Company	S & W Seed Co
AFIA (Aust. Fodder Industry Assoc)	JJ O'Connor & Sons Pty Ltd	Stoller Australia
Barenbrug Australia Pty Ltd	Kongal Seeds	Synergy Seeds Pty Ltd
Brandt	Limestone Coast Seeds	Tatiara Seeds
Cox Rural Keith	Naracoorte Seeds	Teague Australia
D & M Rural	Nutrien	Upper Murray Seeds
DTS Seed Assurance	DLF Seeds	Vermeeren Bros Manufacturing
Elders Keith	RAGT	Western AG
Farmers Centre	Safe Ag Systems	Wilchem
Forage Genetics International	SARDI-Crop and Pasture Improvement	Wise Farm Equipment
Frank Fatchen Pty Ltd		

LUCERNE AUSTRALIA *Executive Committee*

Got a question for Lucerne Australia?

Contact the Executive Officer or any of our Executive Committee Members who will be happy to help.



Scott Hutchings, Chairman
Contact: 0428 551 188

Scott is a senior agronomist with Cox Rural Keith and has worked in the upper south east for 21 years covering pulses, oilseeds and cereals and lucerne for seed, hay and pasture. Scott holds a bachelor of Agricultural Science from Roseworthy Agricultural College. Scott and his wife Cath also run a small prime lamb production and opportunity dryland seed production enterprise.



Ben Farmer, Deputy Chairman
Contact: 0438 501 269

Ben started with Alpha Group Consulting at Keith in 2013 before purchasing a lucerne property with his wife Rachel in December 2016. After a period of time with Nutrien Ag Solutions they began Wilkei Seeds trading a large portion of feed grains and supplying a wide range of pasture seeds both to seed exporters and businesses throughout Australia. Ben believes his direct experience within most facets of the lucerne seed supply chain brings a valuable and unique perspective to the LA Executive Committee.



**Danielle Lannin England,
Executive Officer**
Contact: 0439 538 332

Danielle is based at Keilira, where she is involved in a broadacre grains and Merino wool farming business with her husband Jonathan and his family. She has over 20 years' experience in agricultural extension and working with grower groups across Australia and brings to the lucerne industry strong governance, membership, strategic planning, project management and administrative skills.



Aaron Freeman, Grower Member
Contact: 0428 875 600

Aaron manages 'Colara' at Tintinara owned by the Munro Family producing dryland lucerne hay and seed, cereal hay and cropping along with a self-replacing merino flock and prime lambs. Aaron and his wife Penny also own and operate a contract harvesting business Colara Contracting along with a prime lamb enterprise on a recently purchased property.



Adam Zacker, Grower Member
Contact: 0417 853 799

Adam owns and operates the family farm at Tintinara with his wife Hannah. They run a mix of cropping, sheep (both self-replacing Merinos and prime lamb production), a herd of Angus cows and both dryland and irrigated lucerne seed and hay. Adam is passionate about the lucerne industry and its challenges.



Rodney Lush, Grower Member
Contact: 0419 862 510

Rodney farms with his wife Sally at Coombe, producing lucerne seed, lamb and wool since 1991. The farm production system is based around centre pivot and flood irrigated lucerne and rain fed perennial pastures. He also provides farm business advice and support to clients in the Mallee, South East and Western Victoria as a consultant with Proadvice.



Scott Campbell, Grower Member
Contact: 0417 887 562

Scott and his wife Sophie Campbell own a mixed farming business at Keith, producing Lucerne seed, hay grain and prime lamb production. As a business with a high reliance on lucerne Scott believes it is important to keep abreast of industry issues both domestic and international. His family have been involved in the lucerne seed industry for more than 40 years.



Harrison Berry, Grower Member
Contact: 0447 998 421

Harrison manages a family farming operation at Brimbago, south east of Keith with cropping and sheep enterprises and as well as producing flood irrigated and dryland Lucerne seed. Before returning to manage the Brimbago property 5 years ago, Harrison worked in the Mining industry and also the Civil/Construction industry. This variety has provided a range of different insights and learnings, but he has a strong passion for the agricultural industry and is keen to contribute in building the lucerne seed industry further.



Greg Excell, Associate Member
Contact: 0408 838 684

Greg has more than twenty eight years experience in the seed industry. He has performed various roles including seed cleaning, grain drying and engineering, and has now purchased his own seed processing site called Limestone Coast Seeds. Greg works collaboratively with both growers and marketers to ensure that only Lucerne seed of the highest quality is exported. From working in the seed business for many years it is obvious to Greg the many benefits that Lucerne Australia can offer the industry.