



I have just returned from the UK where I had the opportunity to visit some UK farmers and grain traders in East Anglia, north east of London. Globally, farmers are facing similar difficulties to Australian farmers with the top heavy supply of grain and competition from countries with significantly weakened economies and cheap grain to sell. A significant proportion of the UK requires rain with water restrictions due to be enforced in some regions. If good rain is not received in the next few weeks then the current crop that has emerged from winter dormancy will begin to suffer.

Onto local news and Queensland's winter cropping program is well under way. In central Queensland they have completed planting with an average area planted to wheat. Western Darling Downs is finally starting to dry up after the rain and is approximately 60% planted. The majority of this region will be planted but there is a large cotton crop waiting in the wings. Interestingly many growers have commented that even though Beardmore Dam is full, rain will be required after the cotton crop is planted to refill storages and get the crop in this region through to the end. However, private storage dams are full and as most people are aware this year will be one of the largest cotton plants in a decade.

The Darling Downs region is one of the only areas currently struggling. The area planted to winter crop is only five percent completed to date with growers looking for a good 25mls of rain to finish planting. The window planting opportunity will go through until mid July but yield potential will start to decline from the end of June if the crop is not in the ground. Across all growing regions in Queensland the chickpea plant is one of the largest seen in recent years – early prices were very strong which has encouraged the plant. The other crop that has performed well this year is sunflowers with average yields of 1.5t-1.8t/ha and oils roughly 39%-42%. The remainder of the sunflower crop in the western districts is due to come off in the next 3 weeks. All in all there has been a better than average start to the growing season with good subsoil moisture levels to keep things progressing nicely in the short term.

For further details please contact your local Australian Grain Accumulation
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