



Since early December markets and crop conditions have changed considerably. At that time, summer crops were suffering due to lack of moisture and extreme heat. At the same time domestic grain prices were on the march due to the dry conditions. However the high rainfall received in many parts of Northern New South Wales over the Christmas period, saw market and crop conditions change considerably. The rainfall across the region saw increased yields of sorghum and forage crops and in turn grain prices eased in the region.

In January some growers with decent subsoil moisture have taken the opportunity to plant late crops of sunflowers. At the moment these crops have great yield potential. In the next few weeks, early planted sunflower crops will start to be harvested, and growers will be hoping for decent yields and oil levels.

In the last couple of weeks early planted sorghum crops have been harvested north of Moree. Yields have been disappointing ranging from 1.2-2t/hectare as Christmas rain did not significantly increase yields. I recently attended a sorghum field day at Cryon. It was great to see the level of interest in growing sorghum in the area. The sorghum crop in the Cryon region is looking good and will be harvested in March.

Producers are now starting to look at winter crop rotations. The growers who have received some decent rain and have good subsoil moisture will have more crop choices. Currently the general feeling is that growers are favouring canola and chickpeas over faba beans and wheat.

At time of writing prices of wheat, barley, sorghum, canola and soybeans on a Newcastle basis are: APH1 \$228 APW \$213, F1 Barley \$202, Sorghum \$209, Canola \$426 and Soybeans \$485. Prices for Mono Sunflowers delivered Narrabri are \$585 on fixed tonnage contract and \$565 on a hectare contract.

In the last week most marketers have released prices for the 2010/11 crop. Multigrade APW wheat contract prices are around \$218, F1 Barley \$227 and Canola \$423. These contract prices have failed to excite producer interest much the same 09/10 crop prices. Hopefully in the coming months prices will turn around, however, large global wheat stocks mean this does not look very likely.

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