



2002-03

7111.0

PRINCIPAL AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) WED 26 NOV 2003

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INQUIRIES

- For more information about these and related statistics, contact Gordon Cameron on Hobart (03) 6222 5939, or the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

NOTES

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION This publication contains preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the 2002–03 season and comparative data for earlier years. The data are estimates based on a response rate of approximately 64% of farms from the 2003 Agricultural Survey. More comprehensive and updated estimates for the 2002–03 season will be published in July 2004 in *Agricultural Commodities, Australia* (cat. no. 7121.0).



CHANGES TO THIS ISSUE There are no changes in this issue.



SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES	ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
	ACT	Australian Capital Territory
	Aust.	Australia
	EVAO	estimated value of agricultural operations
	ha	hectare
	n.p.	not available for publication but included in totals where applicable
	NSW	New South Wales
	NT	Northern Territory
	Qld	Queensland
	p	preliminary
	RSE	relative standard error
	SA	South Australia
	SE	standard error
	t	tonnes
	Tas.	Tasmania
	Vic.	Victoria
	WA	Western Australia
	—	nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)
	^	data subject to sampling variability equal to or greater than 10%, but less than 25%
	*	data subject to sampling variability equal to or greater than 25%, but less than or equal to 50%
	**	data subject to sampling variability greater than 50%, estimate is not published
	..	not applicable
	'000	thousands

Dennis Trewin
Australian Statistician

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

Drought was the single most important factor affecting agricultural production in Australia in 2002–03. The 'one in a hundred year drought' saw harvests fall to levels significantly below normal years, and sheep numbers at the lowest level for more than 50 years.

AREA OF CROPS

Preliminary estimates for 2002–03 showed decreases in area for all major crops except barley, oats and sugar cane cut for crushing.

The total area sown to wheat for grain fell by 4% in 2002–03 to 11.0 million hectares. This was mainly due to a 15% (or 500,000 hectares) decrease in New South Wales. South Australia and Queensland also reported decreases, while Western Australia and Victoria both recorded increases in area sown.

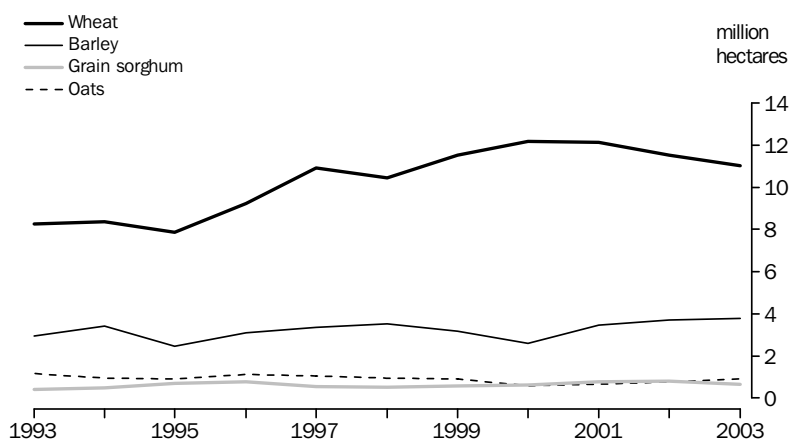
The total area sown to barley for grain increased by 2% in 2002–03 to 3.8 million hectares. The dry conditions led some farmers to plant barley after missing the earlier 'planting windows' for wheat and canola. The largest increases were reported in Victoria and Western Australia, up by 10% (or 68,900 hectares) and 4% (or 43,000 hectares), respectively.

The total area of sorghum sown for grain fell by 18% in 2002–03 to 673,000 hectares. In Queensland, the main growing state, plantings fell by 27% (or 154,000 hectares), with many regions badly affected by the drought.

The area sown to oats for grain increased to more 'normal' levels in response to recovering prices. Total area sown increased by 16% in 2002–03, to 908,000 hectares. The three main growing states all reported increases: New South Wales and Victoria both up by 34%; and Western Australia up by 9%.

The total area sown to lupins for grain fell by 8% to 1.0 million hectares; the area sown to canola fell by 5% to 1.3 million hectares; while the area planted to sugar cane cut for crushing increased by 2% to 435,000 hectares.

S1 AREA OF PRINCIPAL CROPS, AUSTRALIA — 1992–93 to 2002–03p



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

PRODUCTION OF CROPS

Preliminary estimates for 2002–03 showed decreases in production of all major crops except sugar cane cut for crushing.

Drought conditions in major growing regions saw the production of wheat for grain fall by 59% to 10.1 million tonnes, with all mainland states reporting significant reductions. The largest falls were reported in New South Wales (down by 68% to 2.5 million tonnes), Western Australia (down by 49% to 4.0 million tonnes) and South Australia (down by 58% to 2.0 million tonnes).

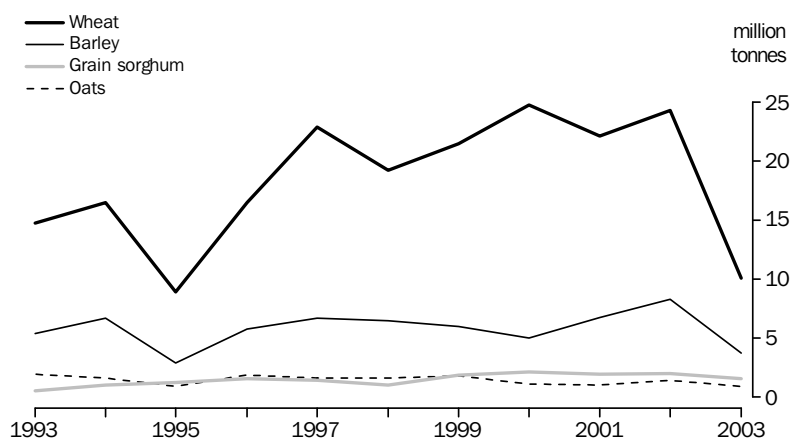
Extremely dry conditions saw barley for grain production fall by 55% to 3.7 million tonnes in 2002–03. All states reported decreases in production, the largest falls being for South Australia (down by 50% to 1.4 million tonnes), Victoria (down by 73% to 448,000 tonnes) and New South Wales (down by 71% to 397,000 tonnes).

Grain sorghum production fell by 24% to 1.5 million tonnes in 2002–03, with production down in both Queensland (down 23% to 963,000 tonnes) and New South Wales (down 25% to 573,000 tonnes). While the fall in Queensland was a result of reduced plantings, the fall in New South Wales was a result of lower average yields since area was little changed.

Production of oats for grain fell by 35% to 926,000 tonnes in 2002–03, the lowest level since 1994–95. Decreases were reported in all states as dry conditions saw average yields fall. The largest falls were reported in New South Wales (down by 64% to 115,000 tonnes) and South Australia (down by 66% to 68,300 tonnes).

The production of lupins for grain fell by 41% to 716,000 tonnes. Canola production fell by 52% to 841,000 tonnes. In contrast, the production of sugar cane cut for crushing increased by 16% to 36.4 million tonnes, with good conditions reported in a number of growing regions.

S2 PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS, AUSTRALIA — 1992–93 to 2002–03p



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

LIVESTOCK

Milk cattle

Preliminary estimates indicated that the number of milk cattle in Australia was 3.1 million head at 30 June 2003. Victoria continued to dominate the dairy industry, with its herd of 2.0 million little changed from the previous year. Falls in New South Wales and Queensland were offset by increases in the remaining states.

S3 NUMBER OF MILK CATTLE, AUSTRALIA — 1992–93 to 2002–03p



Meat cattle

Preliminary estimates indicated the number of meat cattle in Australia fell by 3% to 24.1 million head at 30 June 2003. The largest falls were reported in Queensland (down by 5% or 588,000) and New South Wales (down by 5% or 261,000) which suffered the most extreme drought conditions. Small increases were reported for the remaining states.

S4 NUMBER OF MEAT CATTLE, AUSTRALIA — 1992–93 to 2002–03p



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

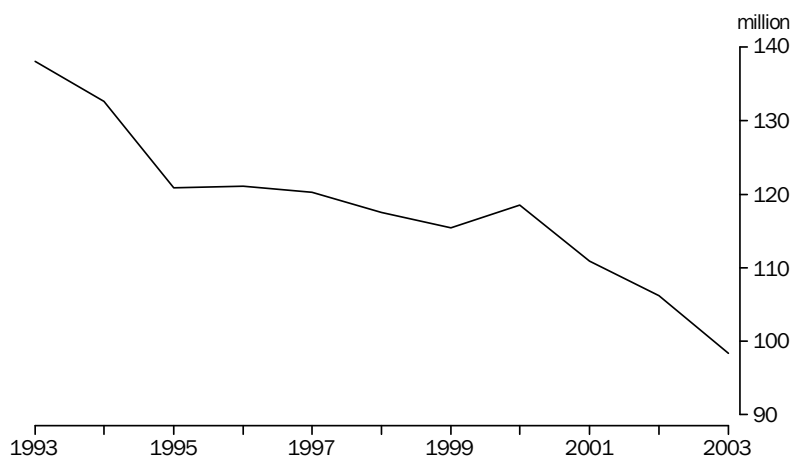
LIVESTOCK *continued*

Sheep and lambs

Preliminary estimates indicated the number of sheep and lambs in Australia fell by 7% to 98.4 million head at 30 June 2003. This was the lowest number reported since 1947. The largest decreases were reported in New South Wales (down 11% or 4.3 million), Queensland (down 34% or 2.3 million) and Victoria (down 5% or 1.1 million).

The number of lambs marked fell by 9% to 34.2 million in 2002–03. This was indicative of the drought conditions experienced in 2002–03 and the overall small size of the flock.

S5 NUMBER OF SHEEP AND LAMBS, AUSTRALIA — 1992–93 to 2002–03p



Pigs

Preliminary estimates indicated the number of pigs in Australia fell by 6% to 2.8 million at 30 June 2003. Pig numbers were down in most states. High grain prices, competition from imports and high temperatures affecting sow fertility over summer led to a general decline in numbers.

S6 NUMBER OF PIGS, AUSTRALIA — 1992–93 to 2002–03p



1

PRODUCTION AND AREA OF PRINCIPAL CROPS

	AUST.			2003p.....							
	2001	2002	2003p	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT
BARLEY FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	6 743	8 280	3 713	397	448	^ 156	1 390	1 298	23	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	3 454	3 707	3 772	619	769	110	1 135	1 131	8	(a)	—
GRAIN SORGHUM											
Production ('000 t)	1 935	2 021	1 541	^ 573	*3	963	(a)	**	(a)	1	—
Area ('000 ha)	758	823	673	257	*5	408	(a)	**	(a)	—	—
OATS FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	1 050	1 434	926	115	259	*2	68	473	9	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	650	784	908	309	190	*10	82	311	4	(a)	—
WHEAT FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	22 108	24 299	10 059	2 535	883	602	2 025	3 984	29	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	12 141	11 529	11 045	2 946	1 226	520	1 913	4 432	8	(a)	—
LUPINS FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	1 055	1 215	716	^ 35	^ 11	—	^ 92	577	^ 1	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	1 180	1 139	1 043	108	^ 41	—	90	804	^ —	(a)	—
CANOLA											
Production ('000 t)	1 775	1 756	841	173	171	^ —	207	288	1	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	1 459	1 332	1 263	476	250	^ —	198	338	—	(a)	—
SUGAR CANE CUT FOR CRUSHING											
Production ('000 t)	28 117	31 424	36 432	2 428	(a)	33 604	(a)	401	(a)	(a)	(a)
Area ('000 ha)	403	426	435	19	(a)	413	(a)	4	(a)	(a)	(a)

(a) Data not collected.

2

LIVESTOCK NUMBERS

	AUST.			2003p.....							
	2001	2002	2003p	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT
MILK CATTLE(a)											
Cows in milk and dry ('000)	2 176	2 123	2 068	255	1 336	159	108	79	128	n.p.	n.p.
Other milk cattle ('000)	1 041	1 008	1 028	143	615	^83	73	54	61	n.p.	n.p.
Total milk cattle ('000)	3 217	3 131	3 096	398	1 951	242	181	133	189	n.p.	n.p.
MEAT CATTLE											
Bulls and bull calves intended for service ('000)	591	620	613	156	^66	242	33	55	14	46	—
Other calves under one year ('000)	6 083	5 679	5 355	1 308	697	1 973	375	528	130	343	2
Cows and heifers one year and over ('000)	12 007	12 652	12 533	2 692	1 281	5 571	606	1 088	219	1 071	5
Other cattle one year and over ('000)	5 823	5 788	5 617	^1 176	529	2 910	219	373	108	303	1
Total meat cattle ('000)	24 504	24 739	24 119	5 332	2 573	10 696	1 233	2 044	472	1 763	8
SHEEP AND LAMBS											
Sheep ('000)	82 958	77 770	72 895	26 010	14 880	3 987	9 119	16 495	2 345	(b)	57
Lambs under one year ('000)	27 969	28 395	25 483	8 131	5 353	^440	4 080	6 763	702	(b)	15
Total sheep and lambs ('000)	110 928	106 166	98 378	34 141	20 233	4 428	13 199	23 259	3 047	—	72
LAMBING											
Ewes actually mated ('000)(c)	47 012	45 813	43 682	15 643	8 605	^1 692	5 972	10 429	1 308	—	32
Lambs marked ('000)	38 227	37 694	34 214	11 612	7 099	^711	5 203	8 499	1 067	—	24
Proportion of lambs marked to ewes mated (%)	81.3	82.3	78.3	74.2	82.5	42.0	87.1	81.5	81.6	—	74.2
Ewes intended to be mated ('000)(d)	48 479	46 457	45 866	16 384	8 938	^1 917	6 023	11 162	1 410	(b)	31
PIGS											
Total pigs ('000)	2 748	2 940	2 766	761	599	665	362	357	18	3	(b)

(a) Excluding house cows.

(b) Data not collected.

(c) Ewes mated to produce lambs marked in the season shown.

(d) Forecast made at the beginning of each season.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the 2002–03 season, intended ewe matings for the forthcoming season, and comparative data for earlier years. These results are based on a response rate of approximately 64% of establishments from the 2003 Agricultural Survey, and is comparable with the response rates of previous years' preliminary estimates.

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

2 Estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from the Agricultural Survey conducted at 30 June 2003.

3 The scope of the 2002–03 Agricultural Survey is establishments undertaking agricultural activity having an estimated value of agricultural operations (EVAO) of \$5,000 or more. This is the same as the scope for Agricultural Censuses from 1993–94 to 1996–97 and for 2000–01, and for the Agricultural Surveys from 1997–98 to 1999–2000 and for 2001–02. Prior to 1993–94 the scope has varied and these details are available on request.

GENERAL

4 The estimates for earlier years shown in this publication have been revised where necessary.

5 Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES (SAMPLE ERROR)

6 The estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample drawn from the total farm population in scope of the collection, and are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all farms had been included in the Agricultural Survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might vary by chance because only a sample was taken. There are about two chances in three that a 'sample' estimate will differ by less than one SE from the figure that would have been obtained if all farms had responded, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two SEs.

7 In this publication, 'sampling' variability of the estimates is measured by the relative standard error (RSE) which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate to which it refers.

8 Most published estimates have RSEs less than 5%. For some states with limited production of certain commodities, RSEs are greater than 10%. Estimates that have an estimated RSE between 10% and 25% are annotated with the symbol '^'. These estimates should be used with caution as they are subject to sampling variability too high for some purposes. Estimates with an RSE between 25% and 50% are annotated with the symbol '*', indicating that the estimate should be used with caution as it is subject to sampling error too high for most practical purposes. Estimates with an RSE greater than 50% are annotated with the symbol '**', indicating that the sampling variability causes the estimates to be considered too unreliable for general use. Separate indication of the RSEs of all estimates is available on request.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

RELATIVE STANDARD ERROR OF SELECTED COMMODITIES — At 30 June 2003

Commodity	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Barley for grain production	6.6	4.9	10.8	3.4	3.8	5.7	..	—	2.1
Grain sorghum production	11.8	48.6	5.9	..	55.6	..	—	—	5.7
Oats for grain production	6.9	6.6	25.6	9.0	6.0	9.1	..	—	3.7
Wheat for grain production	3.9	4.8	5.8	3.0	2.6	7.1	..	—	1.6
Lupins for grain production	10.1	14.6	—	10.9	6.2	12.7	..	—	5.2
Canola production	5.6	6.6	20.1	7.3	8.0	4.3	..	—	3.7
Sugar cane cut for crushing production	8.0	..	3.7	..	8.4	4.0
Total milk cattle	4.8	6.8	9.9	6.3	6.2	7.9	—	—	4.5
Total meat cattle	3.8	4.1	4.4	4.5	7.3	4.7	—	—	2.3
Total sheep and lambs	3.1	3.5	8.5	3.5	2.6	3.1	—	—	1.6
Total pigs	4.6	9.2	8.8	7.6	9.0	9.8	—	..	3.5

ABS DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

9 As well as the statistics included in this and related publications, the ABS may have other relevant data available on request. Inquiries should be made to Gordon Cameron on (03) 6222 5939 or the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

10 ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated. Without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

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2711100007025
ISSN 1328-6900

RRP \$19.00