



2005-06

7111.0

PRINCIPAL AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

AUSTRALIA
PRELIMINARY

EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) THURS 17 MAY 2007

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INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Nigel Gibson on Hobart (03) 6222 5940.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication contains preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the 2005–06 season. The data are based on a response rate of 91% from the 2005–06 Agricultural Census.

The ABS plans to release a dataset containing preliminary horticulture data in June 2007 and second (or near final) commodity estimates at state and Australian level in July 2007 in *Selected Agricultural Commodities, Australia, Preliminary* (cat. no. 7112.0). Final estimates for the 2005–06 season will be published in November 2007 in *Agricultural Commodities, Australia* (cat. no. 7121.0). Estimates of agricultural water use will be published in August 2007 in *Water Use on Australian Farms* (cat. no. 4618.0). The ABS also plans to release a range of sub-state geographic level data in early 2008. The sub-state outputs will generally be available as spreadsheets, data suitable for use in Geographic Information Systems, and possibly as maps. Standard outputs will be produced to approximate as closely as possible various regional structures such as river basins and Natural Resource Management regions.

CHANGES IN THIS ISSUE

Move to a new register of agricultural businesses

Until recently, the ABS had maintained its own register of agricultural establishments. However, it had become increasingly difficult to maintain this list, and users were questioning the accuracy of some of the commodity data published. The ABS investigated a number of alternatives for maintaining the register and discussed these with key users of agriculture statistics. It was agreed that the ABS should move to a new frame sourced from the Australian Taxation Office's Australian Business Register (ABR).

The ABR-based frame has been used for the first time to conduct the 2005–06 Agricultural Census. The key implication of this strategy is that census data will not be directly comparable with historical time series. This is because, in addition to the change in frame, there have been changes in methodologies used for determining whether agricultural businesses are 'in-scope' of the collection and in some of the ways the data are compiled. (For more information, please see the technical note on page 11.)

To provide users with a way of comparing the 2005–06 Agricultural Census data with the historical time series, the ABS has prepared two sets of 2005–06 estimates. 'New-basis' estimates have been prepared using the new ABR-based register and its associated statistical methodologies. These methodologies have been subjected to rigorous analysis and testing, with the resulting 'new basis' estimates representing the start of the new commodity and livestock series. 'Old-basis' estimates have been prepared to provide a best judgement approximation to what the various estimates may have been if the ABS had continued to use the previous ABS-maintained list of establishments (with its associated statistical methodologies) to conduct the 2005–06 Agricultural Census. Due to the complexities involved in collecting, processing and estimating 'old basis' data from a 'new-basis' framework, the 'old-basis' 2005–06 estimates and the movements between 2004–05 and 2005–06 should be considered indicative only.

Brian Pink
Australian Statistician

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

For eastern Australian agricultural areas as a whole, the 2005–06 season saw near average rainfall despite 2005 winter and spring months being wet prior to dry conditions becoming established from December 2005 onwards. There were some noticeable regional variations with a particularly wet winter-spring 2005 period in large cropping areas of South Australia and in parts of Tasmania. However, in western Victoria and southern Queensland, early rain was more than offset by the dry rest of the year.

The western Australian agricultural areas also experienced regional variation in climatic conditions in 2005–06. Rainfall varied from above average in the wheatbelt areas to well below average along the coast.

CROPS

Wheat

The total area sown to wheat for grain in 2005–06 was 12.5 million hectares. The three main growing states were Western Australia (4.9 million hectares), New South Wales (3.4 million hectares) and South Australia (2.1 million hectares).

Production of wheat for grain in 2005–06 was 25.4 million tonnes. In Western Australia, production was reported as 9.4 million tonnes, in New South Wales it was 7.8 million tonnes and in South Australia it was 3.9 million tonnes.

Barley

The total area sown to barley for grain in 2005–06 was 4.4 million hectares. The three main growing states were Western Australia (1.2 million hectares), South Australia (1.2 million hectares) and New South Wales (1.1 million hectares).

Production of barley for grain in 2005–06 was 9.6 million tonnes. Major producing states were South Australia (2.6 million tonnes), Western Australia (2.5 million tonnes) and New South Wales (2.3 million tonnes).

Grain sorghum

The total area sown to sorghum for grain in 2005–06 was 769,000 hectares. In Queensland, the main growing state, the area sown was 443,000 hectares, while in New South Wales it was reported as 322,000 hectares.

Grain sorghum production in 2005–06 was 2.0 million tonnes. Production in Queensland was 1.1 million tonnes, while in New South Wales it was reported as 881,000 tonnes.

Oats

The total area sown to oats for grain in 2005–06 was 936,000 hectares. The three main growing states were New South Wales (409,000 hectares), Western Australia (276,000 hectares) and Victoria (152,000 hectares).

Production of oats for grain in 2005–06 was 1.7 million tonnes. In New South Wales, production was reported as 620,000 tonnes, in Western Australia it was 605,000 tonnes and in Victoria it was 331,000 tonnes.

Other crops

In 2005–06, the total area sown to canola was 979,000 hectares, the area planted to sugar cane for crushing was 407,000 hectares, and the area planted to cotton was 333,000 hectares. The area sown to lupins for grain was 832,000 hectares, and the area sown to rice was 98,800 hectares.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

Other crops continued

In 2005–06, canola production was 1.4 million tonnes, lupins for grain production was 1.3 million tonnes, and rice production was 973,000 tonnes. The production of sugar cane cut for crushing was 38.2 million tonnes, and the production of cotton lint was 576,000 tonnes.

LIVESTOCK

Milk cattle

Preliminary estimates indicate the number of milk cattle in Australia was 2.8 million head at 30 June 2006. Victoria continued to dominate the dairy industry with a herd of 1.7 million. Respondents in Victoria indicated that numbers there were affected by a slow recovery from drought combined with low milk prices.

Meat cattle

Preliminary estimates indicate the number of meat cattle in Australia was 25.7 million head at 30 June 2006. The dominant states in the industry were Queensland with 11.5 million head and New South Wales with 5.8 million head.

Sheep and lambs

Preliminary estimates indicate the number of sheep and lambs in Australia was 91.9 million head at 30 June 2006. The dominant states in the industry were New South Wales with 31.3 million head, Western Australia with 23.0 million head and Victoria with 18.2 million head. Respondents indicated that there was significant destocking during the year, including on-farm deaths.

The number of lambs marked in Australia was reported as 35.3 million in 2005–06.

Pigs

Preliminary estimates indicate the number of pigs in Australia was 2.7 million head at 30 June 2006. The dominant states in the industry were Queensland with 715,000 head and New South Wales with 660,000 head.

PRODUCTION AND AREA OF PRINCIPAL CROPS(a)—Year ended 30 June

| | AUST. OLD BASIS (b) | | 2006 NEW BASIS (c) | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|--------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|------|-----|-----|
| | 2005 | 2006(d) | Aust. | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT |
| BARLEY FOR GRAIN | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 7 740 | (d) | 9 563 | 2 269 | 1 974 | 192 | 2 569 | 2 532 | 27 | na | ^ 1 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 4 646 | (d) | 4 447 | 1 068 | 856 | 146 | 1 175 | 1 192 | 8 | na | ^ 1 |
| CANOLA | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 1 542 | (d) | 1 436 | 296 | 269 | *— | 219 | 650 | ^ 1 | na | *— |
| Area ('000 ha) | 1 377 | (d) | 979 | 180 | 188 | *— | 150 | 458 | 1 | na | *— |
| COTTON LINT | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 563 | (d) | 576 | 345 | na | 230 | na | — | na | na | na |
| Area ('000 ha) | 304 | (d) | 333 | 195 | na | 138 | na | *— | na | na | na |
| GRAIN SORGHUM | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 2 011 | (d) | 1 973 | 881 | ^ 1 | 1 085 | — | ^ 3 | na | * 1 | * 1 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 755 | (d) | 769 | 322 | ^ — | 443 | — | ^ 2 | na | * 1 | * — |
| LUPINS FOR GRAIN | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 937 | (d) | 1 328 | 62 | 37 | ^ — | 125 | 1 104 | ^ 1 | na | na |
| Area ('000 ha) | 845 | (d) | 832 | 36 | 28 | ^ — | 74 | 694 | ^ — | na | na |
| OATS FOR GRAIN | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 1 283 | (d) | 1 695 | 620 | 331 | 7 | 123 | 605 | 8 | na | ^ — |
| Area ('000 ha) | 894 | (d) | 936 | 409 | 152 | 20 | 75 | 276 | 4 | na | ^ — |
| RICE FOR GRAIN | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 339 | (d) | 973 | 956 | 16 | na | na | na | na | na | na |
| Area ('000 ha) | 51 | (d) | 99 | 97 | 2 | na | na | na | na | na | na |
| SUGAR CANE CUT FOR CRUSHING | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 37 822 | (d) | 38 224 | 2 259 | na | 35 554 | na | 411 | na | na | na |
| Area ('000 ha) | 434 | (d) | 407 | 18 | na | 385 | na | 4 | na | na | na |
| WHEAT FOR GRAIN | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 21 905 | (d) | 25 367 | 7 828 | 2 972 | 1 231 | 3 863 | 9 436 | 34 | na | ^ 2 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 13 399 | (d) | 12 543 | 3 430 | 1 340 | 799 | 2 063 | 4 901 | 8 | na | ^ 1 |

^ estimate has a relative standard error of 10% to less than 25% and should be used with caution

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

na not available

(a) Estimates for 2005 are final; estimates for 2006 are preliminary and may be subject to revision.

(b) Used an ABS-maintained land-based frame (list of 'farms'). See Technical Note, page 11.

(c) Used the Australian Business Register-based frame (list of agricultural businesses). See Technical Note, page 11.

(d) Caution should be exercised in comparing 2005 and 2006 estimates. See Technical Note, page 11 for further details.

| | AUST. OLD BASIS (b) | | 2006 NEW BASIS (c) | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| | 2005 | 2006 (d) | Aust. | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT |
| MILK CATTLE (e) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cows in milk and dry ('000) | 2 076 | (d) | 1 870 | 215 | 1 210 | 136 | 101 | 71 | 138 | na | — |
| Other milk cattle ('000) | 981 | (d) | 908 | 125 | 539 | 71 | 63 | 52 | 59 | na | — |
| Total milk cattle ('000) | (f) 3 056 | (d) | 2 778 | 340 | 1 749 | 207 | 164 | 123 | 196 | na | — |
| MEAT CATTLE | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bulls and bull calves intended for service ('000) | 659 | (d) | 706 | 172 | 74 | 300 | 34 | 60 | 13 | 54 | — |
| Other calves under one year ('000) | 5 357 | (d) | 5 728 | 1 399 | 761 | 2 196 | 311 | 611 | 140 | 304 | 4 |
| Cows and heifers one year and over ('000) | 12 935 | (d) | 13 261 | 2 968 | 1 288 | 5 840 | 608 | 1 226 | 230 | 1 092 | 10 |
| Other cattle one year and over ('000) | 5 776 | (d) | 6 007 | 1 274 | 553 | 3 171 | 247 | 418 | 125 | 215 | 3 |
| Total meat cattle ('000) | 24 725 | (d) | 25 702 | 5 813 | 2 675 | 11 507 | 1 201 | 2 315 | 508 | 1 666 | 17 |
| SHEEP AND LAMBS | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sheep ('000) | 71 947 | (d) | 66 928 | 22 685 | 13 319 | 3 716 | 8 103 | 16 786 | 2 233 | *— | 88 |
| Lambs under one year ('000) | 29 178 | (d) | 24 946 | 8 626 | 4 838 | 993 | 3 502 | 6 256 | 707 | *1 | 24 |
| Total sheep and lambs ('000) | 101 125 | (d) | 91 875 | 31 311 | 18 156 | 4 709 | 11 605 | 23 042 | 2 939 | *1 | 111 |
| LAMBING | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ewes mated to produce lambs ('000) | 46 147 | (d) | 42 978 | 14 659 | 8 386 | 1 819 | 5 629 | 11 144 | 1 306 | *— | 36 |
| Lambs marked ('000) | 37 223 | (d) | 35 261 | 11 745 | 7 313 | 1 225 | 4 684 | 9 181 | 1 087 | *— | 26 |
| Proportion of lambs marked to ewes mated (%) | 81 | (d) | 82 | 80 | 87 | 67 | 83 | 82 | 83 | 40 | 73 |
| Ewes expected to lamb next year ('000) (g) | 46 904 | (d) | 47 486 | 16 304 | 8 809 | 1 842 | 6 044 | 12 998 | 1 437 | *— | 52 |
| PIGS | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Boars ('000) | 12 | (d) | 12 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | — | — | na |
| Breeding sows ('000) | 286 | (d) | 302 | 73 | 68 | 73 | 51 | 34 | 2 | — | na |
| Gilts intended for breeding ('000) | 43 | (d) | 50 | ^ 19 | 10 | 10 | 6 | 4 | — | — | na |
| All other pigs ('000) | 2 197 | (d) | 2 338 | 565 | 524 | 630 | 367 | 238 | 14 | 2 | na |
| Total pigs ('000) | 2 538 | (d) | 2 702 | 660 | 605 | 715 | 427 | 277 | 16 | 2 | na |

^ estimate has a relative standard error of 10% to less than 25% and should be used with caution

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

na not available

(a) Estimates for 2005 are final; estimates for 2006 are preliminary and may be subject to revision.

(b) Used an ABS-maintained land-based frame (list of 'farms'). See Technical Note, page 11.

(c) Used the Australian Business Register-based frame (list of agricultural businesses). See Technical Note, page 11.

(d) Caution should be exercised in comparing 2005 and 2006 estimates. See Technical Note, page 11 for further details.

(e) Excluding house cows.

(f) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 13.

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

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication, *Principal Agricultural Commodities, 2005–06* (cat. no. 7111.0), presents preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the 2005–06 season. The preliminary estimates are based on a response rate of 91% from the 2005–06 Agricultural Census.

2 The main objective of the Agricultural Census is to provide benchmark information on the agriculture sector for small geographic areas. The collection has five main roles:

- to provide core production data to derive gross operating surplus and gross income for the farm sector;
- to support the determination and monitoring of agriculture policy;
- to support the determination and monitoring of natural resource and water policy as it relates to agriculture;
- to support decision makers involved in producing, supplying, marketing and trading agricultural commodities; and
- to support the monitoring of economic and social issues affecting rural communities.

STATISTICAL UNITS USED

3 The ABS uses an economic statistics units model on the ABS Business Register (ABSBR) to describe the characteristics of businesses and the structural relationships between related businesses. The units model is used within large and diverse business groups to define reporting units that can provide data to the ABS at a suitable level.

4 The units model allocates businesses to one of two sub-populations:

- a) The majority of businesses are simple in structure and are allocated to the business population that is maintained by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). These are termed (by the ABS) Australian Business Number (ABN) units.
- b) Businesses with more complex business structures are allocated to the business population maintained by the ABS. For agricultural businesses, these are primarily units which have multiple farm locations.

5 Together these two sub-populations comprise the ABSBR population from which respondents to the 2005–06 Agricultural Census were drawn.

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

6 The scope of the 2005–06 Agricultural Census was essentially all agricultural businesses above a minimum size cut-off recorded on the Australian Business Register (ABR) maintained by the ATO.

7 For the 2005–06 Agricultural Census, the measure of size was the ABS's Estimated Value of Agricultural Operations (EVAO) where available; or where it was not available a Business Activity Statement (BAS) turnover size was derived. A minimum size cutoff of \$5,000, based on either EVAO or BAS Turnover, was used to determine whether a unit was in-scope for the Census.

8 While the Agricultural Census frame does not contain all agricultural businesses in Australia, it is expected to provide better coverage than the previous Agricultural Survey frame since most businesses and organisations in Australia need to obtain an Australian Business Number (ABN) from the ATO for their business operations. The Agricultural Census frame is also expected to be more up-to-date as it excludes agricultural businesses with cancelled ABNs and incorporates regularly updated information on agricultural businesses from the ATO.

9 Preliminary estimates indicate a total in-scope population of 155,000 agricultural businesses compared to approximately 130,000 establishments on the previous ABS-maintained frame of agricultural establishments.

GEOGRAPHIC OUTPUT

10 As with past Censuses, small area data at Statistical Local Area (SLA) level will be produced from the 2005–06 Agricultural Census.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

GEOGRAPHIC OUTPUT *continued*

11 In response to increased interest in other geographic areas, the ABS has asked agricultural businesses in the 2005–06 Agricultural Census to provide location address details for their main agricultural property. This address will be used to code each farm to a 'mesh block' from which a range of small area data can be derived. It is intended that mesh blocks will become the basic building block of all statistical, political and administrative geography in Australia. Further information on mesh blocks can be found in *Information Paper Mesh Blocks, Australia, 2003* (cat. no. 1209.0).

12 Release of a range of small area outputs is proposed for early 2008. These outputs will generally be available as spreadsheets, data suitable for use in Geographic Information Systems, and possibly as maps.

DAIRY CATTLE

13 Investigations into the 2006 Agricultural Census estimates have revealed that the frame used for the 2005 Agricultural Survey did not accurately reflect the reduction in dairy establishments due to deregulation. Hence, the 2005 figure is considered to be over-estimated, with analysis indicating that the 2005 total milk cattle estimate to be around 2.9 million, not 3.1 million as previously reported.

GENERAL

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

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES (SAMPLE ERROR)

15 The estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from respondents to the 2005–06 Agricultural Census. Since not all selected units responded, the estimates may differ from those that would have been produced if all farms had responded. 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 when not all units have responded, i.e. when a 'sample' of responses only is obtained. 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.

16 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.

17 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.

18 A table with RSEs for the principal commodities in this publication follows:

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES (SAMPLE ERROR) *continued*

RELATIVE STANDARD ERROR OF PRINCIPAL COMMODITIES, New basis estimates—2005-2006

| | NSW | Vic. | Qld | SA | WA | Tas. | NT | ACT | Aust. |
|--|-----|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|-------|
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Barley for grain, production | 0.9 | 0.6 | 3.0 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 4.3 | na | 20.2 | 0.4 |
| Canola, production | 1.5 | 1.1 | 27.4 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 10.6 | na | 41.2 | 0.9 |
| Cotton lint, production | 2.5 | na | 2.5 | na | — | na | na | na | 1.8 |
| Grain sorghum, production | 1.9 | 15.9 | 1.9 | — | 20.0 | na | 32.9 | 41.2 | 1.3 |
| Lupins for grain, production | 2.8 | 2.5 | 23.5 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 16.7 | na | na | 1.3 |
| Oats for grain, production | 0.9 | 0.9 | 6.4 | 1.7 | 1.6 | 4.0 | na | 24.0 | 0.7 |
| Rice for grain, production | 1.6 | 5.0 | na | na | na | na | na | na | 1.5 |
| Sugar cane cut for crushing, production | 1.6 | na | 0.9 | na | 5.9 | na | na | na | 0.9 |
| Wheat for grain, production | 0.8 | 0.6 | 2.7 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 3.4 | na | 15.9 | 0.4 |
| Total milk cattle | 1.2 | 0.3 | 1.6 | 1.8 | 3.0 | 1.5 | na | na | 0.4 |
| Total meat cattle | 0.5 | 0.3 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.6 | 1.0 | 2.6 | 3.2 | 0.5 |
| Total sheep and lambs | 0.4 | 0.4 | 1.8 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 35.1 | 2.1 | 0.3 |
| Total pigs | 1.6 | 2.5 | 2.8 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 0.5 | na | 1.2 |

— nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

na not available

ABS DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

19 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 either the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070 or Sean Geltner on (03) 6222 5939.

GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

20 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*.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

21 A range of publications relevant to the Agriculture sector are produced by the ABS, including:

Selected Agricultural Commodities, cat. no. 7112.0.55.001

Agricultural Commodities, Australia, cat. no. 7121.0

Livestock and Meat, Australia, cat. no. 7218.0.55.001

Livestock Products, Australia, cat. no. 7215.0

Natural Resource Management on Australian Farms, cat. no. 4620.0

Value of Principal Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia, Preliminary,
cat. no. 7501.0

Value of Selected Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia, cat. no. 7502.0

Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia, cat. no. 7503.0

Water Use on Australian Farms, Australia, cat. no. 4618.0

22 Current publications and other products released by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (cat. no. 1101.0). The Catalogue is available from any ABS office or the ABS web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>. The ABS also issues a daily Release Advice on the web site which details products to be released in the week ahead.

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| '000 | thousand |
| ABR | Australian Business Register |
| ABS | Australian Bureau of Statistics |
| ACT | Australian Capital Territory |
| Aust. | Australia |
| cat. no. | Catalogue number |
| EVAO | Estimated Value of Agricultural Operations |
| ha | hectare |
| NSW | New South Wales |
| NT | Northern Territory |
| Qld | Queensland |
| RSE | relative standard error |
| SA | South Australia |
| SE | standard error |
| t | tonne |
| Tas. | Tasmania |
| Vic. | Victoria |
| WA | Western Australia |

TECHNICAL NOTE OLD BASIS ESTIMATES

OLD BASIS ESTIMATES

- 1** Prior to running the 2005–06 Agricultural Census, the ABS had maintained its own register of agricultural establishments. However, it was increasingly difficult to maintain this list, and users were questioning the accuracy of some commodity data.
- 2** The ABS investigated a number of alternatives for maintaining an agricultural business register and discussed these with key users of agriculture statistics. As a result of this, it was agreed that the ABS should move to a new frame sourced from the Australian Taxation Office's Australian Business Register (ABR) for the 2005–06 Agricultural Census.
- 3** The ABR-based register consists of all businesses on the ABR coded to an 'agricultural' industry, as well as businesses which have indicated they undertake agricultural activities. All businesses with a turnover of \$50,000 or more are required to register on the ABR. Many agricultural businesses with a turnover of less than \$50,000 have also chosen to register on the ABR.
- 4** Moving to the ABR-based register required changes to many of the methodologies used for compiling agriculture statistics. These included changes to the methods used for determining whether agricultural businesses were 'in-scope' of the collection, and also to ways the data were compiled (please see paragraphs 6–9 of the Explanatory Notes for more information about the changes in scope and coverage).

IMPLICATIONS FOR USERS

- 5** The key implication of the move to the new register is that the Census data will not be directly comparable with the historical time series of agriculture data. To provide users with a way of comparing ('bridging') the 2005–06 Agricultural Census data with the historical time series, the ABS has prepared two sets of estimates (see paragraph 12).
- 6** 'New-basis' estimates have been prepared for 2005–06 using the new ABR-based register and its associated statistical methodologies. These methodologies have been subjected to rigorous analysis and testing, with the resulting 'new basis' estimates representing the start of the new commodity and livestock series.
- 7** 'Old-basis' estimates have also been prepared for 2005–06. These estimates are a best judgement approximation to what the 2005–06 estimates may have been if the ABS had continued to use the previous ABS-maintained list of establishments (with its associated statistical methodologies) to conduct the 2005–06 Agricultural Census.

BRIDGING METHODOLOGY

- 8** The need for a bridging strategy for the Agriculture Census was outlined in *Information Paper: Agriculture Census: ABS Views on Content & Procedures, 2005–06* (cat. no. 7103.0) and was discussed extensively with key users in March 2006.
- 9** Key considerations of the bridging strategy have included:
 - a) known movements between 2004–05 and 2005–06 for those units common to both the old and new frame;
 - b) the contribution to 'old-basis' estimates of those units common to both the old and new frame; and
 - c) the contribution to 'old-basis' estimates of uncommon units (i.e. those old frame units which were out-of-scope of the new business register or old frame units which the ABS was not able to link to corresponding units on the new frame).

INTERPRETING THE BRIDGED DATA

- 10** Users should recognise the preliminary nature of both sets of 2005–06 estimates. They should also exercise a degree of caution in interpreting the tables as both the 'old-basis' and the 'new-basis' estimates are subject to sampling and non-sampling variability.
- 11** The non-sampling variability in the 'old-basis' 2005–06 estimates in particular, is expected to be significant due to difficulties in collecting, processing and estimating 'old basis' data from a 'new basis' framework. For this reason, the 2005–06 'old-basis' estimates should be used with considerable caution and movements between 2004–05 and 2005–06 considered as indicative only.

INTERPRETING THE BRIDGED
DATA *continued*

12 The following tables allow users to compare 2005 and 2006 estimates subject to the caveats mentioned.

TECHNICAL NOTE OLD BASIS ESTIMATES *continued*

INTERPRETING THE BRIDGED
DATA *continued*

PRODUCTION AND AREA OF PRINCIPAL CROPS(a)—Year ended 30 June

| | AUST. OLD BASIS(b) | | 2006 NEW BASIS(c) |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------|-------------------------|
| | 2005 | 2006(d) | Aust. |
| BARLEY FOR GRAIN | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 7 740 | 9 480 | 9 563 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 4 646 | 4 408 | 4 447 |
| CANOLA | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 1 542 | 1 370 | 1 436 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 1 377 | 934 | 979 |
| COTTON LINT | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 563 | 550 | 576 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 304 | 318 | 333 |
| GRAIN SORGHUM | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 2 011 | 1 980 | 1 973 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 755 | 772 | 769 |
| LUPINS FOR GRAIN | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 937 | 1 290 | 1 328 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 845 | 809 | 832 |
| OATS FOR GRAIN | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 1 283 | 1 700 | 1 695 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 894 | 939 | 936 |
| RICE FOR GRAIN | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 339 | 960 | 973 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 51 | 98 | 99 |
| SUGAR CANE CUT FOR CRUSHING | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 37 822 | 37 900 | 38 224 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 434 | 403 | 407 |
| WHEAT FOR GRAIN | | | |
| Production ('000 t) | 21 905 | 24 950 | 25 367 |
| Area ('000 ha) | 13 399 | 12 337 | 12 543 |

- (a) Estimates for 2005 are final; estimates for 2006 are preliminary and may be subject to revision. Caution should be exercised in comparing 2005 and 2006 estimates.
- (b) Used an ABS-maintained land-based frame (list of 'farms').
- (c) Used the Australian Business Register-based frame (list of agricultural businesses).
- (d) Data for 2006 old basis are initial bridged estimates and subject to revision. Caution should be exercised in comparing 2005 and 2006 estimates.

TECHNICAL NOTE OLD BASIS ESTIMATES *continued*

INTERPRETING THE BRIDGED
DATA *continued*

LIVESTOCK NUMBERS (a)—Year ended 30 June

| | AUST. OLD BASIS (b) | | 2006 NEW BASIS (c) |
|---|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| | 2005 | 2006(d) | Aust. |
| MILK CATTLE (e) | | | |
| Cows in milk and dry ('000) | 2 076 | 1 865 | 1 870 |
| Other milk cattle ('000) | 981 | 905 | 908 |
| Total milk cattle ('000) | (f) 3 056 | 2 770 | 2 778 |
| MEAT CATTLE | | | |
| Bulls and bull calves intended for service ('000) | 659 | 687 | 706 |
| Other calves under one year ('000) | 5 357 | 5 571 | 5 728 |
| Cows and heifers one year and over ('000) | 12 935 | 12 899 | 13 261 |
| Other cattle one year and over ('000) | 5 776 | 5 843 | 6 007 |
| Total meat cattle ('000) | 24 725 | 25 000 | 25 702 |
| SHEEP AND LAMBS | | | |
| Sheep ('000) | 71 947 | 66 655 | 66 928 |
| Lambs under one year ('000) | 29 178 | 24 845 | 24 946 |
| Total sheep and lambs ('000) | 101 125 | 91 500 | 91 875 |
| LAMBING | | | |
| Ewes mated to produce lambs ('000) | 46 147 | 42 803 | 42 978 |
| Lambs marked ('000) | 37 223 | 35 117 | 35 261 |
| Proportion of lambs marked to ewes mated (%) | 81 | 82 | 82 |
| Ewes expected to lamb next year ('000)(g) | 46 904 | 47 292 | 47 486 |
| PIGS | | | |
| Boars ('000) | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| Breeding sows ('000) | 286 | 286 | 302 |
| Gilts intended for breeding ('000) | 43 | 47 | 50 |
| All other pigs ('000) | 2 197 | 2 215 | 2 338 |
| Total pigs ('000) | 2 538 | 2 560 | 2 702 |

- (a) Estimates for 2005 are final; estimates for 2006 are preliminary and may be subject to revision. Caution should be exercised in comparing 2005 and 2006 estimates.
- (b) Used an ABS-maintained land-based frame (list of 'farms').
- (c) Used the Australian Business Register-based frame (list of agricultural businesses).
- (d) Data for 2006 old basis are initial bridged estimates and subject to revision. Caution should be exercised in comparing 2005 and 2006 estimates.
- (e) Excluding house cows.
- (f) See Explanatory Notes, paragraph 13.
- (g) Forecast made at the beginning of each season.

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