

# new south wales

- > Expectations for winter crop production have fallen dramatically across most of the cropping regions of southern and central New South Wales, largely because of below average rainfall and high seasonal temperatures throughout spring. Harvesting in northern New South Wales is nearly completed, and yields are expected to be significantly higher than in other regions of the state, reflecting more favorable growing conditions.
- > October 2006 was by far the hottest October on record in New South Wales and statewide rainfall was the lowest on record. Conditions in the Murray Darling Basin were particularly severe, where rainfall was half that of the previous driest October in the 'federation drought' year of 1900.
- > The area planted to **wheat** in New South Wales in 2006-07 is estimated to have fallen by 4 per cent to below 3.4 million hectares. With yields estimated to be well below average following the late sowing of crops and lack of in-crop rainfall, wheat production is estimated to be less than 2.2 million tonnes in 2006-07, a decline of 73 per cent from 2005-06.
- > The area planted to **barley** is estimated to have fallen by 11 per cent to 900 000 hectares in 2006-07, following the late start to the season. Below average spring rainfall is expected to result in significant yield penalties, with production forecast to fall by 76 per cent in 2006-07 to 550 000 tonnes.
- > Although the area planted to **canola** increased by 3 per cent in 2006-07, canola production is estimated to fall by 92 per cent to 20 000 tonnes. The decline in production reflects a significant drop in yields owing to the lack of in-crop rainfall, combined with high temperatures. Substantial areas were also cut for hay as producers realised that crops were unlikely to produce harvestable amounts of grain.
- > The area planted to **grain sorghum** is forecast to fall by 17 per cent from the record area planted last year, reflecting

## winter crop estimates, 2006-07 – New South Wales

	area	yield <sup>a</sup>	production	production change from 2005-06
	'000 ha	t/ha	kt	%
Wheat	3 500	2.26	2 150	73
Barley	1 015	2.21	550	76
Canola	145	1.75	20	92

<sup>a</sup> Yields are based on area planted.

## summer crop forecasts, 2006-07 – New South Wales

	area	yield <sup>a</sup>	production	area change from 2005-06
	'000 ha	t/ha	kt	%
Sorghum	250	3.00	750	-17
Sunflowers	50	1.30	65	-20
Cotton seed	115	2.61	301	-46
Cotton lint	115	1.84	213	-46
Rice	20	6.30	126	-81

<sup>a</sup> Yields are based on area planted.

the lack of adequate spring rainfall to enable planting. With an estimated 250 000 hectares planted and assuming average seasonal conditions, grain sorghum production is forecast to fall by 11 per cent in 2006-07 to 750 000 tonnes.

- > Reduced water storage levels in southern New South Wales following below average winter and spring rainfall led to an initial decrease in water allocations to **rice** producers, resulting in an estimated fall in area sown of 81 per cent to 20 000 hectares in 2006-07. Further cuts to water allocations after planting are expected to significantly affect rice production as some crops are abandoned owing to the lack of sufficient water to carry them through to harvest. Rice production is forecast to fall by 88 per cent in 2006-07 to around 126 000 tonnes.
- > Below average rainfall in the majority of **cotton** growing regions during winter and spring has resulted in reduced water allocations, which are estimated to result in the area planted to cotton falling by 46 per cent in 2006-07. Cottonseed and cotton lint production are both forecast to fall by 47 per cent, to 301 000 tonnes and 213 000 tonnes respectively in 2006-07.