

queensland

- > An extremely dry start to the season resulted in very few planting opportunities throughout most of the southern cropping areas. However, central Queensland received good planting rains in early April, resulting in widespread planting, followed by favorable growing conditions. In 2006-07 the vast majority of Queensland's winter crop has come from central Queensland.
- > Like most states, below average rainfall was recorded over the winter cropping season, with the exception of some parts of central Queensland. A dry October in the Dawson and Callide Valleys was favorable for the region's wheat harvest, which is now complete, with yield estimates in the 2.0-2.5 tonnes per hectare range for wheat and barley crops. Later planted crops have generally not yielded as well as those planted in May. The winter crop harvest has also been completed in the Central Highlands, with wheat yields averaging 2.3-2.5 tonnes per hectare.
- > Widespread November rainfall across the central and southern Downs prompted some of the intended sorghum plantings to go ahead. However, with the extremely dry winter and spring, more rainfall will be needed for planting intentions to be realised. Generally, subsoil moisture needs significant replenishment before a summer crop can be planted with confidence.
- > The area sown to winter crops in Queensland is estimated to have declined by 68 per cent in 2006-07, to 690 000 hectares. Total winter crop production is estimated to have fallen by 48 per cent, to around 870 000 tonnes, reflecting the poor seasonal conditions in southern Queensland.
- > The area planted to **wheat** in Queensland is estimated to have fallen by 43 per cent to 550 000 hectares. Because of the poor season in the southern part of the state, wheat production in Queensland is estimated to be 720 000 tonnes in 2006-07, 48 per cent lower than last year and the smallest wheat harvest since the 2002-03 drought.

winter crop estimates, 2006-07 - Queensland

	area	yield ^a	production	production change from 2005-06
	'000 ha	t/ha	kt	%
Wheat	550	1.31	720	-48
Barley	90	1.06	95	-63

^a Yields are based on area planted.

summer crop forecasts, 2006-07 - Queensland

	area	yield ^a	production	area change from 2005-06
	'000 ha	t/ha	kt	%
Sorghum	550	2.30	1265	-6
Sunflowers	15	0.87	13	241
Cotton seed	34	2.40	82	-72
Cotton lint	34	1.7	58	-72

^a Yields are based on area planted.

- > The area planted to barley is estimated to have fallen by 42 per cent, to 90 000 hectares in 2006-07, primarily reflecting a significant reduction in sowings on the Darling Downs, one of the state's major **barley** growing regions. Production is estimated to be 95 000 tonnes, a 63 per cent fall from 2005-06.
- > **Chickpea** production is estimated to rise by 58 per cent in 2006-07 to 49 000 tonnes. Early rain in central Queensland allowed a significant area of chickpeas to be planted and growing conditions remained favorable throughout the season. Crops have now been harvested with above average yields and quality achieved. Due to the poor start to the season there were very few planting opportunities in southern Queensland.
- > The area planted to grain **sorghum** is forecast to fall by 6 per cent to 550 000 hectares. However, subsoil moisture needs significant replenishment before summer crop planting intentions can be realised. It is likely that some planting will be held off until late January next year to avoid flowering during the heat of summer.
- > Inadequate water availability in the main water storage dams is forecast to result in a 72 per cent fall in the area planted to **cotton** in 2006-07 to 34 000 hectares. While average winter rainfall in central Queensland improved subsoil moisture profiles and on-farm storages, the drought conditions being experienced in southern Queensland have severely depleted water storages. This is especially the case for the cotton growing areas of the Darling Downs.