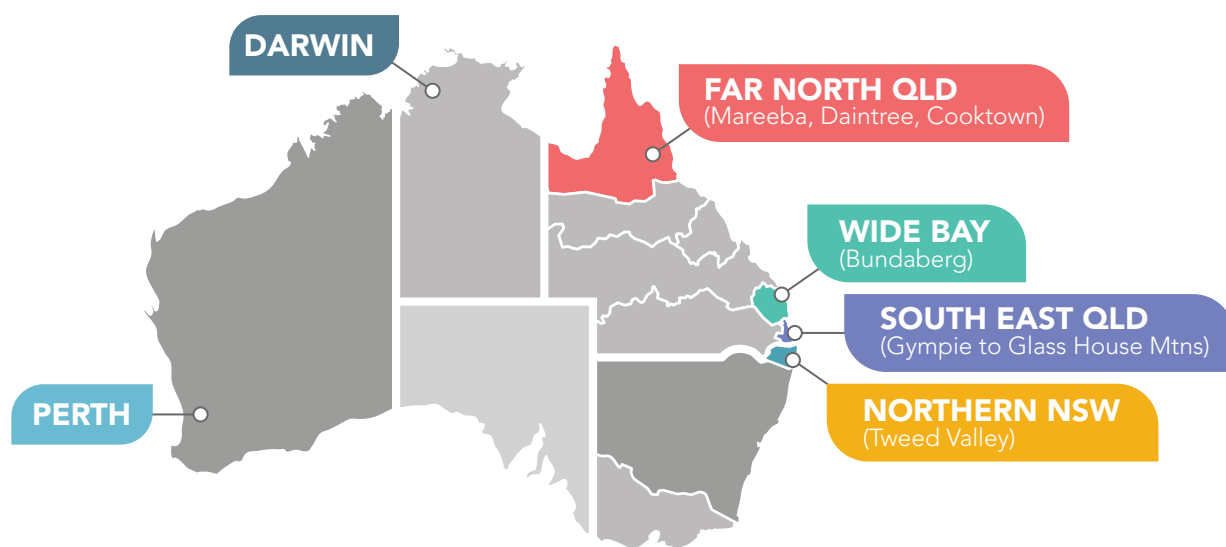


REGIONAL ROUND UP



WEATHER WATCH

DECEMBER

- Records tumbled as this was the warmest December on record for Australia and the lowest rainfall on record for the country as a whole
- It was amongst the five driest Decembers on record for Queensland, New South Wales and the Northern Territory
- December concluded Australia's warmest and driest year on record

JANUARY

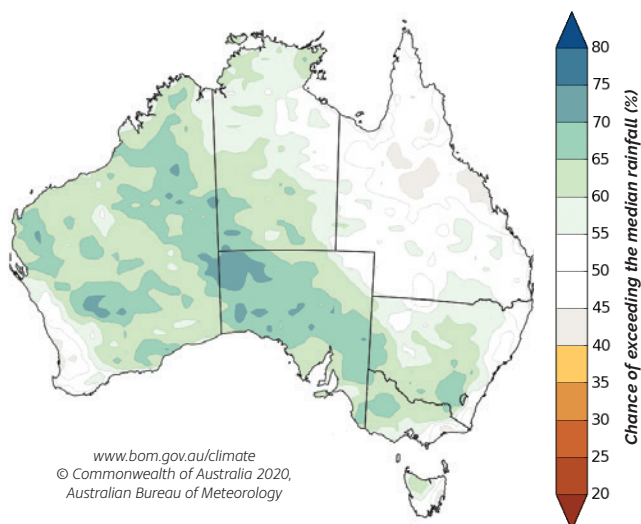
- Bushfires were raging across Australia with an estimated 18.6m hectares burnt from June - January 2020
- Although January was warmer than average, some good news came in the shape of very welcome rain in Bundaberg, the Sunshine Coast and northern NSW growing regions
- Mid-January brought heavy rain and flash flooding to some parts of SEQ and NNSW

FEBRUARY

- Tenth-warmest February on record for Australia at nearly 1°C warmer than average
- A number of BoM stations in New South Wales recorded their warmest February day on record on the 1st
- February rainfall was 11% below average for Australia as a whole, but some areas had record falls. Murwillumbah recorded 3 times average rainfall at 700.5mm for the month

RAINFALL OUTLOOK APR-JUN 2020

CHANCE OF EXCEEDING THE MEDIAN RAINFALL



CLIMATE OUTLOOK OVERVIEW

(Issued 5 March 2020)

- April to June is likely to be wetter than average for parts of western and southern Australia (60-70% chance).
- While recent rainfall over parts of eastern Australia has eased the dry in many areas, long-term rainfall deficiencies continue for many. Several months of above average rainfall are required to replenish water storages and stream flows.
- Both days and nights are likely to be warmer than average across most of the country for April to June, although days have roughly equal chances of being above or below average in parts of the south.

LONG TERM AVERAGE RAINFALL (mm)

WEATHER STATIONS	APR	MAY	JUN
Mareeba	38.6	11.8	11.2
Bundaberg	55.9	66.8	50.2
Sunshine Coast Airport	153.8	154.9	120.5
Murwillumbah	153.5	128.6	106.6

GROWER REPORTS

FAR NORTH QLD

As I write this report, I reflect on the 2019 season and how environmental conditions affected crops in the NQ growing area. Rain, frost, and hailstorms have made for a later season finish in some areas.

Fortunately, yields improved in the later part of the season coupled with some reasonable price rises leading up to Christmas that made the season worthwhile. Moving forward, the 2020 season has had a good start with the region receiving 300mm to 500 mm of rain so far this year. A normal wet season would be welcomed to replenish the 66% full Tinaroo Irrigation Scheme Dam, to ensure the region has water security for its diversity of crops for the following 12 months. All the best from the north for the 2020 season.

Brian & Irene Westwood, Mareeba

BUNDABERG

Hello everyone.

It has finally happened - RAIN. In 2019, Bundaberg officially recorded its lowest annual rainfall on record with my farm only receiving 390mm instead of the usual 1000 mm - 1200mm. Now in the first two months of 2020, my farm has received 400mm, resulting in many hours on the mower/slasher and weed spraying. The vines, new & old are looking good thanks to the rain.

Both the Misty Gem & Pandora have finished picking for a while but there is good flower set happening at the moment. More rain is forecast which hopefully doesn't interrupt the flower set too much. Until next time. Thanks.

Peter & Sally Griffiths, Bundaberg

SUNSHINE COAST

This summer has certainly been a challenge. We started with one of our driest ever Decembers and thankfully finished with our dams full. Apparently, all you have to do to make it rain is get an excavator working to enlarge your dam and it starts to pour down.

After a slow start, most of us had an average season. Quantities were down, but prices were up, so it was less hectic than usual. We completely stopped production for a couple of weeks in early February, but the last few days of summer saw a sudden and dramatic increase in production. I only hope the good prices can hold for another week or two. Unfortunately, a few growers are still feeling the effects of the earlier hailstorms, while others are battling disease after the persistent showers and storms.

We look like having a fairly busy early autumn and hopefully there is time for a good set for the winter crop. At the moment, in the first days of March, we are flat out picking and mowing. The grass has gone crazy lately. I'm already looking forward to some cooler weather. This humidity is no fun anymore. I look forward to catching up with some of you at the field days. All the best for the season.

Jim & Jill Gordon, Yandina

TWEED AREA

Hello Everyone! Summer started off hot and dry with a typical Christmas/New Year crop. Due to the dry end of spring we had a large number of small fruit through, however quality was high.

On Christmas Eve, we received the first of some nice rain which came fairly regularly through January. February rolled along and it just didn't stop raining. We reached 1000mm for January and February combined. Luckily there wasn't much fruit around in February. Spraying has been tricky, and we are now seeing a lot of marked fruit coming through, however all large fruit.

Fusarium is still causing us some worry with vines still dying. In our third-year vines there are long stretches of row with no vine. Also, quite a few deaths in our second-year vines. Our Freshcare audit was completed and they are now around \$1100!! And a couple of printer cartridges lighter. We eagerly await the next update! All the best.

Nick & Nerida Hornery, Newrybar

FAR NORTH QLD

(Mareeba, Daintree, Cooktown)

Mareeba (station 031210)	DEC	JAN	FEB
 MEAN (mm)	28.8 [92.6]	191.2 [209.8]	153.4 [226.4]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	7 [7.8]	12 [11.9]	15 [13.9]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	33.7 [32.2]	33.0 [31.3]	32.5 [30.7]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	20.8 [20.8]	22.0 [21.4]	22.3 [21.4]

WIDE BAY

(Bundaberg)

Bundaberg (station 039128)	DEC	JAN	FEB
 MEAN (mm)	11.6 [124.7]	141.8 [171]	162.0 [156.2]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	2 [6.2]	12 [7.8]	14 [8]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	32.5 [29.7]	31.7 [30.4]	31.4 [30.1]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	21.4 [20.5]	22.5 [21.5]	23.1 [21.4]

SOUTH EAST QLD

(Gympie to Glass House Mtns)

Sunshine Coast Airport (station 040861)	DEC	JAN	FEB
 MEAN (mm)	29.0 [142.5]	272.0 [144.8]	649.8 [207.5]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	4 [6.2]	12 [7.8]	14 [8]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	30.0 [29.7]	29.7 [30.4]	29.2 [30.1]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	20.5 [20.5]	21.7 [21.5]	22.3 [21.4]

NORTHERN NSW

(Tweed Valley)

Murwillumbah (station 058158)	DEC	JAN	FEB
 MEAN (mm)	85.0 [166.2]	263.9 [205.3]	700.5 [230.5]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	6 [10.8]	10 [11.9]	17 [13]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	31.3 [29.2]	30.7 [29.7]	29.0 [29.0]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	18.3 [18.5]	20.8 [19.8]	21.2 [19.7]

Figures in [] are long term historical averages.
All weather data from www.bom.gov.au