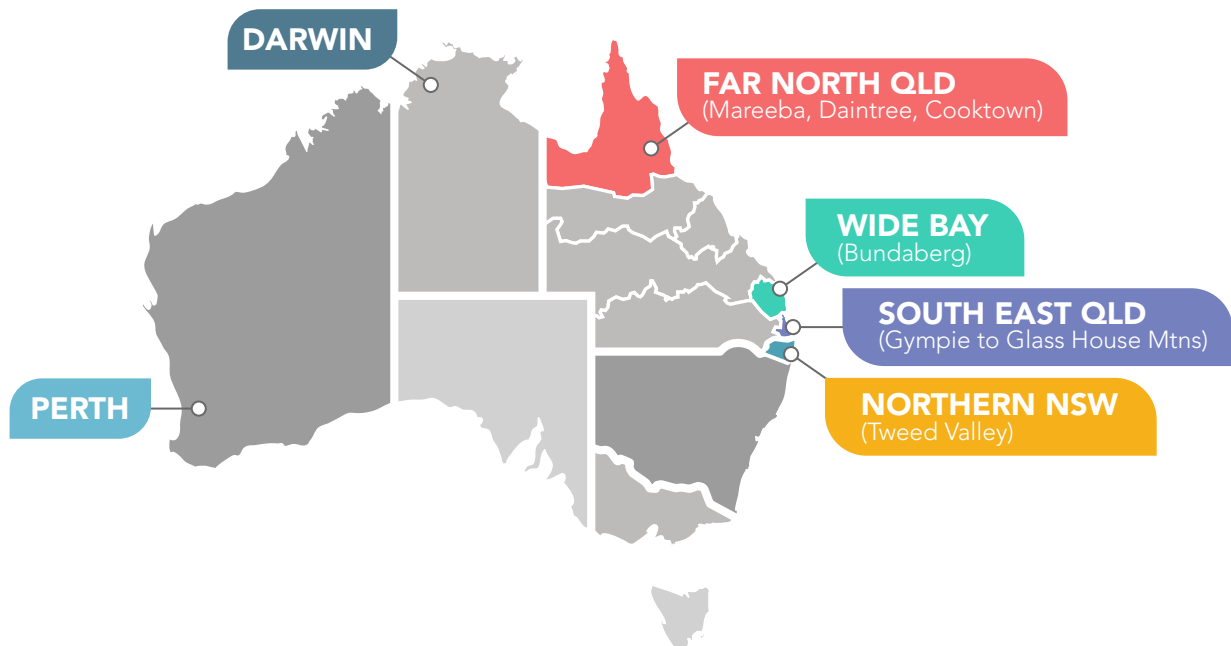


REGIONAL ROUND UP



WEATHER WATCH

JUNE

The second-driest June on record for Australia as a whole, and driest on record for large areas of southern Australia.

The only areas with significantly above average rainfall were on the east coast between Sydney and Brisbane.

JULY

July was Australia's warmest by a large margin, more than 0.5°C warmer than the previous record set in 1975.

Rainfall was below average for much of southern Australia, particularly in New South Wales where it was the driest July since 2002.

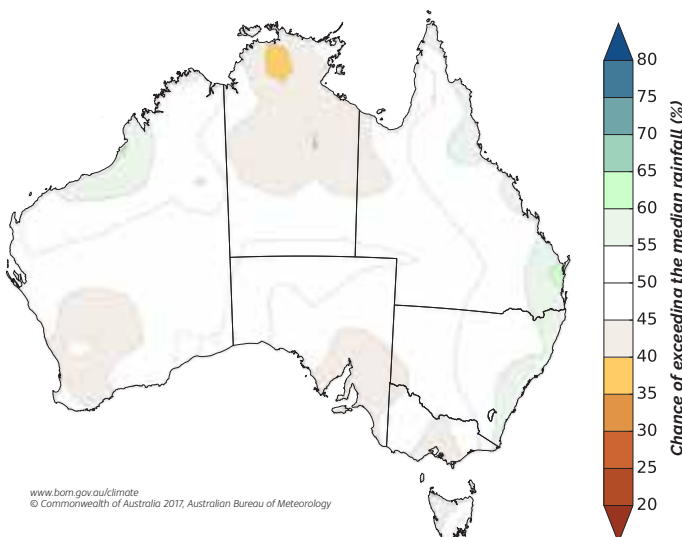
AUGUST

Daytime temperatures were very much above average for most of the growing regions in Australia.

Rainfall was well below average with some regions recording no rain for the entire period.

RAINFALL OUTLOOK | OCT-DEC 2017

CHANCE OF EXCEEDING THE MEDIAN RAINFALL



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CLIMATE OUTLOOK OVERVIEW

(Issued 14 September 2017)

- Shows an equal chance of wetter/drier conditions across Australia
- Means there is no strong driver pushing our climate towards widespread significantly wetter or drier conditions

LONG TERM AVERAGE – MEAN RAINFALL (mm)

WEATHER STATIONS	OCT	NOV	DEC
Mareeba	12.6	47.2	89.1
Bundaberg	68.6	85.5	128.0
Sunshine Coast Airport	70.1	81.8	143.1
Murwillumbah	102.9	124.8	169.1

GROWER REPORTS

FAR NORTH QLD

Mareeba and surrounding areas continue to have harsh growing conditions. Rain events do not exist. There is no subsoil moisture to back up irrigation coupled with diurnal temperature conditions. I believe this could be the reason why passionfruit yields are low. Lakeland Downs and some coastal areas have experienced growing difficulties this season. I remain optimistic with the weather warming, the season could still prove to be reasonable. Tinaroo Dam is now 44% full which is amazing considering that 7500 megalitres has been released into the Barron River for the months of August and September for an environmental flow. Irrigators relying on extra water from the Tinaroo irrigation scheme are disturbed by decisions made of this nature. Looking forward to meeting everyone at the Regional Field Day & AGM.

Brian Westwood, Mareeba

BUNDABERG

Now in mid-September, and Bundy has received minimal rain since mid-May and absolutely nothing for six weeks. My bore water allocation is still 90%, but I imagine in the next allocation period this will reduce dramatically. The cane harvesting season has had no stoppages due to the weather and the harvesters/haul out tractors are creating a major dust problem wherever they are working, (not good when its beside your house). Our winter crop was average for the Misty's and the panama crop was big in volume, but the size of fruit was down due to the large crop load on the vines. We have been experiencing cold nights recently which does not promote too much plant growth in the young vines. Some local farmers are still picking into the good money period which eases the pain, a bit, for having basically no summer crop due to the high temperatures. That's all until next time.

Peter Griffiths, Bundaberg

SUNSHINE COAST

The Sunshine Coast has certainly lived up to its name of late. We have hardly seen a drop of rain since Cyclone Debbie. We have generally had a reasonable winter season here as opposed to the start of the year, good steady production and fair prices. It was a little disappointing that prices didn't go up as our production dropped off in late August / early September. I think most of us on the Sunshine Coast have all but finished for the season as of mid-September. Like everyone else we go like crazy now chopping out vines and preparing for when our plants arrive in the next couple of weeks. The long-range weather forecast is predicting a wetter than average spring, so I hope they are correct. I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at the Regional Field Day & AGM where we can swap good rainfall stories. Happy planting!

Jim Gordon, Yandina

TWEED AREA

The first nine months of this year have been the most challenging period I have experienced in passion fruit. 2017 started hot and dry with our vines only setting a small autumn crop. Then a lot of damage was caused by ex-TC Debbie in March/April. And then it just kept raining with one 'memorable' period of 3 wet weeks - absolutely no sun- and the vines were going backwards.

July came and things dried up quickly. In mid-August, Newrybar received the worst hail storm in the 40 years my parents have been there. Golf ball sized hail ripped through the vines leaving skeletons clinging to the wire. Fruit covered the ground when it hailed and it looked like someone had hit it with a hammer. Some of my 2-year-old vines that were struggling through winter have already died with others likely to follow. Up and down the remaining stalks are ugly-looking abrasions which will cause problems down the track. I've put a couple of Copper sprays on to help them heal. We obviously had no tips to start grafting with so I was able to get some from the Tweed - thank you to the Constables and Johnsons.

Since then we still haven't had any rain. My dam is pretty full and I've been pouring the water on but I feel 20mm of rain could really start to turn things around. I hear some whispers of a La Niña cycle possible so fingers-crossed. I'm hoping for some better news for my next report. All the best.

Nick & Nerida Hornery, Newrybar

FAR NORTH QLD

(Mareeba, Daintree, Cooktown)

Mareeba (station 031210)	JUN	JUL	AUG
MEAN (mm)	13.2 [12.1]	4.6 [6.0]	3.8 [7.9]
MEAN DAYS >1mm	3 [1.9]	2 [1.6]	1 [1.2]
MEAN (MAX °C)	24.5 [25.4]	26.1 [25.0]	27.5 [26.3]
MEAN (MIN °C)	15.4 [15.3]	15.6 [13.9]	14.4 [13.8]

WIDE BAY

(Bundaberg)

Bundaberg (station 039128)	JUN	JUL	AUG
MEAN (mm)	7.0 [65.7]	9.0 [53.5]	0 [33.4]
MEAN DAYS >1mm	2 [4.3]	1 [4.0]	0 [3.5]
MEAN (MAX °C)	23.8 [22.4]	24.4 [22.0]	25.6 [23.2]
MEAN (MIN °C)	12.0 [11.3]	10.9 [9.9]	11.0 [10.7]

SOUTH EAST QLD

(Gympie to Glass House Mtns)

Sunshine Coast Airport (station 040861)	JUN	JUL	AUG
MEAN (mm)	35.2 [19.6]	21.0 [63.1]	0.8 [77.2]
MEAN DAYS >1mm	4 [9.4]	4 [6.6]	0 [5.3]
MEAN (MAX °C)	22.6 [21.4]	22.6 [21.1]	24.4 [22.2]
MEAN (MIN °C)	12.3 [11.4]	9.8 [9.6]	9.7 [9.9]

NORTHERN NSW

(Tweed Valley)

Murwillumbah (station 058158)	JUN	JUL	AUG
MEAN (mm)	222.7 [108.1]	30.7 [61.1]	1.8 [54.1]
MEAN DAYS >1mm	11 [7.3]	7 [5.8]	1 [5.2]
MEAN (MAX °C)	21.4 [21.3]	22.6 [21.0]	24.6 [22.5]
MEAN (MIN °C)	11.8 [9.9]	7.2 [8.6]	7.2 [8.8]

Figures in [] are long term historical averages.

All weather data from www.bom.gov.au

Thank you to Brian, Peter, Jim & Nick for their reports