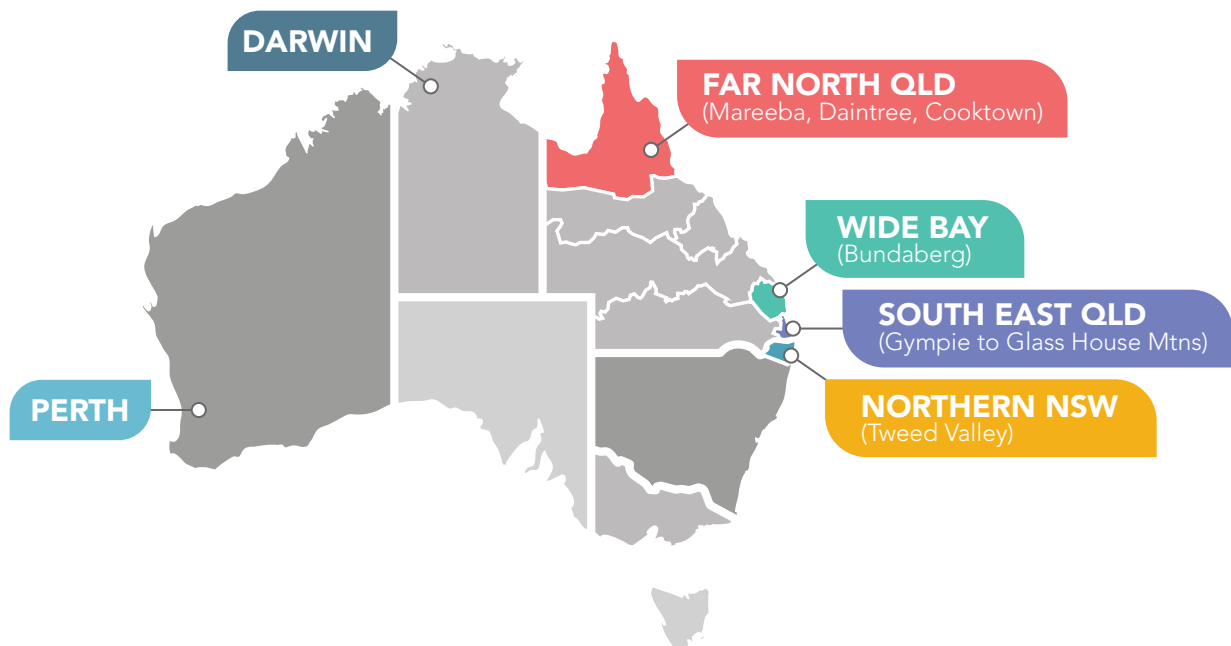


REGIONAL ROUND UP



WEATHER WATCH

AUGUST

Rainfall has been non-existent across all growing regions with only FNQ receiving any rain - just 3.8mm for the month.

Daytime temperatures have also been above average across all areas, contributing further to the big dry.

SEPTEMBER

Bundaberg received no rain at all for the second month running, following two very low rainfall months.

Southern growing regions remained very dry with limited rainfall. Only parts of FNQ received any relief with 21mm recorded at Mareeba for the month and 125mm at Innisfail, but only 1.4mm at Cooktown.

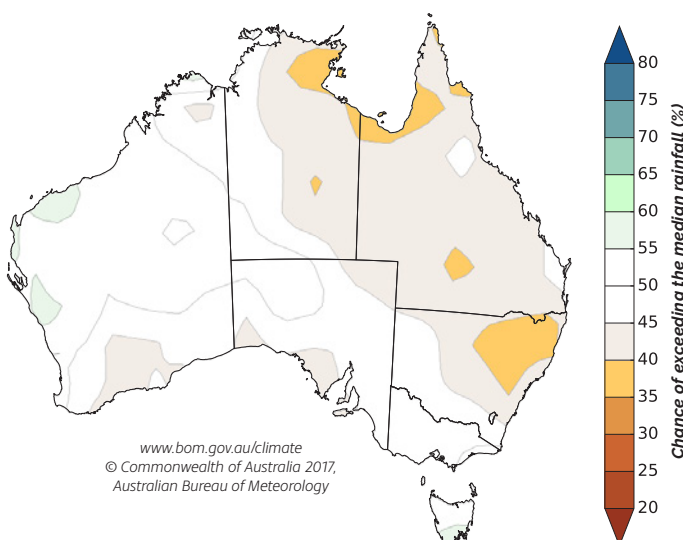
OCTOBER

Dry gave way to extreme wet with Bundaberg Aero recording 238.8mm on one day - Tuesday 3rd October.

Large rain periods were recorded across other areas; Murwillumbah received more than double normal rainfall and both the Sunshine Coast and Mareeba nearly five times the expected average.

RAINFALL OUTLOOK | DEC - FEB 2018

CHANCE OF EXCEEDING THE MEDIAN RAINFALL



CLIMATE OUTLOOK OVERVIEW

(Issued 16 November 2017)

- Australia's major climate drivers remain neutral
- For the three months December to February, most of the country has just a 50% chance of being wetter than average
- The rainfall outlook for summer shows northeast NSW and regions surrounding the Gulf of Carpentaria are likely to be drier than average. Elsewhere across the country, there is no strong signal showing wetter or drier conditions for summer.

LONG TERM AVERAGE – MEAN RAINFALL (mm)

WEATHER STATIONS	DEC	JAN	FEB
Mareeba	89.1	212.5	232.9
Bundaberg	128.0	175.0	156.1
Sunshine Coast Airport	143.1	149.3	186.2
Murwillumbah	169.1	211.5	225.2

GROWER REPORTS

FAR NORTH QLD

The growing season in North Queensland will come to a close in December/January for growers that have a twelve-month re-plant period. Looking back over the growing year, the weather has not been favourable for passionfruit. Mareeba and Tableland areas experienced temperature differences of 25 degrees between night and day. This may be the reason for smaller than usual fruit set, the diurnal temperatures also affected the fruit set of shepherd avocados. Recent rainfalls of 100mm coupled with high winds and hail has damaged different crops across the Tablelands region. My best thoughts go to those growers. The rain, in general, was well received alleviating the high water use from Tinaroo Irrigation Scheme. This increased water allocation by 10%. A Lakeland Downs grower experienced the difficult climatic conditions and summed up his season as below average growing conditions. In finishing, I would like to credit Jane, Margie and others on the new look and informative magazine (great work to all). *Brian Westwood, Mareeba*

BUNDABERG

Hello everyone. In the last two months Bundaberg has encountered the extremes of weather that can be very demoralising. Up to late September we were experiencing one of the driest periods in recent history, to then in October receive about three quarters of our annual rainfall in a two-week period, 600 to 700mm of rain! Our creek was running higher than the 2013 floods and the vines are showing the stress of having wet feet for too long. Then on the afternoon of the Melbourne Cup, parts of Bundy were victims of a severe 1 in 10-year storm. On the north side of town, the wind tore the tops out of large trees, 1000's of mature Macadamia were snapped off at ground level, two semi-trailers were blown onto their sides, a shipping container was rolled about 5 times, cane bins were blown over onto their sides from rail tracks, winds unroofed houses and smashed sheds. Unfortunately, I am aware of a couple of Passionfruit growers who were in the storm's path and have received massive damage to vines & infrastructure, (very sad). On a brighter note, the Misty Gems have continued picking slowly throughout the good money and a good summer crop has set. The Pandora's also have set and should be ready in January. Funnily enough our water allocations have been increased back up to 100%. So, here's hoping the next report is full of good news. Thanks. *Peter Griffiths, Bundaberg*

SUNSHINE COAST

I hope everyone is well and not having too tough a time with the weather. In the Sunshine Coast area we have fared reasonably well compared with other regions. The dams are the fullest they have been in 6 or 7 years and while the rain has affected the quality of some of the early season fruit, I think it will do more good than harm in the long run. Most of us are still planting here, but we should be finished by the second week in November. There is a bit of a shortfall in plant numbers, but the nurseries have done their best in difficult conditions. I wouldn't swap places for quids. The difficulty in propagating the Sweethearts is highlighting the need for new varieties which are not only good for growers, but also economical for the nurseries to produce. Hopefully we'll soon get serious with the picking. It's time to start making money instead of just spending it. Locally, some growers have had fruit for a while with others just starting, and the quality has been variable. With the summer coming on fast, let's hope we can all avoid any damaging weather. There's been more than enough of that for one year. I'd like to thank our new committee members-Aidan and Anton - for their willingness to help our association move forward. They are taking the place of Keith Paxton and Sean Russell who have both made exceptional contributions to the Passionfruit Industry over many years. I'm sure the industry appreciates your efforts and it's good to know you'll be on hand to help and advise any time we need your expertise. Best wishes and good luck for the summer season. *Jim Gordon, Yandina*

TWEED AREA

Hello All! Spring started with a dry September which was not ideal after the hail storm we received in August. For October, we had regular rainfall and warm conditions which led to a great planting season. Very little irrigating was required for the new vines to get away. Fruit wise a quiet Christmas is in store due to the August hail with some good fruit set on the 12 month-old vines, but very little on the 24 month-old ones. At the start of November at Newrybar we had another hail storm come through, but luckily, we were on the edge of it this time. We lost tips on around 1/3 of our new vines, but the older vines had minimal damage. Only a couple of hundred metres up the road got hit hard so it was very nerve-racking watching the storm come up. Unfortunately, the Smiths from Brooklet were hit hard which was devastating for them after also being hit in the August storm. Since then we have had very cool and wet conditions with max temps in the low 20s with the same forecast for the next week. It's very unusual Spring weather (I'm wearing a jumper to work in the mornings!). Although I don't like the heat and humidity, we definitely need some. I haven't spoken to any of the other Tweed growers, but I'd expect some good crops to be hanging. All the best. *Nick & Nerida Hornery, Newrybar*

FAR NORTH QLD

(Mareeba, Daintree, Cooktown)

Mareeba (station 031210)	AUG	SEP	OCT
 MEAN (mm)	3.8 [7.9]	21.0 [4.9]	65.6 [12.6]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	1 [1.2]	4 [1.2]	6 [2.5]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	27.5 [26.3]	28.9 [28.8]	30.3 [30.5]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	14.4 [13.8]	15.1 [15.5]	18.1 [17.3]

WIDE BAY

(Bundaberg)

Bundaberg (station 039128)	AUG	SEP	OCT
 MEAN (mm)	0 [33.4]	9.0 [36.0]	558.2 [68.6]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	0 [3.5]	0 [2.9]	11 [5.0]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	25.6 [23.2]	27.9 [25.6]	27.4 [27.0]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	11.0 [10.7]	13.8 [13.7]	18.9 [16.5]

SOUTH EAST QLD

(Gympie to Glass House Mtns)

Sunshine Coast Airport (station 040861)	AUG	SEP	OCT
 MEAN (mm)	0.8 [77.2]	3.0 [55.5]	320.4 [70.1]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	0 [5.3]	2 [5.5]	8 [7.2]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	24.4 [22.2]	26.9 [24.4]	26.4 [25.6]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	9.7 [9.9]	12.8 [12.9]	18.2 [15.5]

NORTHERN NSW

(Tweed Valley)

Murwillumbah (station 058158)	AUG	SEP	OCT
 MEAN (mm)	1.8 [54.1]	2.0 [40.5]	215.6 [102.9]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	1 [5.2]	1 [5.3]	13 [8.1]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	24.6 [22.5]	28.2 [25.1]	26.7 [26.4]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	7.2 [8.8]	10.4 [11.5]	17.4 [14.1]

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.