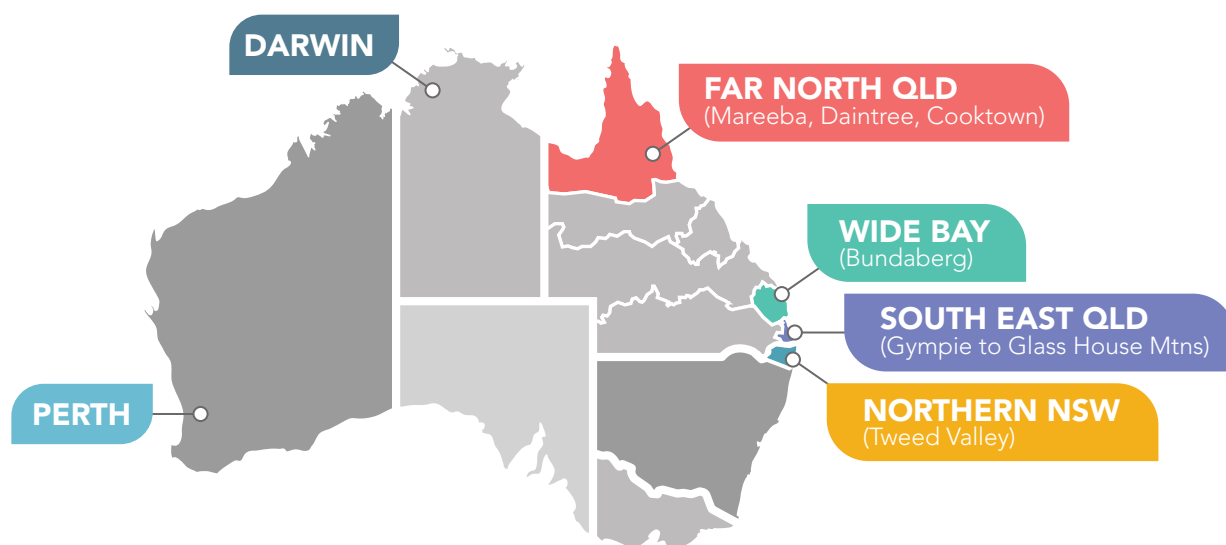


REGIONAL ROUND UP



WEATHER WATCH

FEBRUARY

February was wet in Bundaberg and SEQ, but both FNQ and Northern NSW had far less rainfall than average, and higher daytime temperatures than usual.

The Sunshine Coast received nearly double average rainfall, with 17 wet days in the month creating issues with fungal disease and fruit set across the region.

MARCH

FNQ finally received decent rainfall in March which helped to top up water storages, but it was exceptionally dry in the Bundaberg area with only 10mm of rain recorded across the whole month.

SEQ and Northern NSW had a wet month, with both recording 19 days of rain, although the overall rainfall volume was behind the long-term average, the wet days again hindered fruit set and made very regular spraying an imperative to try to ward off disease.

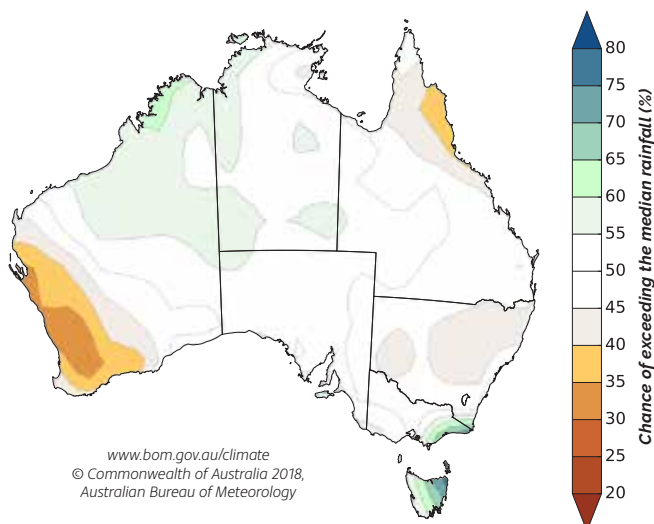
APRIL

April rainfall was well below average across much of Queensland, but there were pockets of above average falls in the far southwest and about the central coast. Temperatures were very warm for both days and nights. A few locations had their highest April mean daily maximum temperature on record!

April was NSW's warmest on record, with both daytime and overnight temperatures very much above average across most of the state. Rainfall during April was below average across most of NSW, making it the State's driest since 2005.

RAINFALL OUTLOOK JUN–AUG 2018

CHANCE OF EXCEEDING THE MEDIAN RAINFALL



CLIMATE OUTLOOK OVERVIEW

(Issued 17 May 2018)

- There is no strong indication that winter will be particularly wetter or drier than average for most of the country – the likelihood of exceeding median rainfall is near 50%.
- The exceptions are in western WA, where a drier season is more likely, and in the country's far southeast, where a wetter season is favoured.
- Both days and nights are likely to be warmer than average for winter in the south. Nights are favoured to be cooler than average in Queensland.

LONG TERM AVERAGE RAINFALL (MM)

WEATHER STATIONS	JUN	JUL	AUG
Mareeba	12.1	6.0	7.9
Bundaberg	51.5	39.6	34.3
Sunshine Coast Airport	119.6	63.1	77.2
Murwillumbah	108.1	61	54.1

GROWER REPORTS

FAR NORTH QLD

The northern passion fruit region has had, at last, a wet season. Tinaroo dam is now 96% full. This ensures the livelihood of those that depend on the irrigation scheme for the next twelve months. On the flip side of a good wet season comes the cost of maintaining healthy vines and fruit quality. From the end of March, growing conditions improved.

There has been good solid panama sent to the southern markets returning favourable prices. Weather has not settled at Lakeland Down, persistent high winds coupled with low dew nights played havoc with vines and fruit set is down. Looking ahead, the long-range forecast for winter is eastern Queensland will be cooler than usual and southern states will be warmer than usual - "hopefully no frost".

Brian Westwood, Mareeba

BUNDABERG

Hello everyone. In the last two months Bundaberg has been uneventful in all departments. Very little rain with warm weather, until last week when a cold front came through which announced the beginning of 'where's my jacket?' The picking of both Misty Gem and Panama has been somewhat slower than previous years which has afforded us the luxury of having a couple of long weekends off. The Panama has now started to ripen and the Misty Gems are still flowering and setting fruit. Just need some warm days and cool nights now to bring the crop on.

Until next time. Thanks.

Peter Griffiths, Bundaberg

SUNSHINE COAST

Hello everyone. Autumn has been erratic for most of us here in the Sunshine Coast area.

As I predicted in the last issue, we had a flush of fruit around Easter. Unfortunately, it didn't continue though, and we almost stopped completely for a while. The next full moon saw another good boost in production only to be followed by another lull to a lesser degree. I suspect the beginning of winter will see us get busy again. Everyone I have spoken to from Gympie down to Glass House seems to have had a similar season.

Of late the weather has been a little more stable if not a bit too cool. I was hoping for another small flower set, but it is looking doubtful at this stage, so we may get in a short holiday before planting this year.

I don't think anyone has set any records this year, but at least fruit prices have been fairly reasonable - you have to really hunt for a positive sometimes. A problem I am having this year even more so than usual, is green fruit drop in the younger vines. If anyone has any suggestions as to a remedy, I would be most grateful. I have tried Phosic Acid which has helped in the past, but not this year.

It was great to see so many growers at the field day held in Beerwah. We had representatives from Bundaberg down to the Tweed. It was a very informative and enjoyable day. Each area will be having a similar event and I hope everyone takes the opportunity to be involved. Hopefully I will see a lot of you at one of the field days or the A.G.M. Have a good winter season!

Jim Gordon, Yandina

TWEED AREA

We had a wet start to autumn down here. Fruit was fairly plentiful through the end of summer and has kept going. Quality has been ok with excellent fruit off the 6 month old vines. We lost a lot of flowers in March & April with the continuous wet - 29 wet wet wet days in total across those months was not helpful.

The vines have set a few fruit in the meantime, but I predict we lost quite a bit of winter fruit due to poor pollination in this wet patch. Spraying was also very difficult to keep on top of through this period. The rest of the Tweed has been fairly similar however some would have good winter crops hanging - let's hope prices stay at a decent level for all of us.

Nick & Nerida Hornery, Newrybar

FAR NORTH QLD

(Mareeba, Daintree, Cooktown)

Mareeba (station 031210)	FEB	MAR	APR
 MEAN (mm)	176.0 [229.7]	324.6 [167.1]	4.2 [40.2]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	7 [13.7]	16 [10.6]	1 [4.1]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	31.5 [30.6]	29.1 [29.8]	28.8 [28.5]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	20.4 [21.4]	21.0 [20.6]	19.0 [18.9]

WIDE BAY

(Bundaberg)

Bundaberg (station 039128)	FEB	MAR	APR
 MEAN (mm)	266.8 [157.8]	10.2 [113.4]	21.2 [55.9]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	12 [7.9]	4 [6.8]	5 [4.8]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	30.1 [30.1]	30.0 [29.2]	28.6 [27.5]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	21.7 [21.4]	20.8 [20.1]	18.4 [17.5]

SOUTH EAST QLD

(Gympie to Glass House Mtns)

Sunshine Coast Airport (station 040861)	FEB	MAR	APR
 MEAN (mm)	380.4 [223.9]	145.4 [217.2]	58.8 [153.8]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	17 [12.9]	19 [13.7]	9 [10.5]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	28.5 [29.0]	28.3 [28.1]	27.1 [26.2]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	21.0 [19.7]	21.4 [18.4]	19.2 [15.6]

NORTHERN NSW

(Tweed Valley)

Murwillumbah (station 058158)	FEB	MAR	APR
 MEAN (mm)	170.4 [223.9]	196.8 [217.2]	60.5 [153.8]
 MEAN DAYS >1mm	13 [12.9]	19 [13.7]	10 [10.5]
 MEAN (MAX °C)	29.3 [29.0]	28.5 [28.1]	26.9 [26.2]
 MEAN (MIN °C)	20.0 [19.7]	19.6 [18.4]	16.7 [15.6]

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