

KEY POINTS

The latest ABARES forecast for South Australia's 2023-24 winter crop production is 8.7 million tonnes (revised up from the previous forecast of 8.1 million tonnes). The latest forecast is 31% lower than the 2022-23 winter crop but 9.0% above the five-year average.

National winter crop production in 2023-24 is forecast to be 46.1 million tonnes, 33% lower than 2022-23 and 8.2% below the five-year average.

FURTHER ANALYSIS

AUSTRALIA

Following three consecutive years of record production, Australian winter crop production is expected to fall by 33% in 2023-24.

Seasonal conditions across Australian winter cropping regions have been mixed. Following below average rainfall in September, early October rainfall boosted prospects for cropping regions in southern New South Wales, Victoria and parts of South Australia.

Much of eastern Australia recorded significant rainfall totals in late November delaying the harvest of winter crops across central and southern New South Wales, Victoria and parts of South Australia. This rain has likely led to a fall in grain quality in unharvested crops.

Area planted to winter crops in Australia is forecast to fall year on year but remain historically high in 2023-24 at 23 million hectares, 3.9% above the 10-year average to 2022-23. The fall is mostly driven by a 5.9% decrease in area planted in New South Wales, a 6.3% decrease in Western Australia and a 9.2% decrease in Queensland.

Table 1: Winter Crop Production 2023-24

	2023-24 Forecast (million tonnes)	Change from previous year (%)
NSW	10.3	-33.2
VIC	9.6	-13.0
QLD	1.7	-47.9
SA	8.7	-31.2
WA	15.5	-40.8
AUST	46.1	-33.2

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

South Australian winter crop production is forecast to fall 31% to 8.7 million tonnes in 2023-24, 8.0% above the 5-year average. This is an upward revision since the September forecast.

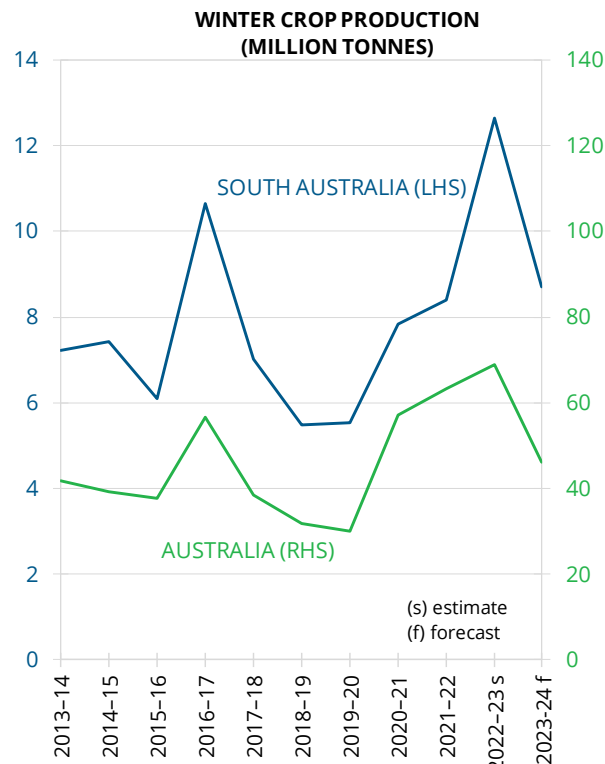
ABARES comments that the fall in production in 2023-24 is reflecting the onset of drier El Niño conditions across most cropping regions.

Due to below average spring rainfall and warmer than average temperatures, South Australia has had one of the earliest harvests on record. Rainfall in November caused some harvesting delays and may cause grain quality downgrades for unharvested crops.

Wheat production in 2023-24 is forecast to fall 33% to 4.9 million tonnes. With no change to area planted this is reflecting a 33% fall in yield.

Barley production is forecast to fall by 28% to 2.1 million tonnes, reflecting a 3.6% reduction in area planted and a 25% fall in yield.

Canola production is forecast to fall by 34% to 510,000 tonnes. There was no change to area planted but a 34% fall in yield.



Next release of ABARES Crop Report is March 2024