



1996-97

EMBARGO: 11:30 AM (CANBERRA TIME) THURS 22 MAY 1997

Principal Agricultural Commodities

Australia

Preliminary

NOTES

SYMBOLS AND OTHER

USAGES

ha	hectare
n.a.	not available
n.c.	not collected
n.e.s.	not elsewhere specified
n.p.	not available for publication but included in totals where applicable
n.y.a.	not yet available
r	figure or series revised since previous issue
SE	percentage standard error
t	tonne
—	nil or rounded to zero
..	not applicable
*	subject to sampling variability too high for most practical purposes

INQUIRIES

For information about other ABS statistics and services, please refer to the back of this publication.

For further information about these statistics and the availability of related unpublished statistics, contact Frank McCallum on Hobart 03 6222 5939.

T. Skinner
Acting Australian Statistician

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

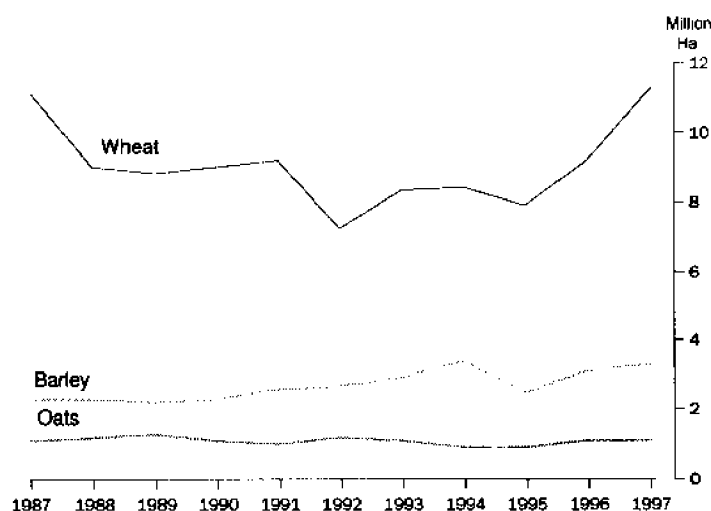
AREA OF CROPS

The estimate of total area of wheat sown for grain in 1996–97 increased 22.8% over 1995–96 to 11.3 million hectares. The largest increase was in New South Wales with 46.9% more area planted to wheat than in 1995–96. Western Australia had the largest area planted, 4.4 million hectares, which was 38.5% of the total area planted to wheat in Australia.

The total area of oats sown for grain fell 4.6% to 1.1 million hectares. The area of oats sown for grain in New South Wales decreased by 19.5%, and was 37.5% of the total Australian area of oats sown for grain.

The total area of barley sown for grain increased 5.2% to 3.3 million hectares. South Australia sowed most barley with just over 1.0 million hectares, an increase of 8.2% over 1995–96. Plantings in New South Wales were 659,000 hectares, 11.1% more than the 1995–96 season.

Wheat, oats and barley



PRODUCTION OF CROPS

The total production of wheat for grain in 1996–97 rose 42.9% to 23.6 million tonnes. Production in New South Wales increased from 4.5 million tonnes to 8.6 million tonnes, an increase of 91.3%. Production in Queensland increased substantially from 519,000 tonnes to 2.0 million tonnes, in line with the general and substantial recovery of cereal crop harvests in that State. Production in Western Australia, up by 12.8% to 7.7 million tonnes, was 32.7% of the total Australian production.

Production of oats in 1996–97 (1.7 million tonnes) was down 10.8% from the previous year. New South Wales was the most productive oats growing State with 613,000 tonnes, although this was 13.9% less than the harvest in 1995–96. Western Australia (564,000 tonnes) was second in total production.

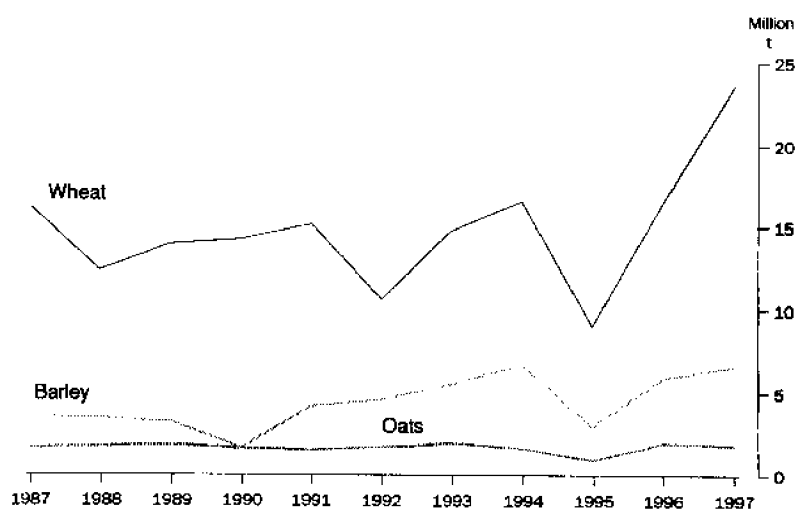
Production of barley (6.6 million tonnes) was 13.9% more than in 1995–96. Queensland experienced the largest percentage increase of 115.8%, with a crop of 421,000 tonnes, but South Australia again reaped the largest crop with 2.0 million tonnes, an increase of 10.4% over the previous year.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

PRODUCTION OF CROPS *continued*

Production of sugar cane cut for crushing (38.3 million tonnes) was 6.6% more than in 1995-96.

Wheat, oats and barley



CROP YIELDS

The national wheat yield in 1996-97 was 2.1 tonnes per hectare, an increase of 16.3% on last year's yield of 1.8 tonnes per hectare. The yield in New South Wales was 2.5 tonnes per hectare (up 30.2%), Victoria, 2.4 tonnes (up 7.7%) and South Australia and Western Australia both maintained yields of 1.8 tonnes.

At the national level, the oats yield fell slightly from 1.6 tonnes per hectare in 1996 to 1.5 tonnes per hectare. Tasmania had the highest yield of 1.9 tonnes per hectare. Although most other States had yields between 1.7 and 1.8 tonnes per hectare, the national figure is strongly influenced by the New South Wales yield of 1.5 tonnes per hectare.

The barley yield rose 8.3% to 2.0 tonnes per hectare in 1996-97. New South Wales had a yield of 2.2 tonnes per hectare, with Tasmania having the highest yield of 2.6 tonnes per hectare.

The sugar cane cut for crushing yield increased by 3.7% to 98.7 tonnes per hectare.

LIVESTOCK

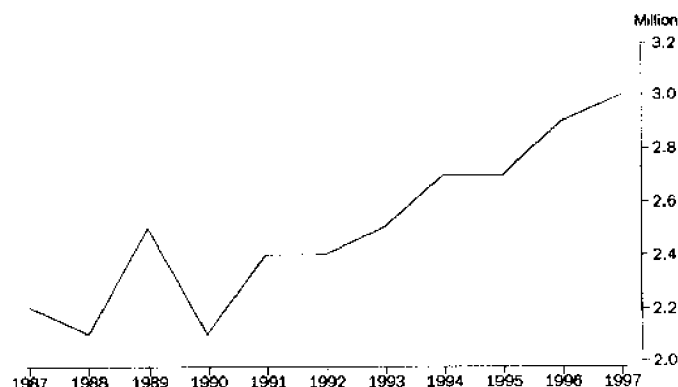
The Australian dairy herd at 31 March 1997 was estimated at almost 3.0 million head, up 5.6% from the previous year. The estimated size of the beef cattle herd of 23.3 million head was slightly less (1.2%) than at 31 March 1996.

The estimated size of the sheep and lamb flock (121.9 million) at 31 March 1997 was a small increase (0.6%) on last year's flock of 121.2 million. Increases in New South Wales (5.9%) and Victoria (2.7%) were off-set by decreases in Queensland (8.2%) and Western Australia (6.3%). South Australia and Tasmania both showed increases, 3.1% and 1.6% respectively. The number of lambs and hoggets rose by 5.7% to 31.1 million.

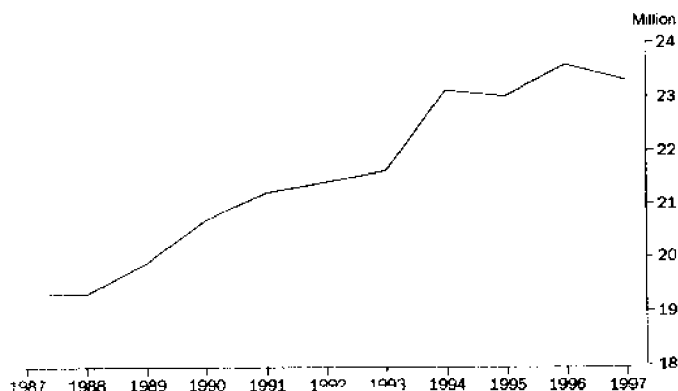
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

LIVESTOCK *continued*

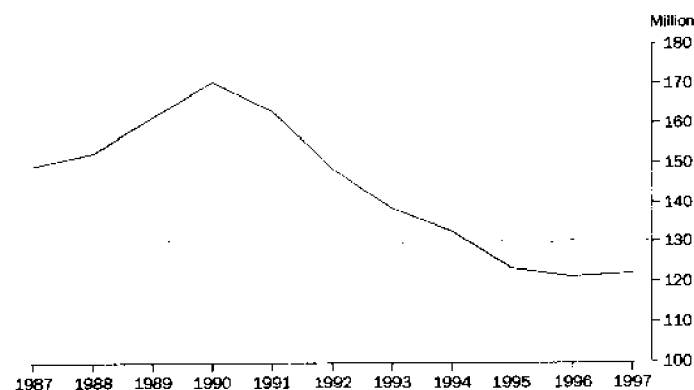
Milk cattle



Beef cattle



Sheep and lambs



Ewe mating intentions, matings and lambings

The number of ewes intended to be mated during the year ended 31 March 1998 is estimated to be 54.8 million head, 3.6% more than the intended matings for the year ended 31 March 1997, and 5.4% more than the 52.0 million actual matings for the 1997 season. These actual matings for the year ended 31 March 1997 were 1.7% less than intended matings reported the previous year.

There were 41.9 million lambs marked during the year, compared with 39.2 million in 1995-96, an increase of 7.0%. The average lambing ratio rose in 1996-97, from 77.0% to 80.6%, an increase of 4.7%.

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS—Years ended 31 March

		AUSTRALIA			1997p.....					
Unit		1995	1996	1997p	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.
WHEAT FOR GRAIN										
Area	'000 ha	7 891	9 221	11 327	3 419	1 003	997	1 551	4 356	1
Production	'000 t	8 972	16 504	23 586	8 622	2 432	1 978	2 847	7 702	5
OATS FOR GRAIN										
Area	'000 ha	897	1 136	1 084	406	169	44	126	330	9
Production	'000 t	924	1 875	1 673	613	294	21	164	564	16
BARLEY FOR GRAIN										
Area	'000 ha	2 470	3 111	3 272	659	574	177	1 043	806	14
Production	'000 t	2 913	5 823	6 632	1 463	1 219	421	2 043	1 450	36
CEREALS FOR HAY										
Area	'000 ha	349	468	386	104	51	17	95	117	2
Production	'000 t	967	1 743	1 447	396	185	59	336	456	14
SUGAR CANE (cut for crushing)										
Area	'000 ha	363	377	388	19	n.c.	367	n.c.	1	n.c.
Production	'000 t	32 971	35 893	38 267	2 368	n.c.	35 631	n.c.	269	n.c.

	1996.....		1997.....	
	Intended(b)	Actual(c)	Intended(b)	Actual(c) p
Items	'000 ha	'000 ha	'000 ha	'000 ha
WHEAT				
New South Wales	1 979	2 328	2 815	3 419
Victoria	826	853	912	1 003
Queensland	(c)(d)762	627	(c)(d)995	997
South Australia	1 453	1 519	1 540	1 551
Western Australia	3 770	3 892	4 195	4 356
Australia	8 791	9 221	10 458	11 327
OATS				
New South Wales	696	505	548	406
Victoria	239	187	212	169
Queensland	n.a.	14	n.a.	44
South Australia	217	120	197	126
Western Australia	390	300	397	330
Australia	(e)1 580	1 136	(e)1 367	1 084
BARLEY				
New South Wales	569	593	627	659
Victoria	615	628	585	574
Queensland	(c)(d)163	168	(c)(d)185	177
South Australia	960	964	1 020	1 043
Western Australia	713	745	909	806
Australia	3 033	3 111	3 340	3 272

(a) Details of area intended to be sown to cereal crops in 1998 were not collected in the 1996-97 Agricultural Census.

(b) For all purposes.

(c) For grain only.

(d) Source: Queensland Department of Primary Industries.

(e) Excludes Queensland.

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LIVESTOCK NUMBERS—at 31 March

	AUSTRALIA			1997p.....						
	1995	1996	1997p	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
Cattle and calves										
Milk cattle(a)										
Cows in milk and dry	1 822	1 884	1 981	235	1 238	196	102	73	137	n.c.
Other milk cattle (bulls, heifers, calves)	919	923	984	143	573	90	55	54	69	n.c.
Total milk cattle(a)	2 741	2 808	2 965	378	1 811	286	158	127	205	n.c.
Beef cattle										
Beef bulls and bull calves intended for service	555	553	522	119	62	220	29	43	11	39
Heifers and other calves under one year	5 806	5 769	6 065	1 829	720	2 240	299	551	172	250
Cows and heifers one year and over	11 215	11 667	11 581	2 963	1 219	4 903	541	984	249	716
Other cattle one year and over(b)	5 419	5 581	5 118	1 127	518	2 708	180	281	103	199
Total beef cattle	22 995	23 569	23 287	6 038	2 519	10 071	1 049	1 859	536	1 204
Total cattle and calves(a)	25 736	26 378	26 252	6 415	4 330	10 357	1 207	1 986	741	1 204
Sheep and lambs										
Lambs and hoggets under one year	126 830	29 456	31 124	11 737	5 260	2 124	3 714	7 187	1 082	n.c.
Sheep (including rams, ewes and wethers)	194 030	91 706	90 799	31 761	17 300	7 708	10 288	20 816	2 842	n.c.
Total sheep and lambs	120 862	121 162	121 922	43 498	22 559	9 833	14 002	28 003	3 924	n.c.
Pigs	2 653	2 526	2 414	714	346	634	374	302	32	12

(a) Excludes house cows.

(b) Includes steers, bullocks and spayed cows.

4

MATINGS AND LAMBINGS—Years ended 31 March

	Unit	AUSTRALIA(a).....			1997p.....					
		1995	1996	1997p	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.
Actual matings	'000	52 528	50 874	52 001	18 768	9 106	3 384	6 607	12 607	1 496
Lambs marked	'000	37 943	39 186	41 933	15 700	7 777	2 249	5 533	9 290	1 363
Proportion of lambs marked to actual matings	%	72	77	81	84	85	66	84	74	91

(a) Excludes Northern Territory.

	Unit	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	Aust.(a)
1996								
Intended matings at start of season								
To Merino rams	'000	12 625	4 833	n.c.	4 317	11 313	917	(b)34 023
To other rams	'000	5 241	3 844	n.c.	1 908	2 146	543	(b)13 690
Total intended matings	'000	17 865	8 677	4 186	6 225	13 459	1 460	(c)51 900
Total actual matings	'000	17 547	8 491	4 025	6 215	13 107	1 463	(c)50 874
Proportion of actual to intended matings	%	98	98	96	100	97	100	98
1997								
Intended matings at start of season								
To Merino rams	'000	12 741	4 871	n.c.	4 348	10 890	930	(b)33 803
To other rams	'000	5 860	4 327	n.c.	2 060	2 421	608	(b)15 284
Total intended matings	'000	18 600	9 198	3 830	6 408	13 311	1 538	(c)52 917
Total actual matings p	'000	18 768	9 106	3 384	6 607	12 607	1 496	(c)52 001
Proportion of actual to intended matings p %		101	99	88	103	95	97	98
1998p								
Intended matings at start of season								
To Merino rams	'000	13 186	4 797	3 667	4 306	10 277	884	37 148
To other rams	'000	6 717	4 721	178	2 551	2 802	673	17 650
Total intended matings	'000	19 902	9 518	3 846	6 857	13 079	1 558	54 798

(a) Excludes the Northern Territory where lambing information is not collected.

(b) Excludes Queensland.

(c) Includes Queensland.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1 This publication contains preliminary agricultural estimates for the 1996–97 season, intended ewe matings for the forthcoming season, and comparative data for earlier years. Because of possible changes in intentions caused by unforeseen circumstances, such as adverse climatic or economic conditions, estimates for the forthcoming season may not always agree with reported statistics from the following Agricultural Census.

SCOPE AND COVERAGE

2 Estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from a substantial proportion of farms in all States and Territories, from the Agricultural Census conducted at 31 March 1997.

3 The scope of the 1996–97 Census, which has been the same since 1993–94, is based on establishments undertaking agricultural activity having an estimated value of agricultural operations (EVAO) of \$5,000 or more. The scope for Agricultural Censuses before 1993–94 varied over the years. Details are available on request.

GENERAL

4 The estimates for earlier years shown in this publication have been revised where necessary.

5 Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

6 Unless indicated otherwise, Australian totals include data for all States and both Territories.

7 Final figures will be published in 1998 when all Agricultural Census forms have been fully processed.

FURTHER INFORMATION

8 The ABS also has more detailed agricultural statistics available on floppy disk, compact disk and magnetic tape. *AgStats* on floppy disk and compact disk offers a wide range of data aggregated at smaller geographic levels than those generally available in printed publications, together with an easy-to-use, menu-driven interrogation facility.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

9 A range of agricultural publications is produced by the ABS, including:

Principal Agricultural Commodities, New South Wales, Preliminary (7111.1)

Principal Agricultural Commodities, Victoria, Preliminary (7111.2)

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Agriculture, Victoria (7113.2)

EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

Agriculture, Queensland (7113.3)

Agriculture, South Australia (7113.4)

Agriculture, Western Australia (7113.5)

Agriculture and Fishing, Northern Territory (7113.7)

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