



2003-04

7111.0

# PRINCIPAL AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

AUSTRALIA  
PRELIMINARY

EMBARGO: 11:30AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUES 30 NOV 2004

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## INQUIRIES

- For more information about these and related statistics, contact Gordon Cameron on Hobart (03) 6222 5939, or the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

## NOTES

### ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication contains preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the 2003–04 season and comparative data for earlier years. The data are based on a response rate of 61% of farms contributing to estimates from the 2004 Agricultural Survey. More comprehensive and updated estimates for the 2003–04 season will be published in June 2005 in *Agricultural Commodities, Australia* (cat. no. 7121.0).



### CHANGES TO THIS ISSUE

There are no changes in this issue.



### SYMBOLS AND OTHER USAGES

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
Aust.	Australia
EVAO	estimated value of agricultural operations
ha	hectare
n.p.	not available for publication but included in totals where applicable
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
Qld	Queensland
p	preliminary
RSE	relative standard error
SA	South Australia
SE	standard error
t	tonnes
Tas.	Tasmania
Vic.	Victoria
WA	Western Australia
—	nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)
^	data subject to sampling variability equal to or greater than 10%, but less than 25%
*	data subject to sampling variability equal to or greater than 25%, but less than or equal to 50%
**	data subject to sampling variability greater than 50%, estimate is not published
..	not applicable
'000	thousands

Dennis Trewin  
Australian Statistician

# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

## INTRODUCTION

Recovery from drought was the most important factor affecting agricultural production in Australia in 2003–04. Harvests for many principal crops rose beyond the levels recorded in normal years. Sheep numbers increased slightly from the previous year, but were still lower than earlier years.

## AREA OF CROPS

Preliminary estimates for 2003–04 showed increases in area for wheat, barley, sorghum and oats for grain. Decreases in area were recorded for lupins, canola, cotton lint and sugar cane for crushing.

The total area sown to wheat for grain rose by 17% in 2003–04 to 13.0 million hectares. This was mainly due to a 29% (or 873,000 hectares) increase in New South Wales. Western Australia, Queensland and Victoria also reported increases.

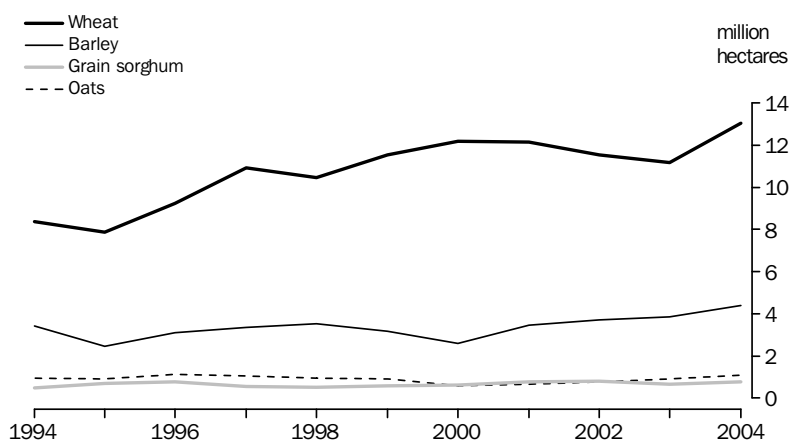
The total area sown to barley for grain increased by 14% in 2003–04 to 4.4 million hectares. The largest increases were reported in New South Wales, up by 40% (or 252,000 hectares), Western Australia, up by 12% (or 137,000 hectares) and Victoria, up by 14% (or 108,000 hectares).

The total area of sorghum sown for grain rose by 14% in 2003–04 to 761,000 hectares. In Queensland, the main growing state, the area sown increased by 38% (or 152,000 hectares), while in New South Wales, it fell by 21% (or 53,000 hectares).

The total area sown to oats for grain increased by 18% in 2003–04, to 1.1 million hectares. Two of the three main growing states reported increases: in New South Wales plantings increased by 44% to 445,000 hectares, while in Western Australia plantings increased by 11% to 347,000 hectares. Victoria, however, reported a decrease of 2% to 185,000 hectares.

The total area sown to canola fell by 7% to 1.2 million hectares; the area sown to lupins for grain fell by 15% to 871,000 hectares; the area planted to sugar cane cut for crushing decreased by 2% to 440,000 hectares; and the area planted to cotton fell by 9% to 222,000 hectares.

### S1 AREA OF PRINCIPAL CROPS, AUSTRALIA — 1993–94 to 2003–04p



## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

### PRODUCTION OF CROPS

Preliminary estimates for 2003–04 showed large increases in production for all major crops, except sugar cane cut for crushing and cotton lint. The large increases were generally attributed to improved conditions following drought in 2002–03. This year's figures show a return to more normal levels of production seen in earlier years, and in some cases exceed earlier production levels.

The production of wheat for grain rose by 159% to 26.2 million tonnes in 2003–04. Production in 2003–04 was 8% higher than that recorded in 2001–02. All mainland states reported significant increases compared to the previous drought-affected year. The largest increases were reported in Western Australia, up by 174% (or 7.0 million tonnes), New South Wales, up by 188% (or 4.7 million tonnes), and Victoria, up by 260% (or 2.3 million tonnes).

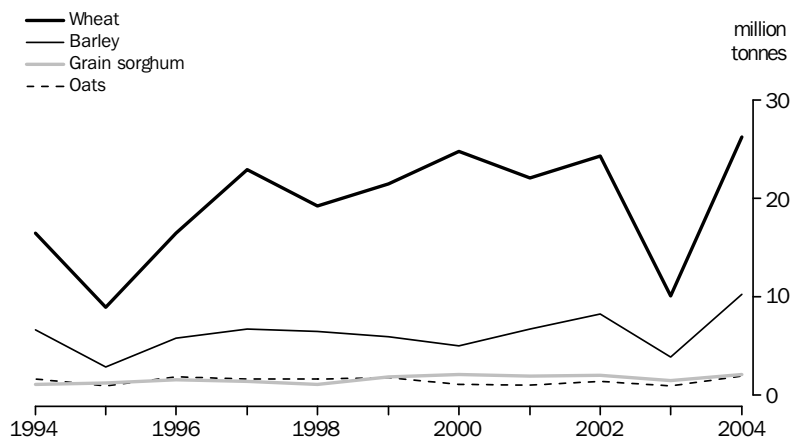
Barley for grain production recovered after drought, rising 166% to 10.3 million tonnes in 2003–04. All states reported increases in production compared with 2002–03, the largest rises being for Victoria, up by 386% (or 1.8 million tonnes), Western Australia, up by 129% (or 1.7 million tonnes), and New South Wales, up by 329% (or 1.4 million tonnes).

Grain sorghum production rose by 44% to 2.1 million tonnes in 2003–04, with production up in both Queensland, up by 51% (or 476,000 tonnes), and New South Wales, up by 32% (or 168,000 tonnes). While the rise in Queensland was a result of increased plantings, the rise in New South Wales was a result of higher average yields since area was reduced by 21%.

Production of oats for grain rose by 105% to 2.0 million tonnes in 2003–04, exceeding levels of production reported in the previous ten years. Increases were reported in all of the major growing states, with the largest rises reported in New South Wales, up by 299% (or 446,000 tonnes), Victoria, up by 100% (or 250,000 tonnes), and Western Australia, up by 52% (or 246,000 tonnes).

The production of lupins for grain rose by 64% to 1.2 million tonnes. Canola production rose by 94% to 1.7 million tonnes. In contrast, the production of sugar cane cut for crushing remained steady at 36.7 million tonnes, while the production of cotton for lint fell by 20% to 292,000 tonnes.

#### S2 PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS, AUSTRALIA — 1993–94 to 2003–04p



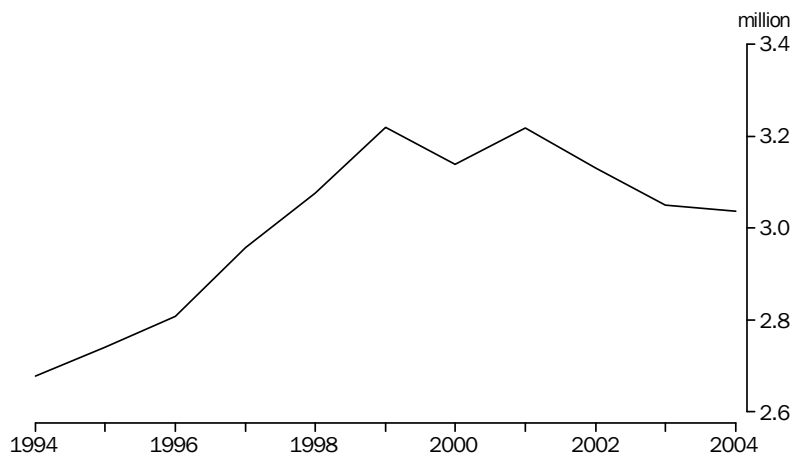
## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

### LIVESTOCK

#### Milk cattle

Preliminary estimates indicated that the number of milk cattle in Australia was 3.0 million head at 30 June 2004, little changed from the previous year. Victoria continued to dominate the dairy industry with its herd of 1.9 million. Decreases in herd numbers were recorded in all states except Victoria and Queensland.

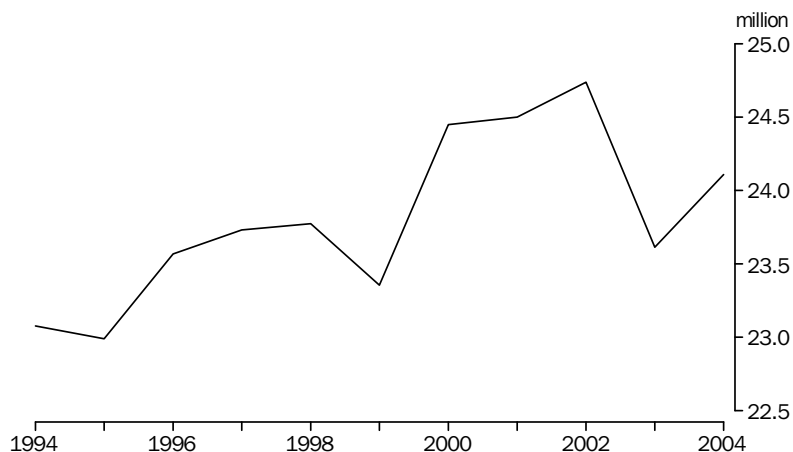
#### **S3** NUMBER OF MILK CATTLE, AUSTRALIA — 1993–94 to 2003–04p



#### Meat cattle

Preliminary estimates indicated the number of meat cattle in Australia rose slightly to 24.1 million head at 30 June 2004. The largest rise was reported in Queensland (up 6% or 637,000).

#### **S4** NUMBER OF MEAT CATTLE, AUSTRALIA — 1993–94 to 2003–04p



## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS *continued*

### LIVESTOCK *continued*

#### Sheep and lambs

Preliminary estimates indicated the number of sheep and lambs in Australia rose by 3% to 103 million head at 30 June 2004. The largest increases were reported in New South Wales (up 7% or 2.2 million) and Western Australia (up 4% or 888,000).

The number of lambs marked rose by 8% to 36.6 million in 2003–04.

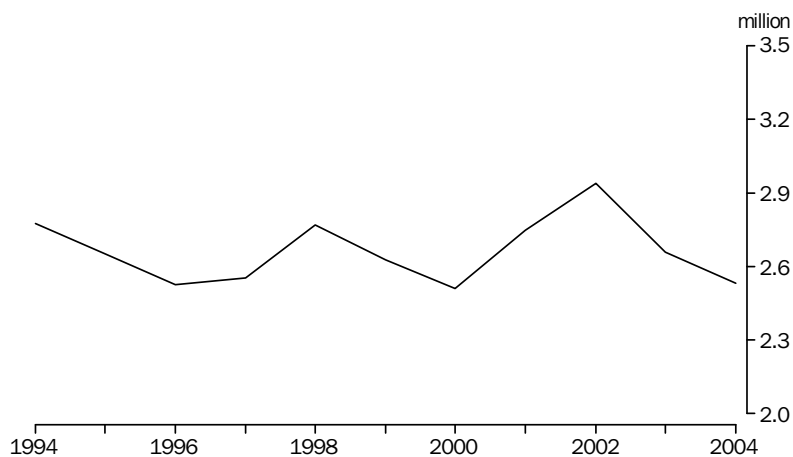
#### **S5** NUMBER OF SHEEP AND LAMBS, AUSTRALIA — 1993–94 to 2003–04p



#### Pigs

Preliminary estimates indicated the number of pigs in Australia fell by 5% to 2.5 million at 30 June 2004. Pig numbers were down in all states except Queensland, which remained steady.

#### **S6** NUMBER OF PIGS, AUSTRALIA — 1993–94 to 2003–04p



# 1

## PRODUCTION AND AREA OF PRINCIPAL CROPS

	Aust. ....			2004p.....							
	2002	2003	2004p	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT
BARLEY FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	8 280	3 865	10 287	1 835	2 323	290	2 725	3 087	27	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	3 707	3 864	4 404	888	886	157	1 187	1 277	10	(a)	—
CANOLA											
Production ('000 t)	1 756	871	1 691	460	367	—	356	507	—	(a)	1
Area ('000 ha)	1 332	1 298	1 208	373	230	—	244	360	—	(a)	—
COTTON LINT											
Production ('000 t)	675	^364	^292	^150	(a)	^142	(a)	—	(a)	(a)	(a)
Area ('000 ha)	458	245	222	^117	(a)	105	(a)	—	(a)	(a)	(a)
GRAIN SORGHUM											
Production ('000 t)	2 021	1 465	2 108	700	**	1 406	(a)	**	(a)	1	—
Area ('000 ha)	823	667	761	202	**	557	(a)	**	(a)	—	—
LUPINS FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	1 215	726	1 194	^60	^32	**	^119	982	*1	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	1 139	1 025	871	71	^29	**	84	685	*—	(a)	—
OATS FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	1 434	957	1 965	596	500	^3	136	723	7	(a)	—
Area ('000 ha)	784	911	1 076	445	185	^6	89	347	4	(a)	—
SUGAR CANE CUT FOR CRUSHING											
Production ('000 t)	31 424	36 995	36 741	*2 939	(a)	33 398	(a)	404	(a)	(a)	(a)
Area ('000 ha)	426	448	440	*31	(a)	407	(a)	3	(a)	(a)	(a)
WHEAT FOR GRAIN											
Production ('000 t)	24 299	10 132	26 231	7 176	3 200	1 160	3 574	11 093	26	(a)	2
Area ('000 ha)	11 529	11 170	13 024	3 868	1 423	804	1 945	4 976	7	(a)	1

(a) Data not collected.

# 2

## LIVESTOCK NUMBERS

	Aust. ....			2004p.....							
	2002	2003	2004p	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT
MILK CATTLE(a)											
Cows in milk and dry ('000)	2 123	2 050	2 036	236	1 322	^169	106	74	127	n.p.	n.p.
Other milk cattle ('000)	1 008	999	1 001	142	606	^83	64	^53	54	n.p.	n.p.
<b>Total milk cattle ('000)</b>	<b>3 131</b>	<b>3 049</b>	<b>3 037</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>1 928</b>	<b>^252</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>n.p.</b>	<b>n.p.</b>
MEAT CATTLE											
Bulls and bull calves intended for service ('000)	620	570	623	150	50	^289	28	50	13	44	—
Other calves under one year ('000)	5 679	5 292	5 093	1 136	655	2 071	327	444	129	330	2
Cows and heifers one year and over ('000)	12 652	12 245	12 461	2 951	1 201	5 529	552	992	228	1 004	5
Other cattle one year and over ('000)	5 788	5 508	5 932	1 260	472	3 255	205	^314	^140	285	1
<b>Total meat cattle ('000)</b>	<b>24 739</b>	<b>23 615</b>	<b>24 110</b>	<b>5 498</b>	<b>2 378</b>	<b>11 144</b>	<b>1 111</b>	<b>1 800</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>1 663</b>	<b>8</b>
SHEEP AND LAMBS											
Sheep ('000)	77 770	73 394	73 211	25 566	14 613	3 910	9 052	17 428	2 563	(b)	79
Lambs under one year ('000)	28 395	25 858	29 409	10 340	5 746	1 041	4 114	7 348	799	(b)	21
<b>Total sheep and lambs ('000)</b>	<b>106 166</b>	<b>99 252</b>	<b>102 620</b>	<b>35 907</b>	<b>20 359</b>	<b>4 951</b>	<b>13 166</b>	<b>24 775</b>	<b>3 362</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>99</b>
LAMBING											
Ewes that had lambs ('000)	45 813	43 741	44 504	15 627	8 574	^1 905	5 818	11 196	1 351	—	32
Lambs marked ('000)	37 694	33 932	36 606	13 064	7 236	^1 161	5 012	8 959	1 147	—	26
Proportion of lambs marked to ewes that had lambs (%)	82.3	77.6	82.3	83.6	84.4	61.0	86.2	80.0	84.9	—	81.6
Ewes expected to lamb next year ('000)(c)	46 457	45 519	46 489	16 655	8 972	^2 084	5 982	11 297	1 461	(b)	37
PIGS											
<b>Total pigs ('000)</b>	<b>2 940</b>	<b>2 658</b>	<b>2 533</b>	<b>683</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>(b)</b>

(a) Excluding house cows.

(b) Data not collected.

(c) Forecast made at the beginning of each season.



# EXPLANATORY NOTES

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## INTRODUCTION

**1** This publication contains preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the 2003–04 season, ewes expected to lamb in the forthcoming season, and comparative data for earlier years. These results are based on a response rate of 61% of establishments contributing to estimates from the 2004 Agricultural Survey, and are comparable with the response rates of previous years' preliminary estimates.

## SCOPE AND COVERAGE

**2** Estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from the Agricultural Survey conducted at 30 June 2004.

**3** The scope of the 2003–04 Agricultural Survey is establishments undertaking agricultural activity having an estimated value of agricultural operations (EVAO) of \$5,000 or more. This is the same as the scope for Agricultural Censuses from 1993–94 to 1996–97 and for 2000–01, and for the Agricultural Surveys from 1997–98 to 1999–2000 and for 2001–02 to 2002–03. Prior to 1993–94 the scope has varied and these 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.

## RELIABILITY OF ESTIMATES (SAMPLE ERROR)

**6** The estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from a sample drawn from the total farm population in scope of the collection, and are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all farms had been included in the Agricultural Survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the standard error (SE), which indicates the extent to which an estimate might vary by chance because only a sample was taken. There are about two chances in three that a 'sample' estimate will differ by less than one SE from the figure that would have been obtained if all farms had responded, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two SEs.

**7** In this publication, 'sampling' variability of the estimates is measured by the relative standard error (RSE) which is obtained by expressing the SE as a percentage of the estimate to which it refers.

**8** Most published estimates have RSEs less than 5%. For some states with limited production of certain commodities, RSEs are greater than 10%. Estimates that have an estimated RSE between 10% and 25% are annotated with the symbol '^'. These estimates should be used with caution as they are subject to sampling variability too high for some purposes. Estimates with an RSE between 25% and 50% are annotated with the symbol '\*', indicating that the estimate should be used with caution as it is subject to sampling error too high for most practical purposes. Estimates with an RSE greater than 50% are replaced with the symbol '\*\*', indicating that the sampling variability causes the estimates to be considered too unreliable for general use. Separate indication of the RSEs of all estimates is available on request.

## EXPLANATORY NOTES *continued*

### RELATIVE STANDARD ERROR OF SELECTED COMMODITIES — At 30 June 2004

Commodity	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Barley for grain production	4.2	3.0	8.5	3.2	3.7	7.9	..	..	1.7
Canola production	5.5	5.0	..	7.1	6.9	—	..	—	3.2
Cotton lint production	19.3	..	12.0	..	—	..	..	..	11.5
Grain sorghum production	8.6	66.2	6.5	..	85.0	..	—	..	5.2
Lupins for grain production	10.1	12.2	95.0	12.2	5.5	26.4	..	..	4.7
Oats for grain production	4.3	5.4	15.4	9.5	5.8	8.7	..	—	2.9
Sugar cane cut for crushing production	30.4	..	5.0	..	—	..	..	..	5.2
Wheat for grain production	2.6	3.0	7.7	2.8	2.6	7.7	..	—	1.5
Total milk cattle	6.7	5.7	13.9	6.5	8.9	4.4	..	..	3.9
Total meat cattle	3.5	4.2	4.1	4.4	5.4	6.5	—	—	2.1
Total sheep and lambs	2.7	3.3	10.3	3.6	2.8	3.4	—	—	1.5
Total pigs	6.1	7.0	8.9	6.6	8.3	3.6	—	..	3.5

#### ABS DATA AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

**9** As well as the statistics included in this and related publications, the ABS may have other relevant data available on request. Inquiries should be made to Gordon Cameron on (03) 6222 5939 or the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

#### GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT

**10** ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated. Without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

#### RELATED PUBLICATIONS

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

*Agricultural Commodities, Australia*, cat. no. 7121.0

*Livestock and Meat, Australia — Electronic Publication*, cat. no. 7218.0.55.001

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