

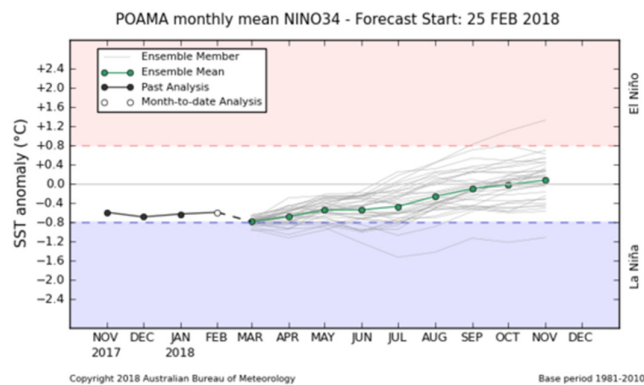
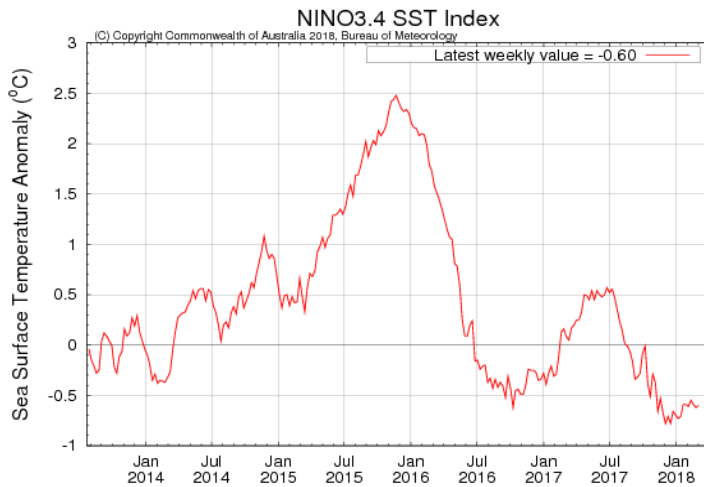


How healthy is the grain market?

At the time of writing ASW delivered port is \$280/t, or Decile 6 and F1 is \$275, or Decile 9. Who knows where it goes from here until the northern hemisphere winter crop spring growth period plays out

Certainly we can use the grain market, climate outlook and our subsoil moisture reserves as reasons to make balanced decisions on crop choices and inputs.

Weather outlook



The latest mail from the BOM is that the weak La Nina from the summer just gone is slowly declining to ENSO neutral status. The NINO3.4 model is the Pacific Sea Surface conditions assessment, factoring currently normal trade winds and sea temperatures just on the slightly warm side of neutral.

POAMA is the long term predictive tool for the year; it shows a 93.9% chance of neutral conditions for both the months of August and September.

In short, we are in a classic “average situation” for the next 7 months, and just waiting for the mechanism to switch on the autumn break



Yield potential

Using the revised French-Schulz WUE model (reduced evaporation), and assuming 80mm summer rain (50% PAW effective on sandy loam soil), our yield potential is $(80/2 + 200 - 70) \times 15 = 2550\text{kg/ha}$

N.B. The long term GSR for Manangatang is 203mm



Wheat

Yield forecasts for the US and EU are down so US Hard Red Winter wheat rose by \$15/t in the last month. The offset to this is that the global market is being offered cheaper wheat by Russia and Argentina

What's new in wheat varieties?

Longsword by AGT is a unique graze and grain wheat. It is a cross between true winter grazing wheat germplasm and Mace (fast spring maturity). It does not have the yield drop off that Wedgetail wheat shows with mid-April and later sowing dates.

Beckom (AGT) is not new, but it certainly has drawn attention to its high yields and yield stability. At the Kyalite NVT it ranked #1 in 2014, 2015 and 2017, and #4 in 2016.

Over five years of NVT Vic Mallee trials it has outyielded Yipti by 10%

	Longsword	Beckom
Maturity	Slow winter Mid spring	Mid spring
Grain	Feed*	AH
CCN	MRMS	R
Stripe rust	MR	MRMS
YLS	MRMS	MSS
Boron	I	T

*provisional grain classification

Hey there!- who's growing hay

Hay can be evaluated very objectively and subjectively to give either an accurate or loaded answer.

The short answer is hay can be more profitable at times than grain, but has some risk attached to it

Oaten hay for export can be very profitable when yields are 5-7t/ha, but should only be attempted if there is sufficient on farm shed storage. Use diuron + metolachlor PSPE to suppress ryegrass numbers if ryegrass is about. Use Yallara or Wintaroo to improve your chances of making the grade as they have good colour and sugar levels.

Vetch hay- can be a very low cost enterprise. Hay must be at least capped with Hay Caps to prevent deterioration of the top two bales. The value of non-Group A or B grass weed control is enormous, as is the rhizoctonia break.



Barley

The recent Free Trade Agreement with China was perfectly timed with their increasing feed grain demand. This also coincided with demand from Saudi Arabia and lower global barley stocks overall. The latest USDA report suggests world barley consumption this year will be 3 MT more than supply.

Given that, there is a reasonably strong incentive to push our own barley yields with nitrogen, knowing the feed market will be strong.



Spartacus CL barley Do's and don'ts

- The game is definitely ON for Spartacus CL barley as it has just received malt status
- Do NOT use Baytan seed dressing- shortens the coleoptile and only 50% effective on loose smut
- Avoid Raxil- loose smut persists
- DO use either the low rate of Rancona Dimension for smuts/bunts, or the high rate to pick up rhizoctonia root rot.
- DO use Mentor (metribuzin) with trifluralin to take brome grass selection pressure off the IMI given Spartacus' low competitive ability
- DO use imidacloprid on barley seed as barley suffers more than wheat
- DO have some kind of plan to manage SFNB later on



Spartacus CL on the left compared to Scope CL.
Note the shorter more open canopy

Reduce RISK yet be more profitable

Dr Phil (O'Callaghan) says consider dropping paddocks that are high cost or high risk- heavy paddocks/ soil constraints, nitrogen hungry or resistant ryegrass paddocks. If farm crop intensity drops to 75-80% to avoid problem paddocks the actual average income per hectare of crop actually rises.
Vetch or field pea brown manures are logical replacements for crops on problem paddocks.

We can still make money out of pulses

2017 was a mixed bag for pulse growers, and some yields were quite good if they missed major frosts.
I noticed that the chickpea plots at the Kulwin research site responded to 9mm rain on October 12 and yielded very well.
The short story is the breakeven yield for lentils is now around 700kg/ha, and for kabuli chickpeas 450kg/ha
The trick here is to reverse engineer the inputs within that breakeven cost. If the spring improves then there is room to move with fungicides because the cost of production per tonne drops as the yield increases.
Interestingly the trial demonstrated that the effect of later sowing was less of a problem with chickpeas than lentils as chickpeas pod up more in warm weather

Southern pulse agronomy site Kulwin 2017

Sowing date	Chickpea yield	Lentil yield
10/5	1.14	1.04
31/5	1.04	0.66
Yield variance (all varieties)	-9%	-37%

Pulse commodity	Indicator price delivered Wimmera
Medium/large red lentil	450
Small red lentil	485
Desi	580 (Decile 5)
Kabuli	840

Note that small red (Hurricane/Nipper) lentils are trading at a premium to medium and large reds. It shows that demand exists in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.