

THE WINTER FORECAST

FOR SOUTHERN MDB REGIONS 2017



As predicted by Kevin Long (Bendigo VIC) 1 June 2017 ph(03)54412394

Forecasts for your local region (supported with regular email updates) are available via my subscription forecast service. See details on the home page of: www.thelongview.com.au

A QUICK SUMMARY OF THE AUTUMN BREAK

- **QLD and northern NSW regions:** The Summer wet season has been below par and the early selling of cattle has commenced. As a result of the buildup to Cyclone Debby and the rain delivered by it, the last half of March delivered well above-average rain for the northeast regions of the MDB. (200mm+ was typical down to central NSW.) Unfortunately, that above-average rain event was short lived and little rain has fallen since the start of April.
 - **Further south:** April rains delivered one of the best early Autumn breaks for most of the southern half of NSW and for most regions of VIC including central SA. But again, those above-average rains were short lived and petered out by the end of April. Most noticeably, little rain has fallen across most regions of Australia during the month of May.
- Many farmers have reported to me that this growing season is off to a great start and that crop emergence has been very good for the early sown crops ... "But we need more rain soon".

SEA ICE IS CLOSE TO "RECORD LOW" FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR

Antarctic sea ice is currently at the third lowest extent of the 39 year recorded period. I view this as one of the few positive drivers for the Winter climate. This low cyclic sea ice condition comes as a result of heat and moisture being injected into the upper atmosphere during the super strong El Nino event of 2015.

I forecast these residual heat effects are at the point of petering out, and that the next sea ice growth cycle will soon be established. The next El Nino event will most likely help to produce another record high sea ice cycle again. Once the Antarctic sea ice has returned to above-average, another dry climate force will be added to the climate mix. Extremes of sea ice are becoming a much greater influence on our climate cycles.

MOST CLIMATE DRIVERS ARE TRENDING TOWARDS A BELOW AVERAGE GROWING SEASON

For once, I largely agree with the BOM's seasonal forecast of dryer than average for the rest of this growing season. Below-average sea surface temperatures (SST's) dominating to the south and west of Australia will reduce the chances of significant rain from that direction. The Indian Ocean is much cooler generally than it was last Winter and trending for dryer conditions. The Pacific is due to swing back into the next El Nino phase during the coming months.

The positive planetary forces that helped deliver the March / April rain events have passed. A weak temporary lift will be provided by Saturn in mid to late June, but no other planetary effects to assist the critical late Winter / Spring period.

The lunar cycles have only another two years of decline to go before the "drought cycle proper" is reached. Hence none of the recent southern air tide surges came up to my expectations, which will be common in the next 3 to 5 years.

Cooler than average SST dominates most of the Australian coast line presently. Only QLD has warmer than average SST nearby, but this region is forecast to also cool as soon as the El Nino phase develops a little more.

THE WINTER FORECAST

Predominantly weak southern lows and weak cold fronts.

The Winter will be dominated by the effects of the dryer transition phase of the lunar air tide cycle.

A developing El Nino cycle is forecast to impact the late Winter-Spring period. Therefore sub-soil moisture will be very low by Spring. Crops will be totally reliant on patchy early Spring rains for grain fill. A short and early hay season is forecast due to the drying forces of a slowly developing El Nino condition by mid-Spring.

Frost damage will be a much greater risk than it has been for many years due to the cooler Indian Ocean and reduced jet stream moisture flows. Very cold southerly winds are forecast to develop occasionally, thus helping to keep the temperature to about average for the Winter / Spring period.

Much of QLD will remain drought declared. Below-average rain is forecast for inland NSW, inland Vic and SA during the Winter and early Spring period.

I forecast most regions of the MDB will receive barely 60% of average rainfall for the rest of this year. Little runoff will be produced to drive the government's new top priority - winter hydro power production! Gone are the days when we managed our reservoirs to maximize future food production. We now burn our water supplies instead of our coal.

I wish you all the best for the 2017 growing season. Kind regards, Kevin.

For more information: www.TheLongView.com.au