

\* \* MEDIA RELEASE \* \*

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## Australia Heading for Record Plantings ... if it rains

“According to ProFarmer and Callum Downs subscribers, Australian grain growers will plant record wheat, barley and canola crops this year”, says ProFarmer Managing Director Richard Koch.

### Higher wheat plantings across the board

Wheat plantings will rise in every state, for a 13% increase in the national plant, which would equate to plantings of around 13.9m ha – well above the previous record level of 13.1m ha in 2004/05.

“QLD is planning the biggest increase in wheat acres (+35%). But the ambitions of QLD growers may be contained if it remains dry through the end of May and much further into June”, says Mr Koch.

Solid increases in plantings are also being pencilled in across NSW (+15%) and WA (+15%). Growers across the southern cropping states of SA (+8%) and Vic (+2%) are planning more moderate increases.

### Unexpected increase in barley plantings

“The rise in barley planting intentions surprised us, as it almost rivals the increase in wheat plantings, at 11%”, says Malcolm Bartholomaeus, Managing Director of Callum Downs News. This would lead to record plantings of 4.8m ha versus the record 4.6m ha in 2004/05, with the biggest lift in WA (+14%) and SA (+16%).

“The increase in cereal plantings of 2% and 5% for wheat and barley, respectively, foreshadowed by VIC growers appears a little disappointing, but should be read in the context of fence to fence plantings last year and a 10% lift in canola sowings”, explains Mr Bartholomaeus.

### Large lift in canola plantings forecast

“Nationally, the ProFarmer/Callum Downs survey foreshadows a large lift of around 40% in canola plantings – double the increase forecast by the Australian Oilseeds Federation (AOF) – and would again lead to record plantings of nearly 1.5m ha”, says Mr Koch.

### Anticipated rise in pulse plantings

Australian growers may attempt to wrong-foot the international market with plans for another large increase in chick pea area (+63%). The extent of this increase is inconsistent with the moderate lifts currently forecast by Pulse Australia (+5%).

“WA growers say they will lift lupin area (+4%), which was a bit of surprise”, says Mr Koch. Hefty increases in winter crop area will be funded by a fall in sorghum plantings in QLD. Falls in oaten hay plantings, and in specialty crops, will allow larger plantings of everything else in VIC.

Reduced hay plantings (for grain and hay) will allow increased seedings in WA, but the bulk of the increases will be from a fall in fallowed area and shifts away from livestock. Larger area in NSW will come from a reduction in fallow and a shift from livestock to cropping. A fall in specialty crops in SA is occurring, as growers move to lower risk cereal crops after two years of drought.

<b>WINTER CROP PLANTING INTENTIONS (HA)</b>						
<b>2008-09 vs 2007-08</b>						
	Wheat		Barley		Canola	
	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
<b>QLD</b>	34,042	25,301	928	1,459		
% ch		35%		-36%		
<b>NSW</b>	128,690	111,572	25,805	23,350	21,311	12,810
% ch		15%		11%	-2%	66%
<b>VIC</b>	57,907	56,791	45,996	43,833	14,873	13,557
% ch		2%		5%	-11%	10%
<b>SA</b>	69,241	64,289	33,142	28,473	11,825	12,075
% ch		8%		16%	10%	-2%
<b>WA</b>	184,264	159,650	60,515	52,955	45,044	28,077
% ch		15%		14%	58%	60%
<b>Aust</b>	474,143	417,963	166,386	150,070	93,053	66,520
% ch		13%		11%	19%	40%
1. Tasmanian responses have been counted as Victorian plantings						
2. Plantings figures are a total of survey respondents and do not reflect expected actual national plantings. They have been provided as a measure of survey reliability						
3. AOF forecasts						

<b>NATIONAL PLANTING INTENTIONS (HA)</b>				
	2008	2007	% Ch	Pulse Aust
<b>Sorghum</b>	27,840	32,129	-13%	
<b>Oats - Grain</b>	13,372	15,043	-11%	
<b>Oats - Hay</b>	12,044	15,471	-22%	
<b>Triticale</b>	4,711	4,995	-6%	
<b>Chick peas</b>	27,781	17,050	63%	5%
<b>Faba beans</b>	10,305	8,222	25%	12%
<b>Field peas</b>	16,581	16,891	-2%	5%
<b>Lupins</b>	31,155	30,146	3%	-6%
<b>Lentils</b>	10,332	13,917	-26%	-14%
<b>Fodder crops</b>	15,682	12,604	24%	

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