

Climate Services for Agriculture



Project title	Climate Services for Agriculture
Project code	169-2020-21
Funding partner	Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment via the Future Drought Fund
Project partners	Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO, FarmLink
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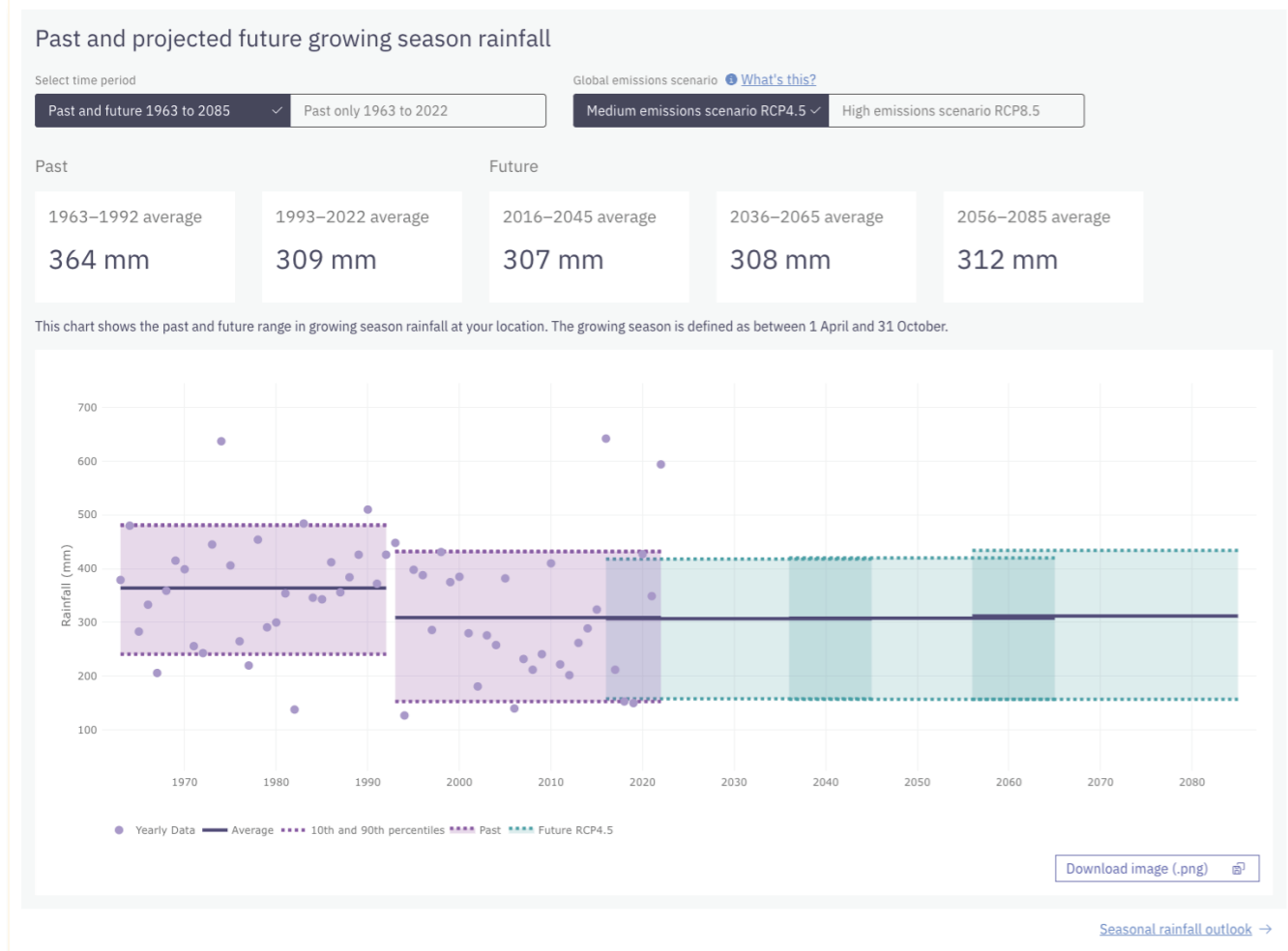
INTRODUCTION

Climate Services for Agriculture is a national project involving the Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO and FarmLink Research, designed to help farmers recognise trends and conditions that have, or may in the future, impact the way they operate on farm. It is an online climate platform that allows growers and producers to search weather and climate indices by location and commodity, to assist them with on-farm decision making and allow them to factor climate risk into their business plans.

FarmLink was engaged as a partner at the outset of the project in 2021, and our role has been multifaceted, including farmer engagement and, more recently, building awareness and encouraging adoption. This has involved countless discussions with individuals, farming systems and industry groups, as well as online and in-person demonstrations, and farm visits.

The Climate Services for Agriculture website was launched nationally in June 2022 as a prototype. As of July 2023, the completed product is now live under a new name, My Climate View. Farmers and farm business advisors can access the site – which features climate information for 20 separate commodities, at www.myclimateview.com.au

Over the remaining 18 months of the project, more commodities will be added, functionality will continue to be enhanced, and a comprehensive communications program will ensure that awareness and adoption of the site continues to grow. The project is due to wrap up in June 2024.



Climate Services for Agriculture is a national project involving the Bureau of Meteorology, CSIRO and FarmLink Research, designed to help farmers recognise trends and conditions that have, or may in the future, impact the way they operate on farm. Funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) via the Future Drought Fund, the project team has developed an online climate platform called My Climate View that allows growers and producers to search weather and climate indices by location and commodity. It is designed to assist them with on-farm decision making and allow them to factor climate risk into their business plans.

Using My Climate View a grain grower, for example, can look at historical trends and future projections in areas such as soil moisture at sowing, growing season rainfall, heat at flowering and frost incidence.

Sheep producers can explore cold exposure at lambing, fertility heat risk, and incidence of heatwaves, among other metrics.

Cherry producers can look at trends in chill accumulation, frost at flowering, hot days post-harvest, warm conditions

during pollination and fruit cracking days at maturity, and so on. Each commodity has its own specific set of metrics that the project team developed through extensive consultation with industry.

Each metric has a default threshold. For example, growing season rainfall for wheat is set at 1 April to 31 October, but users can edit these thresholds to values most appropriate for their situation.

FarmLink was engaged as a founding partner at the outset of the project in 2021. Our role has been multifaceted, including engaging with farmers and advisers for commodity-specific discussions, social science interviews, and user experience testing of the site. In the first six months of the program to June 2021, the then Minister for Agriculture announced four pilot regions: Condamine and Northern Tablelands; Western Australian Wheatbelt; Victorian Mallee and South Australian Riverland; and the North Queensland Dry Tropics. By December 2021, a further four pilot regions were added: Riverina/Goulburn Murray; Central West NSW; Gippsland/Northern Tasmania; and Tropical North Horticulture and Cane.



FarmLink helped connect the broader project team from the Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO – made up of scientists, developers, data analysts and others – to key personnel in the agriculture and horticulture sectors. Speaking to farmers and advisers, and understanding their climate information needs, was critical to building a site that would be relevant and useful.

Over the first two years, the project team has spoken to thousands of individuals: growers, producers, advisers, peak industry bodies, state and local government representatives, Landcare and NRM groups, and others. The input they provided informed the ongoing development of the site.

The Climate Services for Agriculture website was launched nationally in June 2022 as a prototype. As of July 2023, the completed product is now live and has a new name, My Climate View. Farmers and farm business advisers can access the site – which features climate information for 20 separate commodities, at www.myclimateview.com.au.

Over the remaining 18 months of the project, more commodities will be added, and functionality will continue to be enhanced via user feedback. To facilitate this, visitors to the site have the option to provide their suggestions via a 'Give Feedback' button on the homepage.

In 2023, the project has moved into a phase of building awareness and encouraging adoption. A comprehensive communications program is underway – including traditional and social media, as well as a range of end user engagement activities – to ensure that awareness of the site continues to grow. The project is due to wrap up in June 2024.

Understanding climate trends as they impact your enterprise is crucial to effective forward planning. My Climate View demonstrations – either online or in-person – are available to interested individuals or groups. FarmLink members wishing to participate, or just wanting more information, can contact Sarah Clarry at comms@farmlink.com.au or on 0419 165 771.