

Cropping

Cereals for grain

Summary

Cropping is one of the larger industries undertaken in the region. It is commonly undertaken in dry agriculture mixed farming systems. Based on availability of suitable land the majority of cropping is undertaken in Indigo Shire and the Rural City of Wangaratta. The Alp Valleys region does not contain any significant advantages or impediments to cropping and the issues facing the industry are common to the whole of the industry.

North East Region	1996 – 97 AG Census	2000 – 01 AG Census	2008 AG Census
Gross value of production	\$5,344,852	\$7,556,085	\$7,222,000
Production volume (tonnes)	9,637,716	7,196,330	
Total area of production (ha)	13,088	14,236	16,459
Contribution to Victorian GVP of commodity	0.7%	0.6%	1%
Contribution to Australian GVP of commodity	0.1%	0.1%	
Estimated number of farms	247	158	182

Source: ABS Agricultural Census – 1997, 2001 and 2008a

Cropping industry overview

Cereal grains produced within the region include wheat, oats, barley, rice, millet, corn maize, sorghum and triticale. The majority of farmers surveyed grew cereals in conjunction with other farming activities such as livestock production.

Detail	Comments
Product description	Cereal grains produced within the region include wheat, oats, barley, millet, corn maize, sorghum and triticale. A lot of farmers surveyed grew cereals in conjunction with another farming activity such as livestock.
Main season	Predominantly winter crops involving sowing in Autumn – Winter and Sowing in November - January

Industry associations	TopCrop, Vic. Farmers Federation,
Domestic market information	As there are no receival centres within the north east, all grain crops are transported outside of the region. Prices change regularly. The major buyers are Graincorp and Cargills.
Export market information	

Location of the Cropping industry in the AlpValleys region

2008 ABS	Production volume (t)		No. of farms	
Indigo Shire	31,227		95	
Towong Shire	137		3	
Wangaratta (RC)	14,736		81	

Source: ABS Agricultural Census - 2001

Cropping industry labour requirements

The major labour requirement for cropping occurs at harvest time. Contract harvest or casual employees are required and are expected to average 1 employee per farm. Crop receival centres also employ seasonal workers. However there are no receival centres within the North East region.

Cropping industry marketing activities

There is no marketing of grain which is specific to the north east region. Grain accumulation services, GrainCorp and Cargill all market grain without particular reference to the north east.

Cropping industry marketing activities

Further information required

Taxes, rates and charges paid

Taxes, rate and charges
Further information required.

Cropping industry strategic advantages and opportunities

- Increased productivity from slightly reduced area.
- Alternate Crops, e.g. linseed.
- Producing high quality feed grain to specification for local feedlots (chicken, beef, lamb, dairy).

Cropping industry strategic disadvantages and impediments to growth

- Climate variability.
- Short growing seasons.
- Peri urban and lifestyle development.
- "Right to farm issues" - tractors, scare guns etc, and operating outside "business hours".