

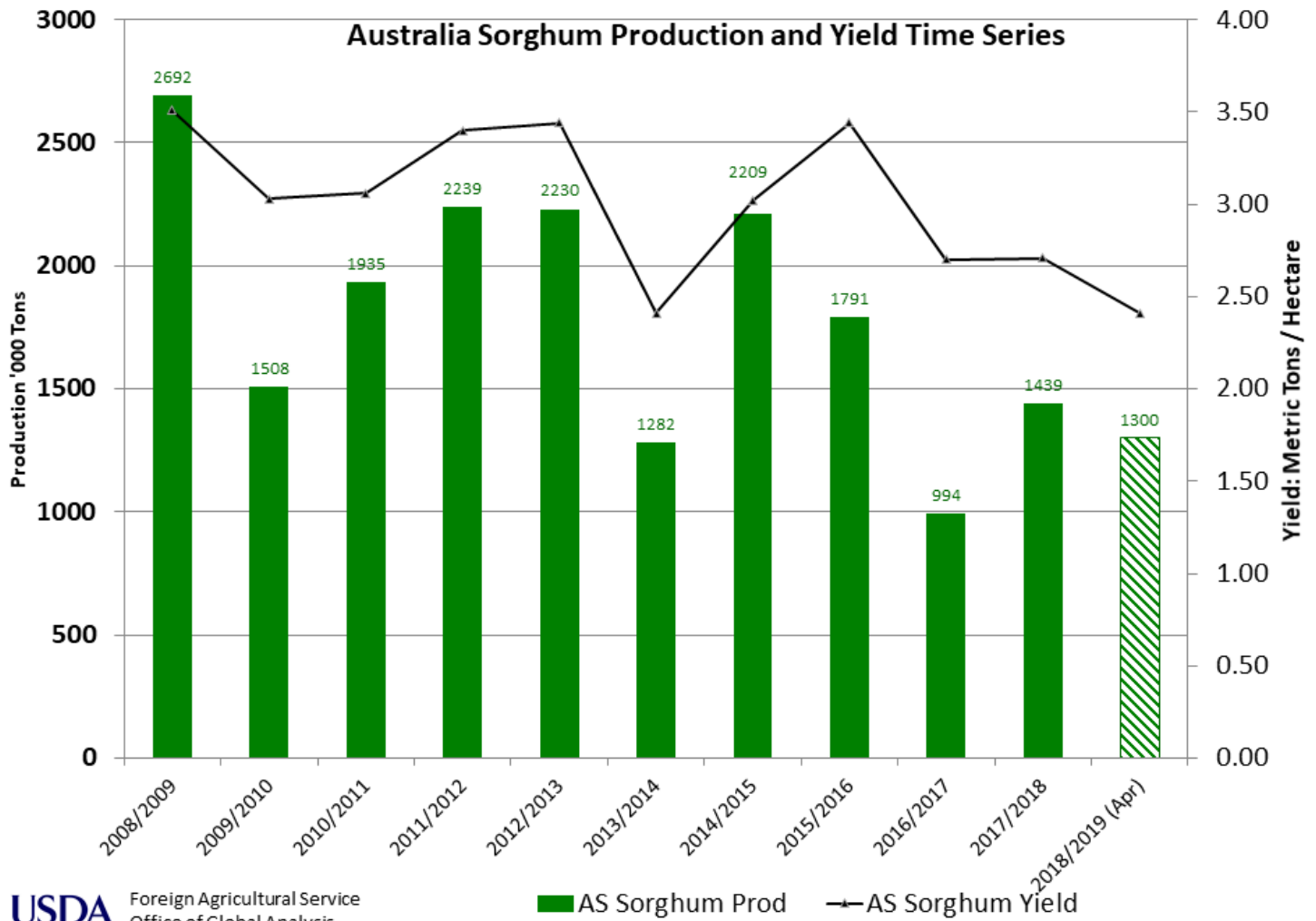
## Australia: Sorghum Reduced by Heat and Dryness

Australia sorghum production for 2018/19 is estimated at 1.3 million metric tons (mmt), down 0.14 mmt or 10 percent from last year (see figure 1). Area is estimated at 0.54 million hectares (mha), up 0.09 mha or 2 percent from last year. Yield is forecast at 2.41 tons per hectare, down 16 percent from the five-year average (see figure 2).

Sorghum is sown from September through February. Late-season planting, the portion of the crop planted in February, was less than typical this season because of unfavorable seasonal conditions during the past several weeks. February's high temperatures stressed the crop, which was already struggling from a lack of moisture. Soil moisture levels remain below average in nearly all sorghum regions (see figure 3).

Many areas of the eastern Australia summer crop region received below average rainfall during the growing season. In February the producing state of Queensland was most affected (see figure 4). This lack of rainfall lowered yield potential. Rainfall received in March was generally too late for improving the yield of early planted crops but will marginally improve the yield for those late planted areas mainly in Central Queensland. However, late-planted crops typically have lower yields.

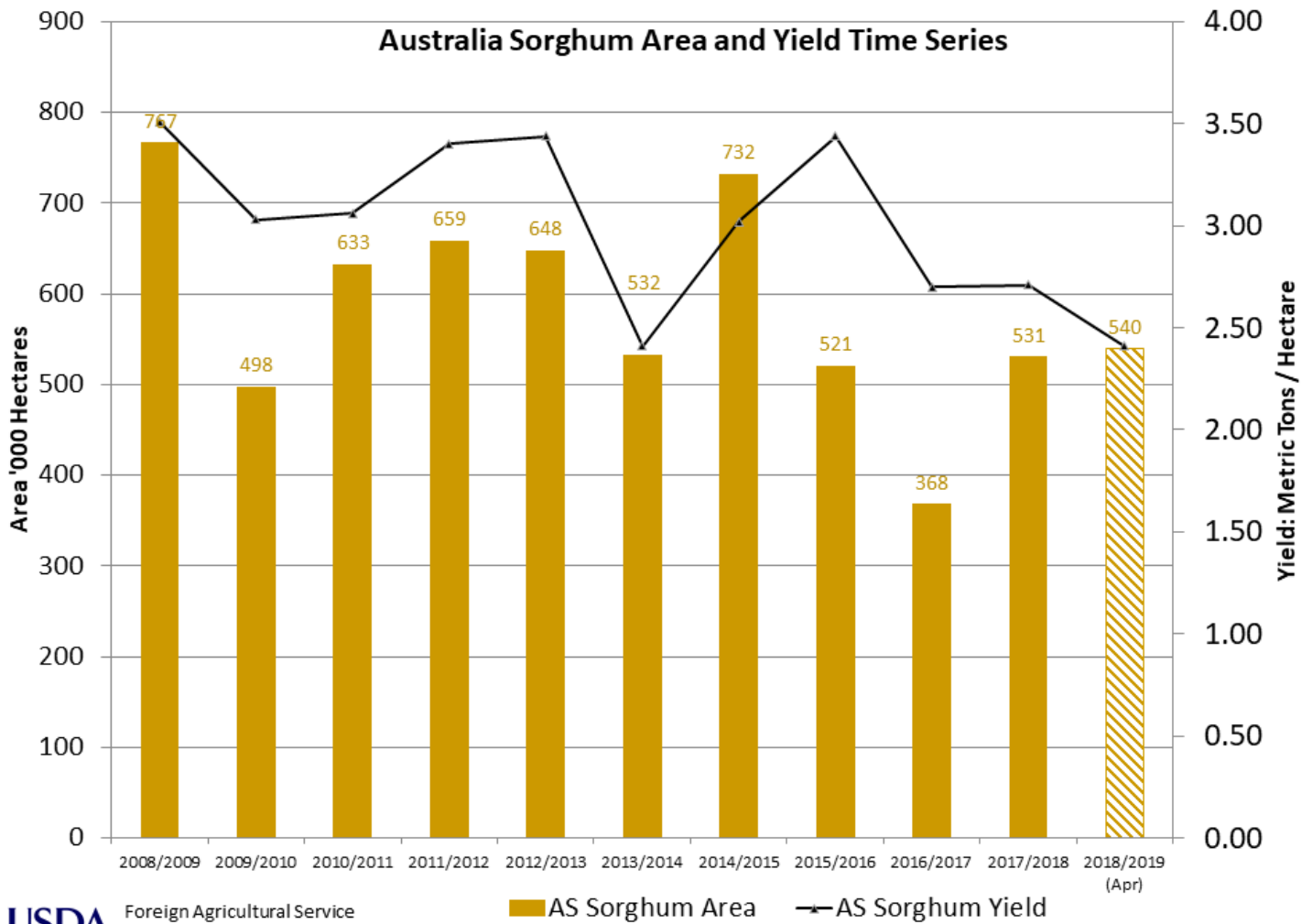
Queensland produces about one-third of Australia's sorghum, with New South Wales accounting for the remainder (see figure 5). Harvest of the early-planted crop began in February. In the summer crop regions of eastern Australia, heat and dryness accelerated crop maturity and initiated harvest earlier than normal. Local agronomists reported that some growers made the decision in early March to cut sorghum crops for hay if estimated yield was one ton or less per hectare. Harvesting is underway in both New South Wales and Queensland. The late-planted crop harvest continues through May.



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Source: USDA FAS PSD

Figure 1 Australia Sorghum Production Time Series



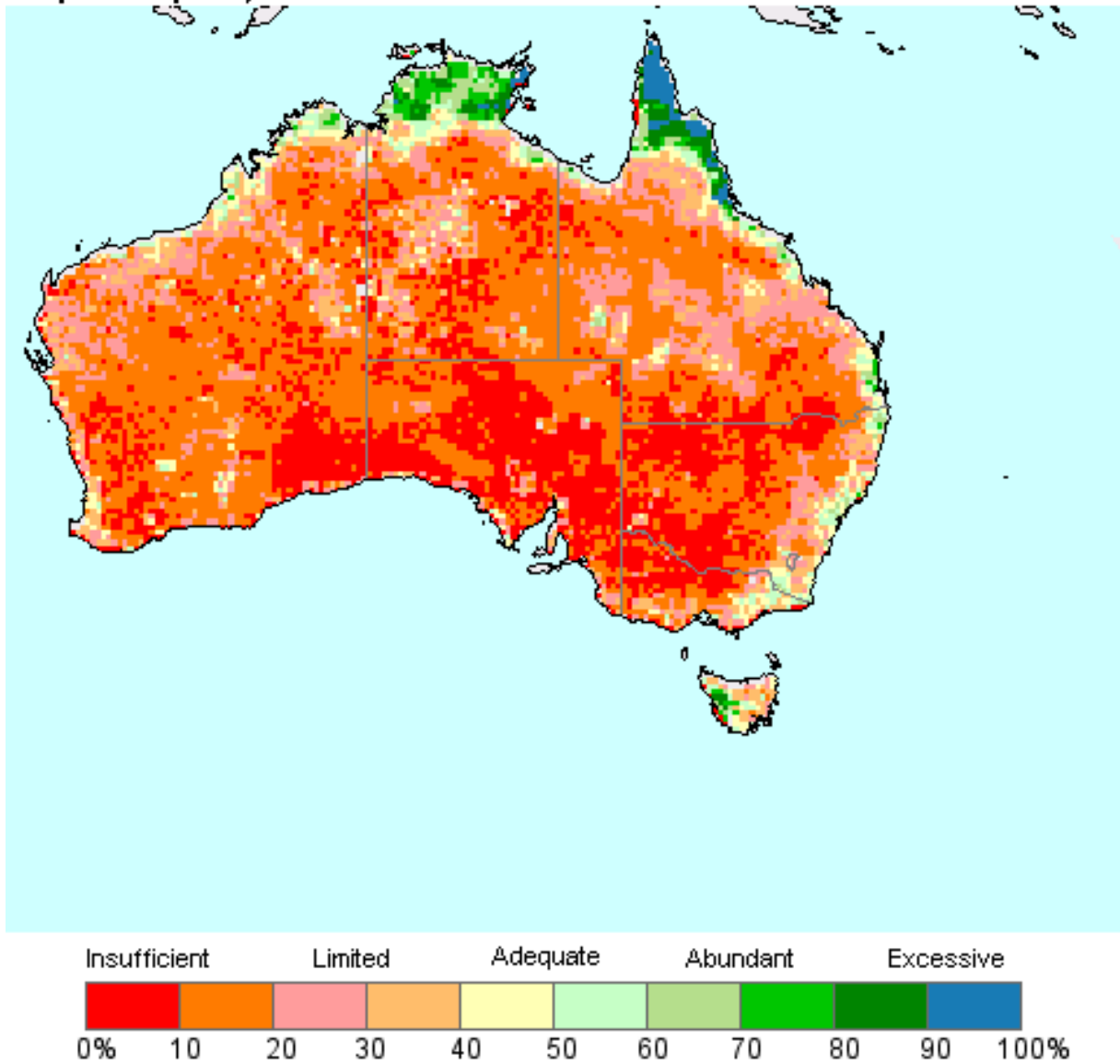
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Source: USDA FAS PSD

Figure 2 Australia Sorghum Area and Yield Time Series

## Percent Soil Moisture (SMAP)

Apr. 11 - Apr. 13, 2019



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Source: 2-layer Palmer Soil Moisture Model  
(corrected with SMAP imagery)  
NASA/GSFC/HSB; USAF 557th WW

Figure 3 Australia Percent Soil Moisture Source: USDA FAS NASA

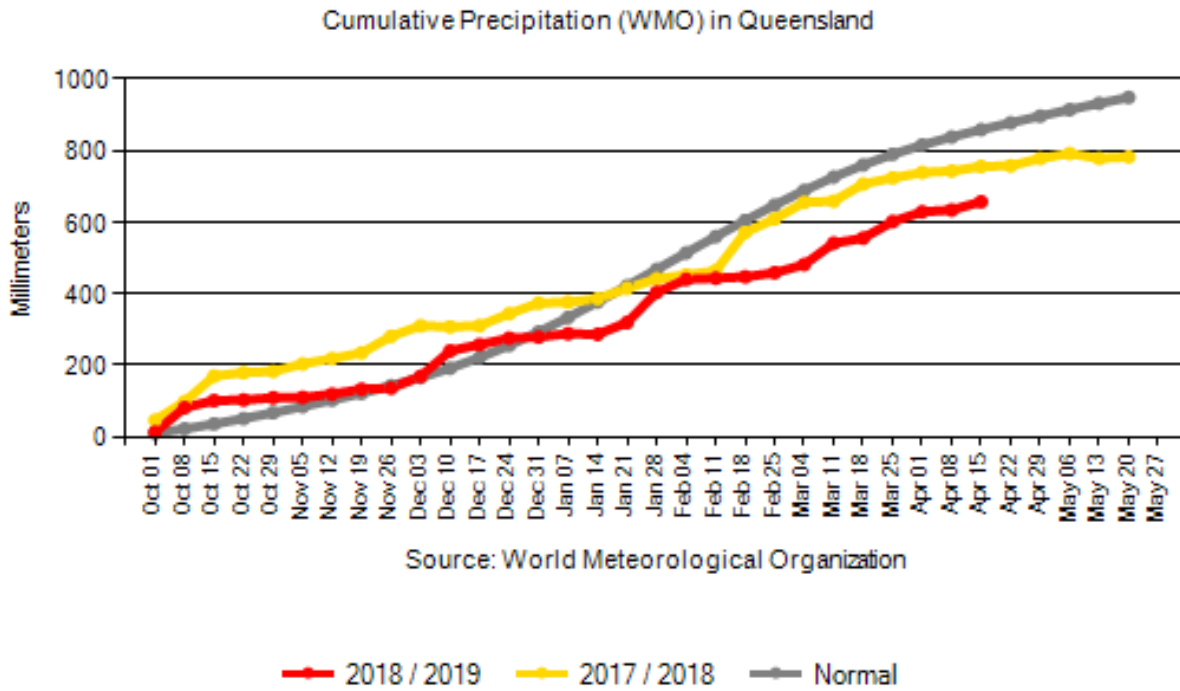
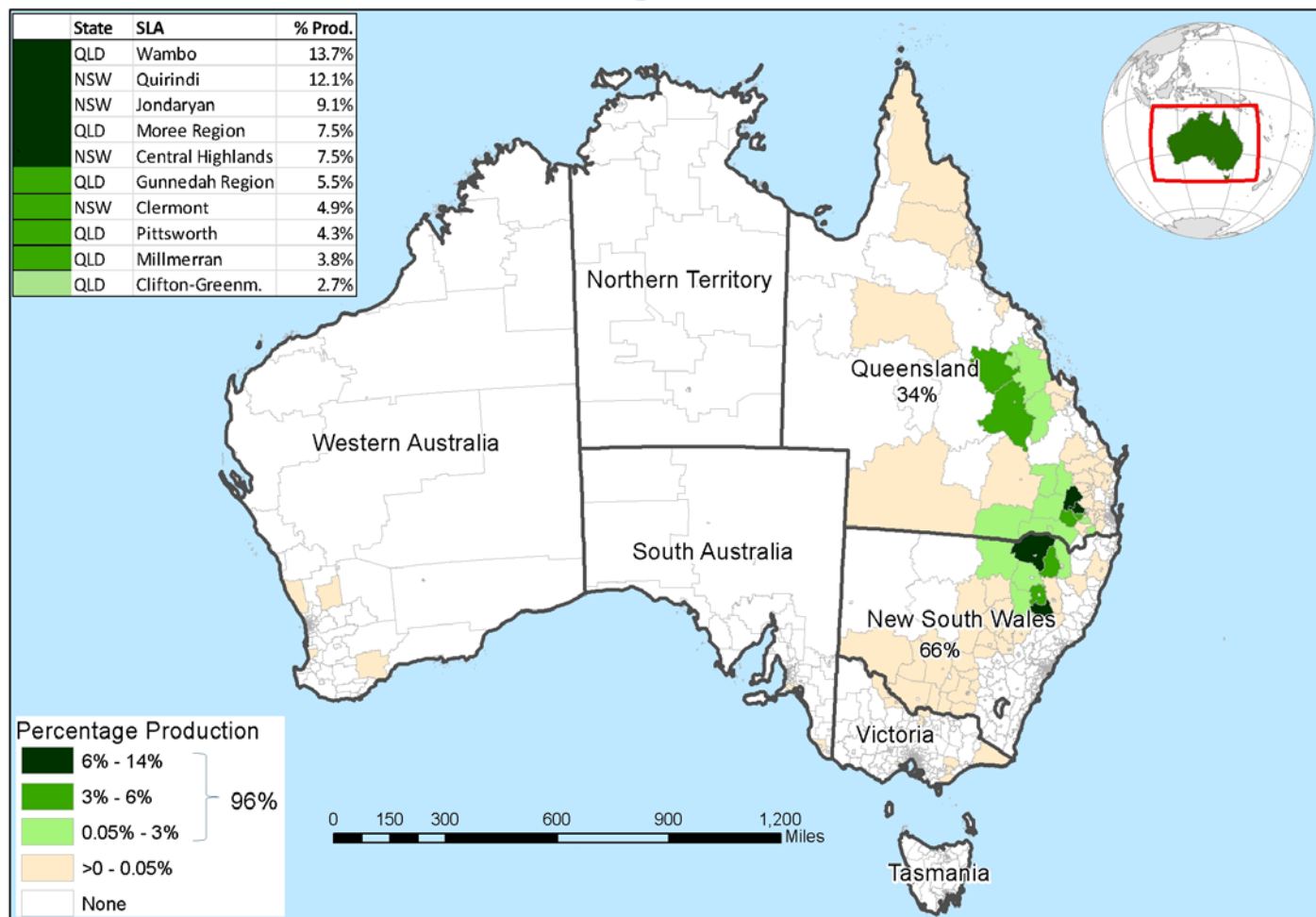


Figure 4 Australia Percent Normal Precipitation, February 2019 Source: WMO

## Australia: Sorghum Production



Data Source: ABS Ag Census with 2016 SLA boundaries (SA2)  
Average percent production of 2005/06, 2010/11 and 2015/16  
Map last updated 3/5/2018

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Figure 5 Map of Australia Sorghum Production Distribution by Shire

For additional information contact Jim Crutchfield | [james.crutchfield@fas.usda.gov](mailto:james.crutchfield@fas.usda.gov) | (202) 690-0135

Current area and production estimates for grains and other agricultural commodities are available on IPAD's Agricultural Production page:

[Crop Explorer](https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/) <https://ipad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer/> or

Production, Supply and Distribution Database (PSD Online):

<http://apps.fas.usda.gov/psdonline/psdHome.aspx>

U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Foreign Agricultural Service  
Office of Global Analysis  
International Production Assessment Division Ag Box 1051, Room 4630, South Building  
Washington, DC 20250-1051  
Telephone: (202) 720-1662 Fax: (202) 720-1158