



The
University
of Sydney

Volume 6
Issue 1
27 March 2008

PBI

Plant Breeding Institute
Cereal Rust Laboratory

Cereal Rust Report Season 2008

Green Bridge for Rust Survival in the Summer of 2008

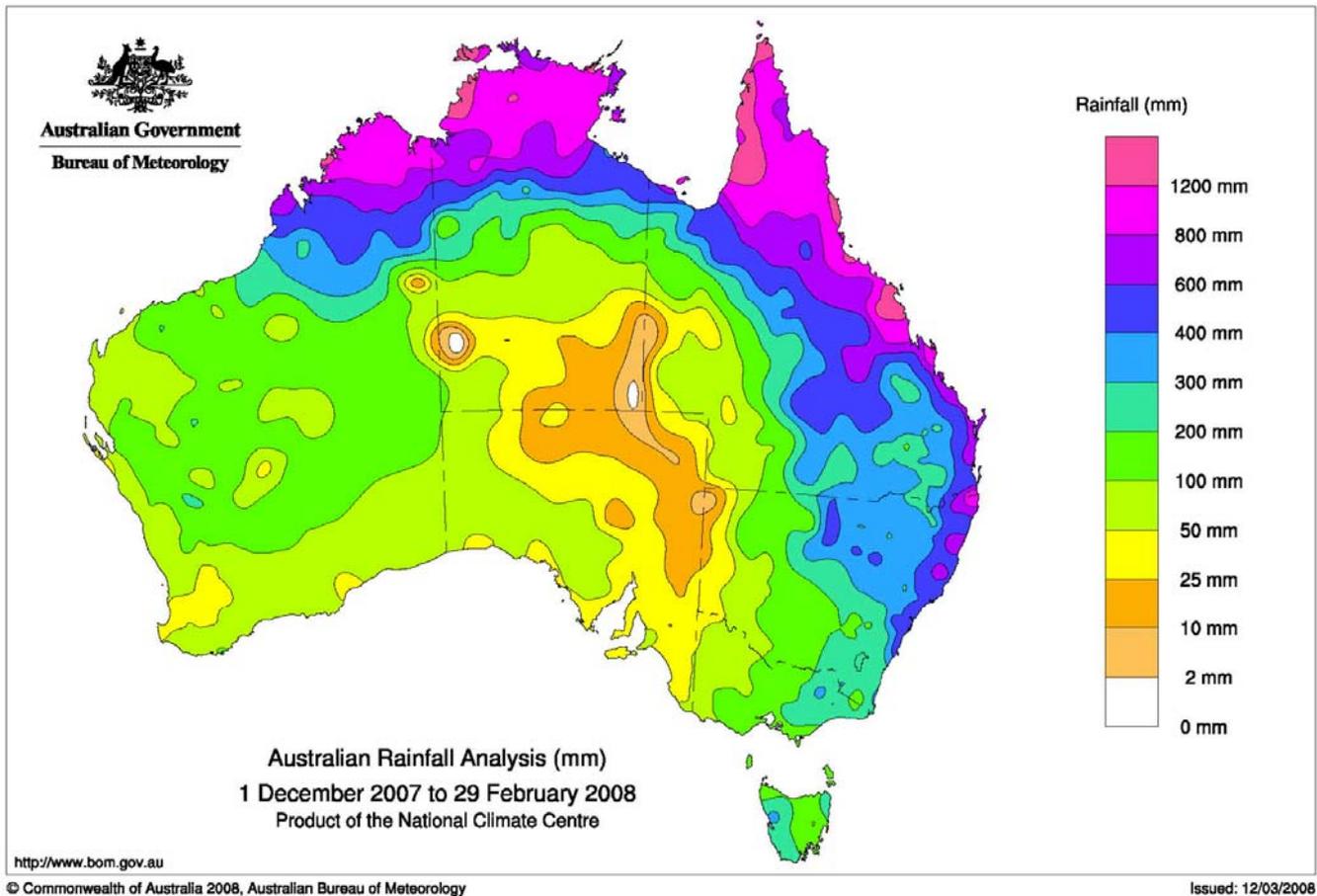
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*(on secondment from NSW Department of Primary Industries)

Unusually heavy and widespread rainfall in parts of central and northern NSW extending into southern Queensland has created opportunities for re-growth of cereal stubbles. These crops have resulted in a considerable green bridge potential that may allow the rust pathogens to survive over the 2008 summer period. This message is to remind growers and advisors to be alert and send rusted cereal samples for identification.

Information obtained from the Commonwealth Bureau of Meteorology indicates the average rainfall in summer in the cropping regions of NSW and Queensland ranges from 100-200mm. In contrast, the map of actual rainfall for the summer of 2007/08 suggests a significant increase in the order of 300-400mm for this region. When this unseasonal summer rainfall coincided with situations where seed fell during harvest operations, or in cases where pre-harvest storms caused varying levels of shattering and/or grain shedding, the resulting stubble paddocks produced well established fields of cereals. A portion of these fields grew actively on follow-up rainfall, and I have one first hand report of a re-growth wheat crop that stripped several hundred tonnes of grain.

The potential for the rust diseases to survive on these summer cereal crops is considerable. While anecdotal reports indicate that this may be the case, there have been just two samples of oat crown rust received in the Cereal Rust Laboratory at the time of writing. This note is to remind the cereals industry, and growers and advisors in particular, to be vigilant in looking for rust samples in stubble fields, and also in locations such as roadsides and grain storages where isolated plants may be growing. If rust samples can be collected during this pre-cropping phase, it will give us an opportunity to capture vital information on rust distribution and the potential for rust problems in the 2008 winter cereal season.



Rainfall distribution in Australia over the summer period of 2007-08. Map used with the permission of the Australian Bureau of Meteorology

General enquiries:

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Rusted plant samples can be mailed in paper envelopes; do not use plastic wrapping or plastic lined packages. Direct samples to:

Australian Cereal Rust Survey
Plant Breeding Institute
Private Bag 11, Camden NSW 2570

The Australian Cereal Rust Control Program is supported by growers through the Grains Research & Development Corporation.

