DECISION REPORT · MAIZE 2026/27

Which hybrid to sow, and is it worth paying to beat the rain?

Planting-date response of two maize hybrids on your own paddocks, what a week of delay costs each of them, and the economics of bringing in a contractor to finish before the forecast rain.

PREPARED FOR	AREA	HYBRIDS COMPARED	REPORT DATE
Wattle Rise Farm (example client)	600 ha of maize · 6 paddocks	Hybrid A and Hybrid B	14 October 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Sow Hybrid A on all 600 ha and hire a contractor for 6 days so sowing finishes before the rain.

On your paddocks Hybrid A out-yields Hybrid B on the optimum date, and the contractor's cost is covered about 4.9 times over by the yield it protects. If the contractor falls through, Hybrid A is still the better choice for a delay of up to about two weeks.

+0.8 t/ha
Hybrid A over Hybrid B when sown on the optimum date (12.4 vs 11.6)

2.1 weeks
Delay at which Hybrid B catches up, because A loses more each week

A$24k
Contractor cost for 6 days, protecting about A$118k of grain

+A$94k
Net gain from hiring the contractor with Hybrid A

The question

Rain is forecast after day 6 of sowing and could stop sowing for about 10 days. Your own planter covers 55 ha a day, so 270 ha would be sown late. Which hybrid should go in, and is extra help worth it?

How we answered it

We used three seasons of your own yield monitor and planter data to measure how each hybrid responds to later sowing on each paddock, then applied that to this year's rain scenario and costed the options.

How Field IQ produced this report

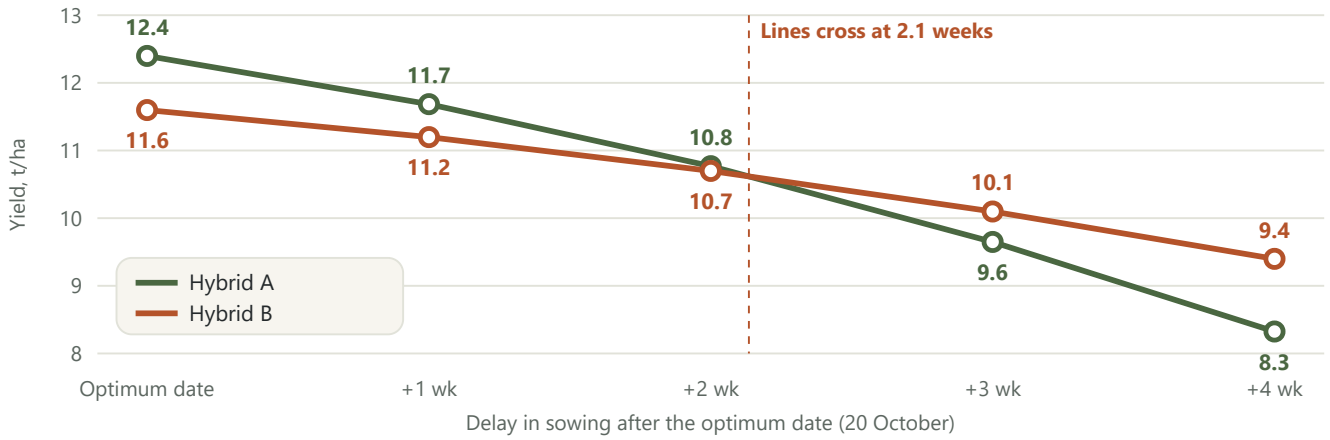
STEP	WHAT WE DID	WHAT YOU RECEIVE
Connect	Yield monitor files, planter logs and zone layers merged	A clean dataset you keep
Analyse	Hybrid response to sowing date, by zone and paddock	Response curves and paddock results
Decide	Rain scenario, costed options and sensitivities	A recommendation and its break-even

Inside: page 2 response to delay · page 3 results by paddock · page 4 rain scenario and economics · page 5 sensitivity, next steps and limits.

PLANTING DATE RESPONSE

Hybrid A yields more on time, but loses more with every week of delay

Across your paddocks, Hybrid A yields 12.4 t/ha when sown on the optimum date against 11.6 t/ha for Hybrid B. Each extra week of delay then costs Hybrid A between 0.71 and 1.32 t/ha, and Hybrid B only 0.40 to 0.70 t/ha. The lead shrinks to 0.5 t/ha after one week and reverses after about 2.1 weeks.



Farm average, area weighted. Based on 3 seasons of your yield monitor data. Estimates for delays beyond 3 weeks rest on fewer paddock-seasons and are indicative.

Extra yield lost with each week of delay



What it means

- Up to two weeks late, Hybrid A is still ahead or level.
- Beyond about 2 weeks, Hybrid B is the lower-risk choice.
- On low ground the crossover comes sooner, at about 12 days.

The data behind it

Seasons and paddocks	3 seasons · 6 paddocks
Hybrid-paddock-seasons	31
Yield points after cleaning	418,000
Sowing dates covered	12 Oct to 18 Nov

How the analysis was done

1. **Cleaned the yield data.** Removed monitor errors and calibrated against weighbridge loads.
2. **Joined sowing date, hybrid and zone** to every yield point.
3. **Compared like with like:** hybrids within the same zone and season, so a good paddock or year flatters neither.
4. **Fitted a delay response** for each hybrid and zone, then applied it to this year's plan.

RESULTS BY PADDOCK

Hybrid A leads everywhere on time. How long it keeps the lead depends on the ground.

Deeper, higher-yielding ground holds Hybrid A's advantage for longer. On the two low paddocks it is gone in under two weeks, which is where Hybrid B becomes the safer pick if sowing slips.

PADDOCK	HA	ZONE	A ON TIME	B ON TIME	A OVER B	A AT +2 WK	B AT +2 WK	B CATCHES UP AFTER
North Flat	120	High	13.27	12.41	**+0.86**	11.73	11.45	**19 days**
Creek	100	Mid	12.65	11.83	**+0.82**	11.02	10.91	**15 days**
Top Hill	110	Mid	12.15	11.37	**+0.78**	10.58	10.49	**15 days**
Windmill	90	Low	11.53	10.79	**+0.74**	9.82	9.95	**12 days**
Long Paddock	100	Mid	12.65	11.83	**+0.82**	11.02	10.91	**15 days**
Bore	80	Low	11.78	11.02	**+0.76**	10.03	10.16	**12 days**
Farm average	**600**		**12.40**	**11.60**	**+0.80**	**10.77**	**10.70**	**15 days**

Yields in t/ha. "B catches up after" is the delay beyond which Hybrid B yields at least as much as Hybrid A on that paddock.

Where the rain would catch you

Your own planter sows 55 ha a day, so the first 330 ha (North Flat, Creek and Top Hill) go in before the rain. Windmill, Long Paddock and Bore, 270 ha in all, would wait about 10 days.

Schematic, not to scale. Paddocks are shown in sowing order, left to right, top to bottom.

North Flat
120 ha · High zone
Sown before the rain
A 13.3 · B 12.4 t/ha on time

Creek
100 ha · Mid zone
Sown before the rain
A 12.6 · B 11.8 t/ha on time

Top Hill
110 ha · Mid zone
Sown before the rain
A 12.2 · B 11.4 t/ha on time

Windmill
90 ha · Low zone
Sown ~10 days late (own team)
A 11.5 · B 10.8 t/ha on time

Long Paddock
100 ha · Mid zone
Sown ~10 days late (own team)
A 12.6 · B 11.8 t/ha on time

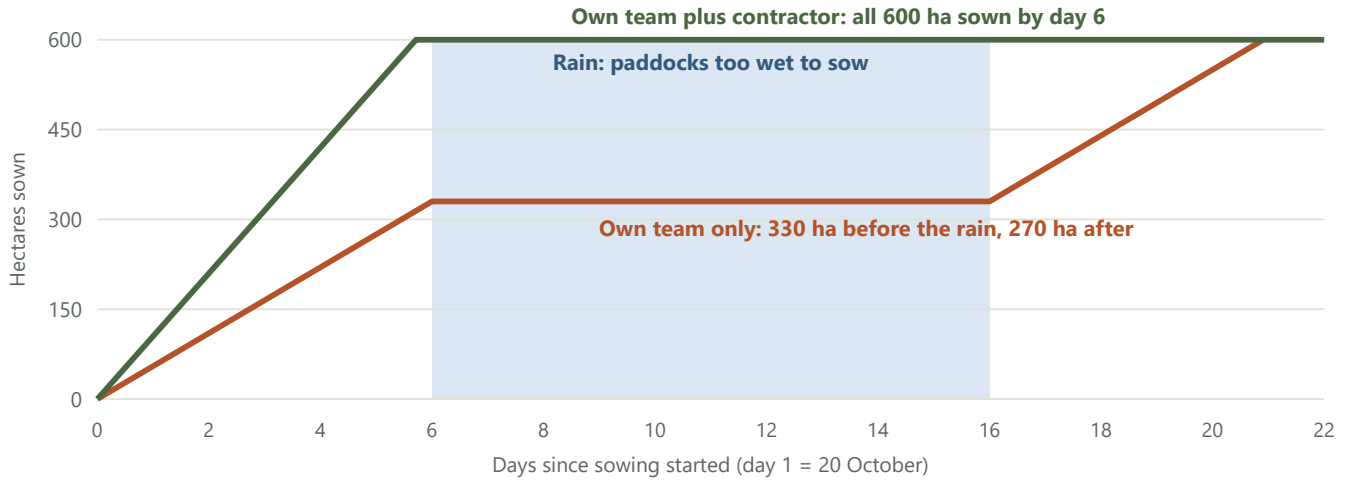
Bore
80 ha · Low zone
Sown ~10 days late (own team)
A 11.8 · B 11.0 t/ha on time

Two of the three late paddocks are low ground, where Hybrid A's yield drops fastest. That is why finishing before the rain matters more for Hybrid A than for Hybrid B.

RAIN SCENARIO AND ECONOMICS

A contractor costs A$24k and protects A$118k of grain

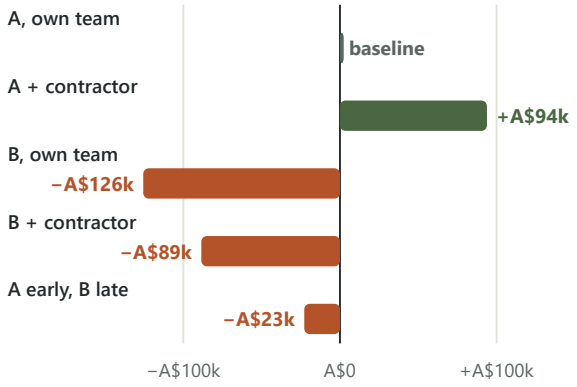
With a contractor adding 50 ha a day, 600 ha is sown by day 6, just ahead of the rain. Without one, 270 ha waits about 10 days.



OPTION	GRAIN, T	REVENUE	CONTRACTOR	NET RESULT	VS S1
S1 Hybrid A, own team only	7,129	A$2,708,876	–	**A$2,708,876**	baseline
S2 Hybrid A, plus contractor	7,439	A$2,826,729	−A$24,000	**A$2,802,729**	+A$93,853
S3 Hybrid B, own team only	6,798	A$2,583,271	–	**A$2,583,271**	−A$125,605
S4 Hybrid B, plus contractor	6,959	A$2,644,359	−A$24,000	**A$2,620,359**	−A$88,517
S5 A on early paddocks, B on late ones, own team only	7,069	A$2,686,084	–	**A$2,686,084**	−A$22,792

Grain valued at A$380 per tonne. Contractor: 6 days at A$4,000 a day (machine, operator and fuel). Other costs are the same across options and left out.

Difference from the current plan (S1)



Does the extra yield pay for it?

- The contractor needs to save only **63 t**, or 0.23 t/ha on the late paddocks, to cover its cost.
- Finishing in time saves **310 t** with Hybrid A (A$118k), so 4.9 times the cost.
- With Hybrid B it saves 161 t (A$61k), 2.5 times the cost. Worth it, but A gains more because it loses more from delay.

NEXT STEPS

What to do, in order

1. **Book the contractor now** for 6 days from 20 October. The decision only works if they are on the paddocks before the rain, not after it.
2. **Sow Hybrid A on all 600 ha** and start with North Flat, Creek and Top Hill so the best ground goes in first.
3. **Order seed for Hybrid B on Windmill and Bore as a fallback.** Use it only if the contractor is not available and sowing on those two paddocks looks likely to slip beyond about 12 days.
4. **Re-check the forecast on day 3.** If the rain moves out by a week, the contractor may no longer be needed. If it moves in, nothing else changes.
5. **Record sowing dates and hybrids by paddock this season.** Each season of clean data makes the next recommendation sharper, especially for delays longer than three weeks.

What if the wet spell is longer or shorter?

SOWING STOPPED FOR	A, OWN TEAM	B, OWN TEAM	BETTER HYBRID	A + CONTRACTOR	CONTRACTOR ADDS
5 days	A$2,772,454	A$2,615,946	Hybrid A	A$2,802,729	**+A$30,274**
10 days (forecast)	A$2,708,876	A$2,583,271	Hybrid A	A$2,802,729	**+A$93,853**
14 days	A$2,653,051	A$2,554,858	Hybrid A	A$2,802,729	**+A$149,678**
21 days	A$2,533,647	A$2,495,190	Hybrid A	A$2,802,729	**+A$269,082**
28 days	A$2,392,533	A$2,425,578	Hybrid B	A$2,802,729	**+A$377,151**

Net result for the whole area. Hybrid A with a contractor does not change with the length of the rain because everything is sown beforehand. Sensitivity to price: net gain of the contractor at A$300, A$380 and A$460 per tonne is +A$69,042, +A$93,853 and +A$118,664 with Hybrid A.

Assumptions

- Grain is valued at A$380 per tonne. All other costs are equal across options.
- The rain stops sowing for 10 days. The table above tests 5 to 28 days.
- Own planter 55 ha a day, contractor 50 ha a day, as supplied by the client.
- Yield responses come from three past seasons and assume a similar season.

Limits

- Delays beyond 3 weeks have few observations.
- The analysis covers sowing date and hybrid only. Frost, heat at flowering and disease are not modelled.
- Yields at harvest depend on the season. These are expected values, not guarantees.
- Hybrid names are generic. Check seed supply, maturity and agronomic fit before ordering.

This is an example report. The client, paddocks, yields and costs are illustrative and were generated to show what a Field IQ decision report looks like. It is not agronomic, financial or purchasing advice.