

SNAIL AND SLUG MANAGEMENT FOR THE YEAR AHEAD – 2026

Key points

- Understand when slugs and snails are actively feeding and breeding, as this underpins successful management.
- Applications of **Metarex Inov**® now, following substantial rainfall in March, will reduce round snail numbers this autumn. Rolling after harvest prior to bait application complements that control.
- Protect susceptible seed/seedlings by applying **Metarex Inov** after sowing and before crop emergence.

There was limited snail activity in the long dry autumn of 2025. Moderate conditions and late rain in spring is thought to have aided survival and breeding of conical snails, with high levels of small (<2 mm) individuals detected in grain samples. Conical snail numbers were not reduced in lentils sprayed with carbendazim, yet an application of **Metarex Inov** reduced the population significantly, highlighting its efficacy.

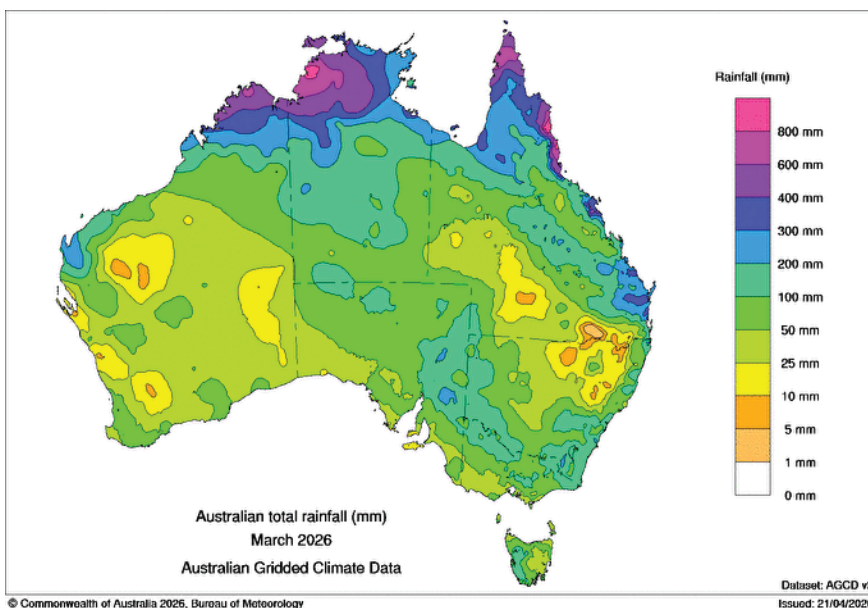
Substantial rainfall in March (see map) has triggered extensive snail activity. Applying **Metarex Inov** now will provide excellent control of Italian and vineyard (round) snails prior to their breeding. Focusing on known areas, along fence lines and water channels/ creek lines, where high numbers are known to seek refuge over summer, will catch populations before

they spread out into paddocks to feed on the new vegetation. It is essential to monitor snail numbers after application of **Metarex Inov** to assess if re-application is needed.

There was limited, late emergence of black keeled slugs in 2025 (GRDC monitoring project UOA2308-004RTX), hence limited slug damage to canola. Proactive growers applied bait after seeding to protect seed and seedlings, but where bran-based pellets were used, some growers needed to re-apply after substantial rainfall. Those using **Metarex Inov** were controlling slugs even after 50–80 mm of rain, 5 weeks after application.

In traditional slug areas, large numbers of grey field slugs were observed in late November 2025 when windrowing crops. Based on previous experience that means, if it rains after sowing, slugs will be present in May 2026. Observations and research support the hypothesis slugs are active once soil moisture is greater than 25–30%. Also, black keeled slugs can delay breeding for over 500 days. These points highlight the need to not be complacent. Use long-lasting **Metarex Inov** for sustained control; especially useful where monitoring of establishing crops every 3–4 days is not possible.

*Metarex Inov is a registered trademark of De Sangosse SA
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Australian Rainfall Analysis March 2026

