

MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MONTANA FIELD OFFICE
 10 West 15th Street, Suite 3100, Helena, MT 59626
 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Eric Sommer
 (800) 835-2612

CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2016

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: February was largely mild and dry with periods of high winds across Montana. High temperatures ranged from the mid 40s to the lower 70s and low temperatures ranged from -25 degrees to 20 degrees. Most of the state recorded at least some precipitation but the amount received varied widely, with the highest recorded this month in Heron with 3.53 inches of moisture, and other reporting stations recording between 0.01 to 1.83 inches of moisture. Warm temperatures and lack of snow cover have some farmers beginning spring work in their fields and are making plans for early planting according to reporters. Topsoil moisture conditions were 61 percent adequate to surplus which is well behind last year's 81 percent. Subsoil moisture conditions are 55 percent adequate to surplus, also below last year's 80 percent. Winter damage to winter wheat increased from the previous month as a result of decreased snow coverage. The State's snow coverage fell to 5 percent good to excellent which is slightly below last year at this time when snow coverage was 7 percent good to excellent. However, winter wheat condition remained above the previous year and is rated 53 percent good to excellent, compared with 44 percent last year. Livestock grazing is 78 percent open to difficult compared to 73 percent at the same time last year. Dry conditions and lack of grass have more producers providing supplemental feed at higher rates than the previous year with 98 percent of both cattle and sheep being fed, compared with 96 percent of cattle and 97 percent of sheep last year. Livestock birthing continues in mild conditions for the season with 8 percent of calving and 6 percent of lambing complete so far, which is behind the five year average of 12 percent for cattle but right on the five year average of 6 percent for sheep.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Cattle and calves				
Calving completed.....	8	2	10	12
Receiving supplemental feed.....	98	99	96	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Lambing completed.....	6	2	5	6
Receiving supplemental feed.....	98	98	97	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

Commodity	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Topsoil moisture				
Very short.....	10	5	3	NA
Short.....	29	12	16	NA
Adequate.....	58	79	75	NA
Surplus.....	3	4	6	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	11	8	4	NA
Short.....	34	24	16	NA
Adequate.....	52	65	68	NA
Surplus.....	3	3	12	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Grazing Accessibility				
Open.....	64	28	49	NA
Difficult.....	14	28	24	NA
Closed.....	22	44	27	NA
Winter Wheat				
Very poor.....	1	1	8	NA
Poor.....	3	3	14	NA
Fair.....	43	24	34	NA
Good.....	41	52	35	NA
Excellent.....	12	20	9	NA
Winter Wheat – Wind Damage				
None.....	77	81	71	NA
Light.....	19	18	22	NA
Moderate.....	3	1	5	NA
Heavy.....	1	--	2	NA
Winter Wheat – Freeze & Drought Damage				
None.....	79	78	65	NA
Light.....	19	20	25	NA
Moderate.....	2	2	8	NA
Heavy.....	--	--	2	NA
Winter Wheat – Protectiveness of Snow Cover				
Very Poor.....	62	17	37	NA
Poor.....	22	19	31	NA
Fair.....	11	30	25	NA
Good.....	3	23	7	NA
Excellent.....	2	11	--	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

Montana’s weather data can be accessed at the following:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Montana/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/2016/MT_Weather_0228016.pdf