

MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MONTANA FIELD OFFICE
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 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Precipitation varied and temperatures were warmer in Montana according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Beneficial rain was received in western portions of the State according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). Moving east, conditions were gradually drier. Temperatures ran above average for the majority of Montana, with largest departures from normal occurring in the eastern half of the State. Temperatures ran as high as 8-10 degrees above normal in parts of the east. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor released on August 31, 2023, the amount of land rated drought free remained unchanged, at 52 percent. Abnormal dryness and moderate drought conditions were also unchanged at 9 and 13 percent, respectively. Severe drought was found across 17 percent of Montana, compared with 23 percent last week. Extreme drought conditions increased to 9 percent, up 6 percentage points from the previous week. Moisture and cooler temperatures slowed harvests in Blaine County. Furthermore, smoke from Canadian wildfires resulted in poor air quality. Though hot and dry conditions adversely affected production and grazing areas in Chouteau County, the early season rains significantly benefitted fields and ranges before the poor weather conditions began. Harvests were better than normal. Farmers were expecting the 2023 crops to rank in the top 10 percent across all the production years for the county. Valley grasses were once again growing and turning green in Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties with the recent rains and cooler temperatures. Conditions in mountain pastures were excellent for livestock in face of the dry conditions seen during the past several months in Ravalli County. In spite of the recent rains, drought conditions were still present in Mineral County, and some producers qualified for disaster assistance. A reporter in Roosevelt County stated that with the continuing severe drought status a few fires had developed.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous week (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Alfalfa hay				
2 nd cutting harvested	84	62	97	NA
Barley				
Harvested.....	86	72	79	77
Canola				
Harvested.....	63	52	73	55
Corn				
Harvested for silage	15	1	20	15
Dry edible beans (includes Chickpeas)				
Harvested.....	84	64	72	58
Dry edible peas				
Harvested.....	95	91	NA	NA
Durum wheat				
Harvested.....	83	65	78	62
Flaxseed				
Harvested.....	76	60	69	48
Lentils				
Harvested.....	91	86	92	NA
Mustard seed				
Harvested.....	93	80	72	58
Oats				
Harvested.....	73	66	78	74
Other hay				
2 nd cutting harvested	68	49	77	74
Safflower				
Turning color	68	55	NA	NA
Harvested.....	23	17	39	21
Spring wheat				
Harvested.....	85	71	85	77
Winter wheat				
Harvested.....	93	80	100	95
Planted.....	1	NA	4	2
Cattle and calves				
Moved from pasture	27	24	NA	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Moved from pasture	25	23	NA	NA

NA – not available
 (-) – zero

DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK AND SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
Days suitable for field work	6.4	5.9	7.0	6.6
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	35	42	40	27
Short	49	40	45	41
Adequate.....	16	18	15	30
Surplus.....	--	--	--	2
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	45	45	29	26
Short	38	41	56	41
Adequate.....	17	14	15	32
Surplus.....	--	--	--	1

NA – not available

(--)- zero

CROP, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Corn				
Very poor	1	--	3	4
Poor	3	5	5	8
Fair.....	19	19	19	23
Good.....	68	66	71	56
Excellent	9	10	2	9
Pasture and range				
Very poor	11	11	17	20
Poor	20	26	26	21
Fair.....	28	33	36	28
Good.....	36	27	21	26
Excellent	5	3	--	5
Safflower				
Very poor	--	--	--	6
Poor	--	--	19	14
Fair.....	41	43	47	35
Good.....	59	57	20	38
Excellent	--	--	14	7

Current conditions for Sugarbeets are available using the QuickStats on-line database at: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/

NA – not available

(--)- zero