

# MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
**MONTANA FIELD OFFICE**  
 P.O. BOX 150969 · Lakewood, CO 80215-0969  
 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
 April 1, 2024

Contact: Eric Sommer  
 (800) 392-3202

## CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION WEEK ENDING MARCH 31, 2024

**AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY:** The week brought varying levels of precipitation to Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. For much of Montana, precipitation levels were below normal, according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). Precipitation levels were slightly above normal, however, in parts of the northeast and southwest, and in other isolated portions of the State. Temperatures were at or below normal for all of Montana. Temperatures ran as many as 20 degrees below average in the northeast. Average temperatures were warmer moving west, running about normal to 4 degrees below average in far western portions of the State. Changes in drought conditions were minimal according to the U.S. Drought Monitor report released on March 28, 2024. The amount of land rated drought free increased to almost 6 percent, compared with 5 percent the previous week. Abnormal dryness stood at 53 percent, unchanged from the previous week. Moderate, severe, and extreme conditions were also unchanged, at 25, 16, and 1 percent, respectively.

### CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy .....	42	13	4	16
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved.....	43	15	24	36
Receiving supplemental feed .....	95	97	98	94
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambled .....	29	12	17	30
Receiving supplemental feed .....	92	99	97	97

NA – not available  
 (--) – zero

### DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK AND SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current week (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Days suitable for field work.....	1.9	NA	1.0	3.3
Topsoil moisture				
Very short .....	7	10	--	15
Short .....	36	43	12	23
Adequate .....	56	47	84	54
Surplus .....	1	--	4	8
Subsoil moisture				
Very short .....	16	19	4	15
Short .....	54	60	39	30
Adequate .....	30	21	56	50
Surplus .....	--	--	1	5

NA – not available  
 (--) – zero

**CROP, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION**

Commodity	Current week	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Grazing accessibility				
Open .....	68	59	29	54
Difficult .....	14	21	23	18
Closed .....	18	20	48	28
Pasture and range				
Very poor .....	15	13	17	26
Poor .....	35	39	31	20
Fair .....	39	46	25	29
Good .....	10	2	26	22
Excellent .....	1	--	1	3
Winter wheat				
Very poor .....	1	1	1	5
Poor .....	3	3	9	10
Fair .....	39	48	66	44
Good .....	53	44	24	37
Excellent .....	4	4	--	4
Winter wheat – wind damage				
None .....	59	50	63	NA
Light .....	26	31	25	NA
Moderate .....	15	19	11	NA
Severe .....	--	--	1	NA
Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage				
None .....	72	63	80	NA
Light .....	19	23	11	NA
Moderate .....	7	12	8	NA
Severe .....	2	2	1	NA
Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover				
Very poor .....	26	17	3	NA
Poor .....	40	31	27	NA
Fair .....	27	35	29	NA
Good .....	6	14	34	NA
Excellent .....	1	3	7	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero