

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 APRIL 21, 2024

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Precipitation levels were once again mostly below normal, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. The exceptions were across portions of Madison, Gallatin, Park, and Sweet Grass Counties, and surrounding areas. Moisture received was as much as one inch above normal in these parts of the State. Temperatures were in a range of 2-6 degrees above average for much of the State, according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). A few isolated areas saw average temperatures as high as 10 degrees above normal. Average temperatures were at or slightly below normal, however, in parts of the southwest, central Montana, and isolated areas in the north. Drought conditions improved according to the U.S. Drought Monitor report released on April 18, 2024. The amount of land rated drought free increased to 14 percent, up from 9 percent the previous week. Abnormal dryness was unchanged at 51 percent. Moderate drought conditions fell by 4 percentage points to 23 percent. Severe conditions stood at 12 percent, down from 13 percent last week. Extreme drought conditions were found in less than 1 percent of the State. Following much needed recent rains in Mineral County, winter wheat fields were in excellent condition. A Missoula County producer found a triticale field from 2023 that had wintered over as was making another crop this spring. Calving was nearing completion in Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties. Some ranchers voiced concern over cases of scours and pneumonia found in some calves due to the damp and cool weather. Crop conditions looked good. Mountain snowpack levels were low. Operators questioned the availability of water for irrigation later in the season. Strong, persistent winds hit Wibaux County along with zero moisture. Weather conditions were cooler. Planting was off to a slow start.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Barley				
Planted.....	21	4	5	14
Canola				
Planted.....	2	1	NA	NA
Dry edible beans				
Planted.....	2	1	2	2
Dry peas				
Planted.....	6	1	5	12
Durum wheat				
Planted.....	5	1	3	3
Flaxseed				
Planted.....	2	1	5	5
Lentils				
Planted.....	3	1	3	6
Mustard seed				
Planted.....	2	1	2	3
Oats				
Planted.....	4	2	3	5
Safflower				
Planted.....	5	2	4	1
Spring wheat				
Planted.....	7	2	4	10
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy	91	70	69	71
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved.....	77	64	69	72
Moved to pasture	1	NA	NA	NA
Receiving supplemental feed	74	83	91	84
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambed	57	40	45	61
Moved to pasture	2	NA	NA	NA
Receiving supplemental feed	74	81	96	87

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	5.8	5.1	1.6	3.9
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	10	7	--	15
Short	52	46	12	17
Adequate.....	38	46	80	62
Surplus.....	--	1	8	6
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	10	11	2	15
Short	48	48	21	22
Adequate.....	41	40	73	59
Surplus.....	1	1	4	4

NA – not available

(--)- zero

CROP, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Grazing accessibility				
Open	82	78	67	69
Difficult	8	11	12	15
Closed.....	10	11	21	16
Pasture and range				
Very poor	18	19	14	23
Poor	27	28	24	16
Fair.....	42	47	27	31
Good	12	5	35	25
Excellent	1	1	--	5
Winter wheat				
Very poor	--	1	--	5
Poor	5	6	4	8
Fair.....	43	37	58	35
Good	50	51	37	43
Excellent	2	5	1	9

NA – not available

(--)- zero