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 AUGUST 18, 2024

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Temperatures and precipitation were both varied across the State, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Average temperatures were lower in southwestern and south-central portions of Montana, according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). Some areas saw average temperatures fall as many as 4 degrees below normal. In parts of the north and east, average temperatures were as high as 5 degrees above normal. Rainfall levels were in a range of about normal to 0.9 inch above normal in the southwest, parts of the southeast, and in portions of the north. Some areas received higher amounts of rain. For the remainder of the State, moisture levels ranged from slightly below normal to about 0.45 inch below normal. According to data from the U.S. Drought Monitor report released August 15, abnormal dryness was found in 35 percent of Montana, down 3 percentage points. Moderate drought increased slightly from 42 to 43 percent. Severe drought increased 3 percentage points to 15 percent. Extreme and exceptional drought conditions were unchanged at 6 and almost 1 percent, respectively. Thunderstorms with hail and high wind went through various parts of Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties. Moisture received was minimal in most areas. Ample irrigation water was available for most producers, though reports of shortages were surfacing. Haying moved forward. Some hay was wet from the recent rain. Rain was in the forecast in Prairie County, and was visible on radar, but precipitation was insufficient. Temperatures ran high. Parts of the county remained under 24 percent of normal precipitation for both July and August. Pastures and ranges were showing the effect of the drought. Some producers were supplementing their livestock feed due to the shortage of good grasses. Conditions were also dry in Roosevelt County. Some ranchers were feeding baled hay to cattle on pastures.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Alfalfa hay				
2nd cutting harvested	45	40	53	58
Barley				
Coloring	90	75	93	NA
Harvested	23	19	65	47
Canola				
Coloring	82	78	85	NA
Harvested	16	11	34	30
Dry edible beans				
Harvested	45	24	37	29
Dry peas				
Harvested	89	61	80	75
Durum wheat				
Coloring	96	93	90	NA
Harvested	42	24	41	29
Flaxseed				
Harvested	13	1	27	23
Lentils				
Harvested	65	43	63	59
Mustard seed				
Harvested	14	5	48	24
Oats				
Coloring	86	83	92	NA
Harvested	40	28	57	41
Other hay				
1st cutting harvested	96	90	NA	NA
2nd cutting harvested	25	18	30	42
Safflower				
Blooming	95	81	96	NA
Coloring	37	29	38	52
Harvested	5	2	10	8
Spring wheat				
Coloring	91	87	91	NA
Harvested	38	22	54	43
Winter wheat				
Harvested	75	69	76	77
Cattle and calves				
Moved from pasture	4	2	20	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	6.2	5.2	6.5	6.0
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short	19	20	33	30
Short	59	55	46	39
Adequate	22	25	21	30
Surplus	--	--	--	1
Subsoil moisture				
Very short	25	25	38	32
Short	54	51	40	36
Adequate	21	24	22	31
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)
Barley				
Very poor	1	--	--	10
Poor	13	11	7	15
Fair	21	30	47	28
Good	64	58	37	35
Excellent	1	1	9	12
Canola				
Very poor	--	--	1	6
Poor	1	2	6	7
Fair	38	38	55	32
Good	61	55	31	41
Excellent	--	5	7	15
Corn				
Very poor	1	--	1	7
Poor	9	9	6	8
Fair	24	22	18	20
Good	64	67	64	58
Excellent	2	2	11	7
Durum wheat				
Very poor	--	--	--	8
Poor	3	7	14	12
Fair	41	38	76	46
Good	56	52	9	28
Excellent	--	3	1	6
Lentils				
Very poor	--	--	NA	NA
Poor	2	3	NA	NA
Fair	34	35	NA	NA
Good	64	60	NA	NA
Excellent	--	2	NA	NA
Mustard seed				
Very poor	--	--	--	2
Poor	3	3	18	12
Fair	6	8	49	51
Good	90	88	32	31
Excellent	1	1	1	4
Pasture and range				
Very poor	13	17	8	21
Poor	20	25	18	18
Fair	50	43	42	29
Good	14	13	30	27
Excellent	3	2	2	5
Safflower				
Very poor	2	2	--	6
Poor	4	5	--	12
Fair	57	59	44	39
Good	36	33	56	41
Excellent	1	1	--	2
Spring wheat				
Very poor	1	2	--	NA
Poor	7	6	18	NA
Fair	29	34	54	NA
Good	62	56	25	NA
Excellent	1	2	3	NA

[1]Current conditions for Dry Edible Beans, Flaxseed, Oats, and Sugarbeets are available using the QuickStats on-line database at: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/
NA – not available
(--) – zero