

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 22, 2024

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Essential precipitation fell in parts of Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Much of the State received moisture in a range of normal to about 2 inches above normal, according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). Higher amounts were received in Fergus and Musselshell Counties, surrounding areas, and in a few other isolated areas. Five inches of rain were reported near Lewistown, in Fergus County. Parts of the northwest, southeast, and eastern Montana, however, received below average amounts of precipitation. Temperatures varied. Temperatures ran about 8 inches above average in some eastern sections of the State. Moving west, average temperatures ran lower. Parts of the southwest experienced temperatures in a range of about 2 to 4 degrees below average. Abnormally dry conditions increased to 41 percent, up 4 percentage points from the previous week, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor released September 19. Moderate drought conditions fell to 36 percent, down from 39 percent last week. Severe conditions were found in 14 percent of Montana, down 1 percentage point. Extreme and exceptional drought conditions were again unchanged, at 8 and 1 percent, respectively. An agent in Hill County reported that some areas received moisture in a range of 2 to 8 inches, depending on locality. Parts of Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties saw the first frost of the fall season. Some farmers were putting up a third cutting of alfalfa and grass hay. Quality was poor due to the recent rain. Fires were out, and air quality was back to normal in Ravalli County. Calf prices were below some of the prices that were contracted earlier in the spring. Some producers were having difficulty finding buyers for their calves. Conditions remained dry in Roosevelt County, and producers were giving supplemental feed to livestock. Northern Wibaux County received rain, but northwestern and southwestern areas remained dry. Producers were shipping livestock earlier than usual, and supplemental feeding has been underway since August.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Alfalfa hay				
2 nd cutting harvested	90	87	94	NA
Barley				
Harvested.....	95	93	94	95
Canola				
Harvested.....	81	79	76	NA
Corn				
Harvested for grain	2	--	14	9
Harvested for silage	27	20	41	43
Dry edible beans				
Harvested.....	96	86	93	NA
Flaxseed				
Harvested.....	61	59	93	NA
Lentils				
Harvested.....	94	89	NA	NA
Oats				
Harvested.....	81	79	79	NA
Other hay				
2 nd cutting harvested	85	67	79	86
Safflower				
Coloring.....	80	61	81	NA
Harvested.....	51	31	31	48
Winter wheat				
Planted.....	39	23	31	30
Emerged	4	NA	--	4
Cattle and calves				
Moved from pasture	27	25	35	27
Sheep and lambs				
Moved from pasture	14	13	32	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.....	4.9	4.8	5.1	5.9
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short	19	19	38	35
Short	46	55	39	37
Adequate	35	26	23	26
Surplus	--	--	--	2
Subsoil moisture				
Very short	27	30	56	40
Short	40	46	29	35
Adequate	33	24	15	24
Surplus	--	--	--	1

NA – not available
 (–) – zero

CROP, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous week (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Corn				
Very poor	--	1	1	5
Poor	8	8	13	11
Fair	40	38	20	23
Good	50	50	57	52
Excellent	2	3	9	9
Pasture and range				
Very poor	36	27	10	26
Poor	26	30	15	22
Fair	31	36	27	24
Good	6	6	41	25
Excellent	1	1	7	3
Safflower				
Very poor	3	2	--	NA
Poor	4	5	--	NA
Fair	58	59	32	NA
Good	34	33	68	NA
Excellent	1	1	--	NA

¹Current conditions for Sugarbeets are available using the QuickStats on-line database at: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/

NA – not available

(--) – zero