

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 MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2018

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Low temperatures and deep snow were widespread throughout Montana for the month of February, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Topsoil moisture conditions were 69 percent adequate to surplus which is below last year's 85 percent. Subsoil moisture conditions are 57 percent adequate to surplus which is below last year's 82 percent. Reporters in Northwestern areas of the state welcomed colder temperatures in order to firm up the ground before calving gets underway. However, reporters in central areas of the state were concerned that the ground was not frozen deeply enough, noting concerns that run off may not be captured in pits or reservoirs once conditions begin to thaw. Reporters noted that heavy snow cover prevented them from confirming the condition of their winter wheat, but they suspected little to no wind or frost damage due to the heavy snow cover. Winter freeze and wind damage to winter wheat remains low with 85 percent of reporters observing no freeze & drought damage, and 85 percent reporting no wind damage. Winter wheat snow coverage for the state is rated 79 percent good to excellent compared with 26 percent at this time last year. Winter wheat condition is rated 54 percent good to excellent, compared with 51 percent last year. Grazing accessibility was limited with 72 percent of grazing lands reported as inaccessible or closed, and 22 percent rated as difficult. Livestock producers are providing supplemental feed at similar rates as the previous year at this time with 100 percent of cattle and 99 percent of sheep being fed. Reporters noted that feed stores were depleting quickly with some ranchers selling cattle due to the long winter and low hay stocks following the 2017 drought.

A monthly report will be released for March on Monday, March 26, 2018.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved.....	3	NA	8	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	100	96	99	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambled.....	2	NA	6	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	99	98	100	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK AND SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current week	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	8	7	1	NA
Short.....	23	21	14	NA
Adequate.....	47	64	82	NA
Surplus.....	22	8	3	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	14	9	2	NA
Short.....	29	30	16	NA
Adequate.....	45	54	77	NA
Surplus.....	12	7	5	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Grazing accessibility				
Open.....	6	24	59	NA
Difficult.....	22	38	20	NA
Closed.....	72	38	21	NA
Winter wheat				
Very poor.....	2	--	1	NA
Poor.....	3	3	6	NA
Fair.....	41	31	42	NA
Good.....	46	58	45	NA
Excellent.....	8	8	6	
Winter wheat – wind damage				
None.....	85	86	67	NA
Light.....	12	12	24	NA
Moderate.....	3	2	8	NA
Heavy.....	--	--	1	NA
Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage				
None.....	85	85	65	NA
Light.....	11	12	25	NA
Moderate.....	3	3	8	NA
Heavy.....	1	--	2	NA
Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover				
Very poor.....	3	6	9	NA
Poor.....	8	12	36	NA
Fair.....	10	24	29	NA
Good.....	34	38	14	NA
Excellent.....	45	20	12	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

Montana’s weather data can be accessed at the following:

Montana’s weather data was not available at time of publication. A link will be provided as soon as data becomes available.