

# MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
**MONTANA FIELD OFFICE**  
 10 West 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 3100, Helena, MT 59626  
 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Contact: Eric Sommer  
 (800) 835-2612

## CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION WEEK ENDING APRIL 1, 2018

**AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY:** Montana continues to wait for spring conditions to arrive, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. High temperatures were recorded in Billings and Townsend at 62 degrees. The low temperature for the week was recorded in Saco at -14 degrees. Precipitation in the form of snowfall was reported at 78 weather stations. The highest recorded precipitation for the week was in Broadus with 0.96 of an inch of moisture. Topsoil moisture conditions were 87 percent adequate to surplus which is below last year's 93 percent. Subsoil moisture conditions are 65 percent adequate to surplus which is well below last year's 87 percent. Reporters noted that conditions remained too wet for field work throughout the state, with snowy conditions reported in much of the state. The western portion of the state reported that perennial grasses were returning and with it early cattle grazing. Cattle receiving supplemental feed was reported as 96 percent this week, compared to 98 percent in the previous report. Calving was reported to be going well in most of the state with the exception being Phillips county in which low temperatures and snow 12-18" deep resulted in high calf mortality. Calving progress was reported at 40 percent complete compared to 14 percent in the previous report, and 46 percent at this time last year. The remaining snow has made rating the progress and condition of the winter wheat crop difficult in many areas, according to reporters. Winter wheat was reported with 3 percent of the crop breaking dormancy, significantly behind last year's progress report of 53 percent for the same week. Fifty-eight percent of the winter wheat crop was rated in good to excellent condition.

### CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy.....	3	--	53	NA
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved.....	40	14	46	42
Receiving supplemental feed .....	96	98	90	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambed.....	17	5	42	32
Receiving supplemental feed .....	98	100	94	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

**DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK AND SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION**

	Current week	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
Days suitable for field work.....	0.6	NA	3.2	3.7
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	2	2	--	9
Short.....	11	12	7	20
Adequate.....	46	52	82	61
Surplus.....	41	34	11	10
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	13	11	3	11
Short.....	22	21	10	22
Adequate.....	51	50	74	57
Surplus.....	14	18	13	10

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.....	21	16	77	64
Difficult.....	36	27	15	18
Closed.....	43	57	8	18
Pasture and range				
Very poor.....	23	NA	2	9
Poor.....	39	NA	10	22
Fair.....	23	NA	31	39
Good.....	15	NA	40	25
Excellent.....	--	NA	17	5
Winter wheat				
Very poor.....	--	2	--	1
Poor.....	3	2	5	6
Fair.....	39	31	32	33
Good.....	56	48	58	50
Excellent.....	2	17	5	10

NA – not available

(--) – zero

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

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Montana/Publications/Crop\\_Progress\\_&\\_Condition/2018/MT-Weather-04012018.pdf](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Montana/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/2018/MT-Weather-04012018.pdf)