

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 3, 2022

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Warm winter conditions continued into the beginning of April and minimal moisture was received across the State of Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Much of the State received 0.2 inches or less of moisture this week. Temperatures were 2 to 5 degrees warmer than average for this time of year. The lack of moisture and warm temperatures brought little change to drought conditions. According to the United States Drought Monitor for March 31, 2022, 87.4 percent of the State continues to experience drought conditions, unchanged from the previous report. The amount of land rated as abnormally dry was 2.1 percent, compared to 2.0 percent at the end of March. Moderate drought was present across 2.8 percent of the State, compared to 2.9 percent at the end of March. Severe drought conditions increased slightly from 30.0 percent at the end of March to 30.1 percent of the State. Extreme drought conditions decreased slightly to cover 52.4 percent of the State, compared to 52.5 percent at the end of March. Conditions in Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties continue to be dry despite some moisture received during the past week. There were similar reports of dry conditions in Valley County. Despite rain forecasted for the upcoming week, high winds are likely to quickly dry out any moisture that is received. Reporters in Powder River and Wibaux Counties reported dry, windy conditions. Many producers in Wibaux County have applied for the ELAP Hay Transportation program. Without significant moisture received in April, grass is expected to be very short, and many producers will begin selling more livestock.

Spring planting is underway. Barley planted was estimated at 2 percent complete, compared to 2 percent complete this time last year. Spring wheat planted was reported at 3 percent complete, compared to 1 percent complete this time last year. Winter wheat was reported with 34 percent of the crop breaking dormancy, slightly behind the previous year at 36 percent. Topsoil moisture levels were reported as 55 percent very short, 41 percent short, and 4 percent adequate, compared with 64 percent very short, 32 percent short, and 4 percent adequate on the previous report. Subsoil moisture levels were reported as 48 percent very short, 41 percent short, and 11 percent adequate, compared with 57 percent very short, 32 percent short, and 11 percent adequate on the previous report. Winter wheat conditions were rated as 10 percent good to excellent compared to 57 percent this time last year. The warm weather continues to be beneficial for calving and lambing. Calving was reported at 50 percent of cows calved, compared to 47 percent this time last year. Lambing was reported at 45 percent of ewes lambbed, compared to 32 percent this time last year.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Barley				
Planted.....	2	NA	2	1
Oats				
Planted.....	1	NA	--	--
Spring wheat				
Planted.....	3	NA	1	--
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy	34	15	36	30
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved.....	50	35	47	46
Receiving supplemental feed	91	97	93	93
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambbed	45	30	32	36
Receiving supplemental feed	99	99	95	95

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	6.9	NA	6.3	2.9
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	55	64	22	5
Short	41	32	54	16
Adequate.....	4	4	24	65
Surplus.....	--	--	--	14
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	48	57	19	6
Short	41	32	52	20
Adequate.....	11	11	29	65
Surplus.....	--	--	--	9

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	65	59	85	58
Difficult	16	14	7	20
Closed.....	19	27	8	22
Pasture and range				
Very poor	64	73	40	13
Poor	27	21	24	18
Fair.....	7	5	34	34
Good	2	1	2	28
Excellent	--	--	--	7
Winter wheat				
Very poor	15	14	5	2
Poor	22	25	10	9
Fair.....	53	50	28	29
Good	10	11	52	53
Excellent	--	--	5	7

NA – not available

(--) – zero