

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 OCTOBER 2, 2022

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: This week brought trace amounts of moisture and unseasonably warm temperatures to Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. The majority of the State received 0.5 inches or less of rainfall. Counties in the center of the State, including portions of Cascade, Judith Basin, Lewis and Clark, and Meagher Counties received over an inch of rainfall, with localized areas in Cascade County receiving over 5 inches of rainfall. Although temperatures are cooling off, temperatures were above average for this time of year. Average daily temperatures ranged from 6 to 9 degrees warmer than average for most of the State. Entering October, rainfall totals for most of the State are 3 inches below average. Drought conditions in the State continue to worsen as dry conditions persist. According to the United States Drought Monitor for September 29, 2022, 12.4 percent of the State is now experiencing extreme drought conditions – an increase of 8.8 percentage points from 3.6 percent last week. The amount of land rated as abnormally dry was 17.1 percent, a decrease from 21.8 percent last week. Moderate drought increased 16.1 percent – from 27.9 percent last week to 32.4 percent this week. Severe drought decreased to cover 32.7 percent of the State, compared to 37.9 percent last week. Overall, 94.6 percent of the State continues to experience drought conditions, compared to 91.2 percent last week.

Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties were dry for most of the week but received some moisture over the weekend. Irrigated pastures are reported to be doing well. In Ravalli County, the rainfall received over the weekend reduced the threat of wildfires; however, irrigation water is running very short in the county. Valley County received some rainfall this week, but conditions remain very dry. There are reports of multiple crops being tested for use as alternative forage – including wheat hay, oats, and pea stubble. Due to dry conditions in the county, winter wheat has not been seeded and if no moisture is received soon, many producers will not be able to plant winter crops. Golden Valley and Musselshell Counties received between 1.25 and 3 inches of rain over the weekend, while Roosevelt County received no significant moisture and is now experiencing severe to extreme drought conditions according to the United States Drought Monitor. Comments from Prairie County indicated conditions in the county are poor, due to lack of moisture and grasshopper damage. Potato harvest in Broadwater County is progressing, with harvest reported at roughly 75 percent complete. Sugarbeet harvest is now underway, with harvest reported at 5 percent complete, compared to 5 percent complete this time last year. Corn harvested for silage is progressing slightly behind last year, while corn harvested for grain is progressing similarly to last year. Harvest is reported at 60 percent complete for corn harvest for silage, compared to 68 percent this time last year and harvest is reported at 20 percent complete for corn harvested for grain, compared to 21 percent complete this time last year.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous week (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Corn				
Harvested for silage	60	46	68	69
Harvested for grain	20	17	21	14
Safflower				
Harvested	91	89	69	53
Sugarbeets				
Harvested	5	--	5	NA
Winter wheat				
Planted	66	58	51	48
Emerged	31	17	18	13
Cattle and calves				
Moved from pasture	35	30	49	32
Sheep and lambs				
Moved from pasture	41	36	48	32

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	6.5	7.0	4.8
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short	47	53	61	21
Short	40	42	35	31
Adequate	12	5	4	39
Surplus	1	--	--	9
Subsoil moisture				
Very short	53	50	60	25
Short	36	45	34	37
Adequate	11	5	6	33
Surplus	--	--	--	5

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Corn				
Very poor	1	3	14	5
Poor	7	9	33	12
Fair	21	23	21	27
Good	70	62	31	47
Excellent	1	3	1	9
Pasture and range				
Very poor	30	36	68	29
Poor	21	25	23	19
Fair	28	19	9	24
Good	21	20	--	21
Excellent	--	--	--	7
Sugarbeets				
Very poor	1	1	10	4
Poor	1	1	11	8
Fair	20	22	42	30
Good	78	75	35	44
Excellent	--	1	2	14

NA – not available

(--) – zero