



Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup



Cooperating with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
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Week Ending May 18, 2008

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This report can be found on the Internet at www.nass.usda.gov/pa and click on "Pennsylvania Publications."

Poor week for Field Work: Rain and cooler temperatures prevented growth of most crops already in the ground. Very little field work was done in these poor conditions. Farmers are hoping for some sunshine and wind so fields will dry out. Planting is falling behind in some areas but overall crop conditions are good or better. Overall, 2 days were suitable for field work. Principal farm activities included spring plowing, spraying, cutting hay, as well as planting corn, soybeans, potatoes and oats. Eighty-five percent of the plowing has been completed, just 4 percentage points below average. Due to the excessive rainfall and moisture, farmers continued to make other necessary preparations such as equipment maintenance and cleaning barnyards.

PA Topsoil Moisture for Week Ending May 18, 2008

Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
Percent 0	Percent 0	Percent 35	Percent 65

Crops: The state's corn is estimated at 57 percent planted, with 28 percent emerged. Ninety-seven percent of the barley has headed, which is up 15 percentage points from last year and 13 points above average. Twenty percent of the barley has now turned yellow. Seventy-two percent of the state's wheat is in good or excellent condition. Fifty percent of the wheat has headed, which is 15 points higher than last year and 13 points above average. Only 6 percent of the wheat was estimated as poor or very poor. As the remainder of the states oat crop finishes planting, eighty-eight percent has currently emerged. Seventy-four percent of the oats are in good or excellent condition. The state's soybeans are 22 percent planted, which is 14 percentage points lower than last year and 11 points higher than the average. Fifty-one percent of the potatoes have been planted, which is 16 points behind average. The first cutting of alfalfa has begun and shows to be 17 percent completed. Seventy percent of the alfalfa was in good or excellent condition, while 79 percent of the timothy clover was in good or excellent condition. Pennsylvania's fruit continues to progress well. Peaches are now 100 percent in full bloom, with 98 percent in good or excellent condition. The apple crop conditions were estimated to be 100% good or excellent.

Livestock: The excessive rain may have hurt pasture conditions more than improved them. The soil is saturated and conditions can easily decline with livestock already grazing muddy areas. However, pasture conditions are still above average, as 68 percent of the pastures are estimated to be in good or excellent condition. The state's pasture conditions were estimated as follows: 2% very poor, 4% poor, 26% fair, 56% good, and 12% excellent.

U.S. as of May 11, 2008: Heavy rain returned to most of the Midwest during the middle of the week through later in the week. This closed a brief window of opportunity for corn and early season soybean planting.

Wet weather also prevailed across the Plains and much of the South. Rain was beneficial for winter wheat and emerging summer crops on the High Plains, but maintained wet conditions across the east-central and southeastern Plains. In addition, severe thunderstorms caused damaging local wind and hail. The same storm system spawned more than 100 tornadoes. In contrast, mostly dry weather prevailed across the lower Southeast and west of the Rockies. Warm and dry weather promoted crop growth in the Southwest, but increased both irrigation demands and the threat of wildfire activity. Meanwhile in the Northwest, development of winter wheat and the emergence of spring-sown crops continued to lag the normal pace due to persistently cool conditions since mid-March. Weekly temperatures ranged from as much as 10 degrees F below normal in the north-central U.S. to at least 5 degrees F above normal in a few locations across the Deep South from southern Texas to the southern Atlantic States.

Corn: With 51 percent of the crop planted nationally, corn growers were 20 points behind last year and 26 points behind the 5-year average pace. When compared with the previous year's pace, all corn-producing states were planting at the same pace or behind, except Michigan, where growers were 18 points ahead. Eleven percent of the corn crop in the nation had emerged by the end of the week, which was 21 and 22 points behind last year and normal, respectively. As cooler than usual temperatures persisted across northern and western corn producing areas, emergence was delayed in all states when compared with last year. When compared with the usual pace elsewhere, all states were behind, except Colorado. In North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas, more than half of the planted corn acreage had emerged.

Soybeans: Producers planted eleven percent of the intended soybean acreage by the end of the week, 15 and 18 points behind last year and normal, respectively. In other areas, the percent of acreage planted ranged from 2 to 32 percent. Producers in all states remained behind last year's pace, except Michigan, and behind the 5-year average pace, except Louisiana and Michigan.

Winter Wheat: Thirty-six percent of the wheat acreage reached the heading stage by the end of the week, 11 points behind last year and 17 points behind the 5-year average. In most states, development was behind the pace of last year or normal. Condition rating of the crop remained 47 percent good and excellent, the same as last week.

Small Grains: Eighty-three percent of the intended acreage of oats in the nation was planted by week's end, 6 and 7 points behind last year and the 5-year average pace, respectively. Oat planting in all states, except North Dakota and Pennsylvania, was behind or at the same pace of last year and usual. Pennsylvania producers had planted 96 percent of their intended acreage, ahead of last year and normal by 11 and 7 points, respectively.

Weather Data For Week Ending May 18, 2008

Station	Last Week Weather Summary						April 1 - May 18, 2008					
	Temperature				Precipitation		Precipitation			GDD Base 50F		Base 40F
	High	Low	Average	DFN	Total	Days	Total	DFN	Days	Total	DFN	Total
Northwest												
Erie	67	39	54	-4	1.01	4	4.59	-0.57	21	294	148	671
Franklin	73	36	53	-5	1.27	6	5.50	-0.16	23	211	66	594
Meadville	68	40	52	-4	1.32	6	5.11	-0.30	21	234	114	617
Mercer	69	35	52	-6	1.26	5	5.76	0.32	23	205	53	594
Springboro	68	33	51	-7	0.92	6	5.55	0.59	22	195	38	564
Warren	72	27	50	-7	1.23	6	5.71	-0.03	23	182	47	541
North Central												
Bradford Region	68	32	48	-5	1.24	6	4.32	-1.27	23	132	50	446
Emporium	76	37	53	-2	1.62	6	4.81	-1.10	23	192	95	567
Kane	71	31	48	-5	1.53	6	4.75	-1.16	22	94	15	400
Laporte	67	37	51	-7	1.85	6	5.99	0.46	27	171	16	507
Lock Haven	75	38	53	-5	2.02	6	6.40	1.25	23	245	70	646
Port Allegany	70	34	50	-5	1.11	6	4.14	-1.04	20	129	23	462
Renovo	76	39	54	-4	2.44	6	6.78	1.63	23	250	75	645
Ridgway	73	34	49	-6	1.80	6	5.20	-0.71	22	130	33	468
Stevenson Dam	75	37	52	-3	2.22	6	6.08	0.17	22	202	105	572
Towanda	76	36	52	-5	1.22	5	4.99	0.09	22	191	32	555
Wellsboro	69	34	49	-5	1.40	6	5.09	0.91	24	137	53	459
Williamsport	75	40	56	-4	1.74	6	5.46	0.06	23	307	83	732
Northeast												
Hawley	75	33	52	-4	1.24	3	6.05	0.31	19	158	52	495
Wilkes-Barre/Sc	75	35	54	-5	1.39	5	5.05	0.00	21	283	92	662
Susquehanna	75	36	53	-3	0.92	4	5.21	-0.73	21	166	72	525
West Central												
Butler	71	37	51	-7	1.23	6	5.63	0.14	28	189	20	583
New Castle	74	37	54	-5	1.03	6	4.82	-0.16	25	247	88	655
Slippery Rock	72	36	52	-5	1.38	5	5.36	0.18	20	202	61	614
Central												
Altoona/Blair	70	33	52	-7	1.75	6	7.46	2.23	25	266	60	653
DuBois	70	37	50	-8	2.28	6	5.62	0.04	26	233	87	593
Lewistown	76	39	54	-7	2.36	6	10.03	4.75	20	248	3	643
Middletown	75	44	57	-5	2.43	6	7.34	1.62	20	331	46	767
Prince Gallitzi	72	33	50	-7	1.52	6	4.99	-2.00	23	164	34	528
Selinsgrove	74	40	54	-6	1.55	6	6.56	1.21	20	232	31	627
State College	73	34	53	-6	2.06	6	8.19	3.25	22	269	81	665
East Central												
Allentown-Bethel	75	36	55	-6	1.34	5	5.95	-0.04	17	275	39	682
Lehighton	75	39	55	-6	1.37	6	5.78	-0.06	26	238	14	630
Matamoras	76	34	53	-6	1.24	5	6.11	-0.39	20	168	-15	530
Mt_Pocono	70	35	51	-3	1.63	6	5.60	-1.16	22	149	71	477
Southwest												
Pittsburgh/Alle	69	41	53	-6	1.70	5	7.30	1.62	23	348	140	773
Derry	70	37	53	-6	2.09	6	8.73	3.14	24	266	94	667
Myersdale	66	35	49	-10	2.76	6	8.46	1.98	26	141	-26	486
Mount Pleasant	68	41	52	-4	1.89	6	7.47	0.97	22	260	126	674
Pittsburgh Intl	69	38	53	-7	1.10	5	4.88	-0.31	21	336	107	760
Connellsville	70	40	53	-8	1.79	6	8.39	2.12	27	320	80	746
Waynesburg	70	39	53	-6	2.36	6	6.71	0.96	21	261	70	671
South Central												
Biglerville	76	41	57	-6	3.49	6	9.56	4.03	21	305	21	718
Everett	72	36	51	-8	2.39	6	11.51	6.00	22	210	19	588
Hanover	75	37	55	-7	2.76	4	9.55	4.02	23	286	2	694
Harrisburg_AP	76	44	57	-6	1.89	5	5.62	-0.10	16	343	53	781
South Mountain	71	36	52	-8	3.09	5	11.18	5.95	25	204	4	573
York	77	37	57	-6	2.61	6	7.97	2.25	23	341	48	770
Southeast												
Green Lane	75	40	56	-4	1.66	5	5.53	-0.58	17	284	65	707
Hamburg	76	42	57	-2	1.11	6	5.08	-1.59	20	297	125	720
West_Chester	78	37	55	-7	1.71	5	5.86	-0.54	19	269	-7	680
Lancaster	74	38	56	-6	1.40	6	4.87	-0.76	19	286	47	702
Neshaminy Falls	76	38	56	-5	1.62	4	6.44	-0.23	19	305	73	733
New Holland	77	41	56	-5	1.15	5	5.80	0.17	18	315	76	736
Philadelphia	77	45	59	-5	1.52	4	5.34	-0.47	19	405	87	860
Philadelphia NE	79	46	61	-3	1.71	5	5.59	-0.22	20	442	124	900
Reading	77	38	57	-5	1.04	6	4.65	-1.70	21	323	102	747
Valley Forge Na	76	36	56	-7	1.67	4	7.45	1.25	21	276	-28	708
Willow Grove	75	43	57	-4	1.85	5	5.54	-1.13	19	327	95	761

DFN = Departure from normal (using 1961-90 normals period).

Precipitation (rainfall or melted snow or ice) and pan evaporation in inches.

Precipitation days = days with precipitation of .01 inch or more.

Air temperatures in degrees fahrenheit.

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Internet Reporters Comments, By County:

Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Conservation District (CD), farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.

ADAMS COUNTY, Judy A Behney (FSA) - Adams County had a very wet week of weather and also not too much sunshine. Beginning of week we started out with rain and flooding due to the ground being so saturated with over 2 inches of rainfall. Morning temps varied 40 to 50 degrees. Daytime temperatures got into 70's on Tues-Wed-Thurs but only in 50's Friday and then about 60 on Saturday. Sunshine was received on Wednesday and Thursday to brighten those days but then again on Friday we received another 1 1/2 to 2 inches of rainfall with some sun on Saturday at times and some more rainfall on Saturday evening and again Sunday until about lunchtime. The sun made an appearance again Sunday afternoon. The soil conditions are very wet in our county causing major concern to our producers about how they are going to get their crops planted and also how are they going to get the hay made.

Wheat and barley continue to head and also some is lodged because of all of the rainfall we have been receiving. We are just hoping that some rainfall will be saved for later in the summer when crops really need moisture to continue in higher temperature months. Haylage continues to be made at a very slow pace due to weather conditions. Dry hay has not been cut yet but will soon be when weather changes. Corn is not getting enough sun and ground is staying cool. Some fields are laying in water which is a concern whether the corn will emerge or rot due to excessive moisture levels in soil.

Fruit crops continue to be doing fine. The wet weather makes spraying conditions a little slippery in the orchards which are on slopes in most of the county. Strawberries are turning red and are being harvested and more the next few weeks. Sweet corn is about the same as field corn due to cool soil temperatures and excessive moisture in the soil are causing some concerns for sweet corn already planted.

Overall Adams County is very damp and could use a good week of sunshine and warm temperatures to help our producers get to their field work.

ADAMS COUNTY, Thomas Kerr - Cool wet week prevented any significant field work. Rainfall this spring has been more than adequate, and now we need a few warm sunny days to help dry the surface so that the rest of the corn and soybeans can be planted. Very little forage made this week. Fruit is still looking good.

BUCKS COUNTY, Michael Fournier (EXT) - A couple inches of rain over the past 10 days has kept most planters and drills on the sidelines. Early corn and beans have emerged. Some beans required a rotary hoe due to soil crusting. Orchard grass is starting to get old, but with the wet soils, hay won't be made for a while.

CAMBRIA COUNTY, Dolly Little (FSA) - The week started out cold and wet and ended cold and wet with snow showers on Monday. The only dry day was on Tuesday, just as the sun would come out another rain shower would go through the county. One minute the sun was shining and the rains were pouring down. The only work that could be done last week would have been working inside on the equipment. The ground is saturated with water and will take some wind and heat to dry out before crops can be planted.

CENTRE COUNTY, Dick Decker - Wet week, 2 3/4 inches in my gauge. Limited field work was completed; some rye and grass being harvested high moisture. We need a week of sun shine.

LACKAWANNA COUNTY, John Esslinger (EXT) - Cool temperatures are holding back planting on sensitive vegetable like tomatoes and peppers. Onion and cole crop planting is on schedule.

LANCASTER COUNTY, Axel Linde - This has been a good weekend for lots of rain. Farmers are anxious for a string of dry weather to harvest hay. The early no-till corn is standing nicely. Some soybeans are emerging. Two farmers have planted no-till tobacco. Some pastures are super thick and are past their prime for harvesting high-quality forage. Other pastures are over-grazed already.

LANCASTER COUNTY, Burell Whitworth Jr (NRCS) - No-tilled tobacco planting started this week. Fields that are no-tilled offer more stable planting conditions than conventional tilled fields. Rain and cool weather continue to slow planting crops this week.

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, Brian Fulmer - Good working conditions, except for Friday. Powdery mildew is present on some of the wheat. Potatoes are starting to emerge. Second planting of sweet corn looks poor. Too many weeds present in fields. Apricots are doing well. It has been too cold to transplant veggies.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY, Viola Pflieger - Ground is saturated again. This past week we have had over 1.75 inches of rain. I guess we must have prayed too much last July and August for rain.

POTTER COUNTY, Dave Stratton (FSA) - Some corn planting completed but heavy rains have slowed progress for the last part of the week. Some haylage was also made this week.

SNYDER COUNTY, William C. Sheaffer - It was a very poor week for field activities. Rainfall in excess of two inches put the damper on planting. The heavy rainfall coupled with below average temperatures is causing slow plant emergence. The winter grains and the hay crop look good at this point.

TIOGA COUNTY, Clair W Zerby - Spraying oats and planting corn. Have been setting up pasture lots for rotational grazing. Wheat is making excellent growth, with a deep green color, but some winter damage.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY, John Lohr (FSA) - Too wet to do any field work this week. Rainfall of nearly 5 inches since May 8 will make fields too wet until at least late next week. Cool temperatures have slowed the growth of newly planted crops. Alfalfa is ready for harvest as soon as growers can get into the fields.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY, Tom Sierzega (NRCS) - Extremely wet and very cool has slowed field work to a standstill. It rained nearly every day with 4+ inches of rain. Temperatures were well below normal. Some concern about seed germination of planted corn and soybeans due to extremely wet, cool conditions.

PA Crop Progress for Week Ending May 18, 2008

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Spring plowing	85	85	89
Corn, planted	57	71	70
Corn, emerged	28	30	34
Barley, heading or headed	97	82	84
Barley, turning yellow	20	0	1
Wheat, heading or headed	50	35	37
Oats, emerged	88	60	71
Soybeans, planted	22	36	33
Soybeans, emerged	9	4	6
Tobacco, transplanted	14	7	12
Potatoes, planted	51	68	67
Alfalfa, 1st cutting	17	5	19
Peaches, in full bloom or past	100	100	100

PA Crop Condition for Week Ending May 18, 2008

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Corn	0	10	24	47	19
Wheat	5	1	22	51	21
Oats	1	3	22	70	4
Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures stand	1	5	24	58	12
Timothy clover stand	0	3	18	65	14
Pasture	2	4	26	56	12
Peaches	0	0	2	53	45
Apples	0	0	0	51	49

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