WISCONSIN CROP PROGRESS

Compiled by the Wisconsin Field Office of
USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service

December 2008

REVIEW OF THE 2008 CROP YEAR

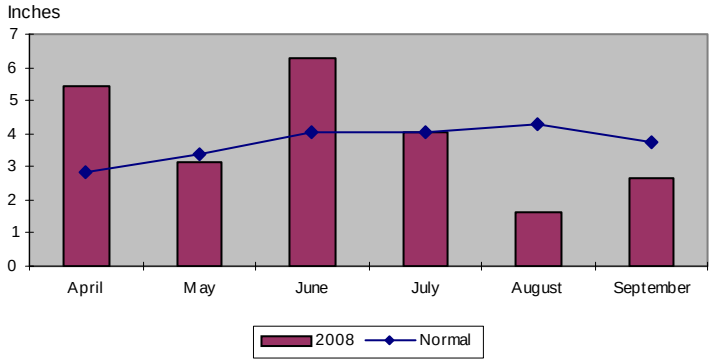
2008 - From Too Much Rain to Not Enough

The 2008 growing season started slowly. Cool weather and frequent precipitation in April left many fields saturated, delaying planting and spring tillage. The month of May was significantly colder than normal. Although planting moved forward at a steady pace, cold temperatures hampered crop emergence. In the first half of June, severe storms, with heavy rain and high winds, prevented fieldwork and left standing water in many fields in Central and Southern Wisconsin. Twenty-two counties were declared a state of disaster due to long periods of standing water in fields. As the fields began to dry out, crop conditions improved, with sprayers hitting the fields to curb the rapid weed growth. Crops were rated mostly good to excellent from late June through most of August. By mid-August, producers were hoping for rain and warmth. Lack of moisture and cool evening temperatures caused crop development to remain behind normal. Spotty rain showers in late August and early September were not enough in many areas to prevent stress to corn, soybeans, alfalfa, and pastures. Warm weather in the fall gave crop development a final boost and allowed crops to mature because of a late hard frost.

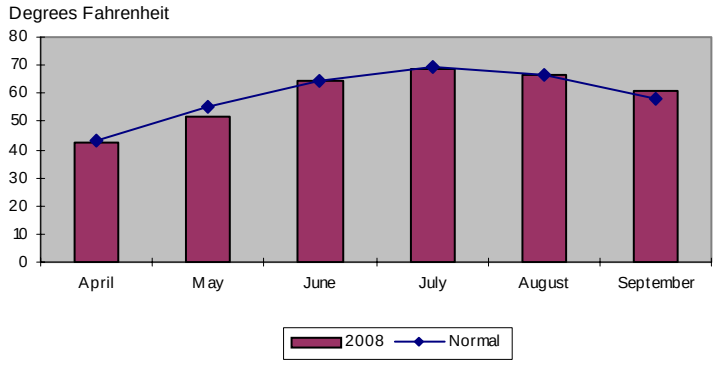
Statewide temperatures from June to September were 0.3 degrees above normal in 2008, making this the fourth straight growing season with above normal temperatures. Temperatures in June, July, and August were all slightly below normal, while September was 2.6 degrees above normal.

Precipitation and soil moisture varied greatly across the state with total precipitation for April through September at 23.19 inches. This was 1.61 inches more than the total for 2007. Total precipitation in the northern third of the state was 2.7 inches below normal for April through September, while the central and southern thirds of the state saw above normal precipitation for the same time period. The southern third of the state averaged 7.0 inches above normal for April through September precipitation.

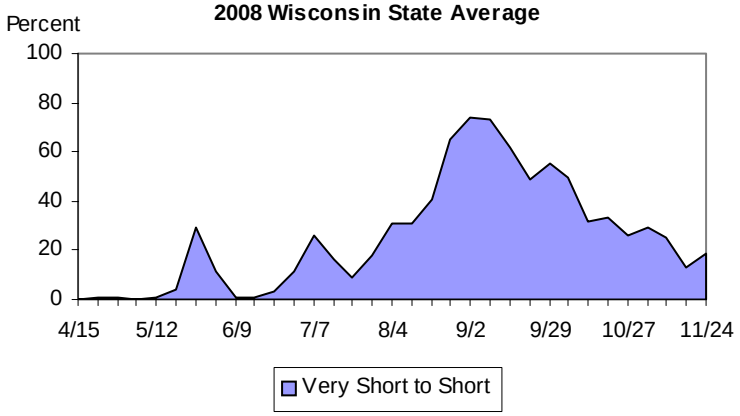
Monthly Rainfall
2008 Wisconsin State Average



Monthly Temperature
2008 Wisconsin State Average



Soil Moisture Ratings
2008 Wisconsin State Average



MONTHLY TEMPERATURES: 2008 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL*

District	April 1/		May 1/		June 1/		July 1/		August 1/		September 1/	
	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal
	Degrees Fahrenheit											
NW	40.0	41.7	50.3	54.4	62.1	63.1	67.5	68.1	65.5	65.9	59.1	56.6
NC	39.1	40.4	48.8	53.2	61.3	61.8	66.4	66.4	64.0	64.2	57.9	55.3
NE	41.7	41.3	50.1	53.6	62.5	62.5	67.2	67.0	64.5	64.8	59.1	56.0
WC	43.4	45.2	53.6	57.4	65.7	66.4	70.5	70.8	67.4	68.3	61.7	59.3
C	44.5	44.5	53.0	56.7	65.5	65.8	69.7	70.2	66.7	67.7	61.5	59.0
EC	44.2	42.8	51.7	54.6	64.6	64.1	69.3	69.5	67.7	67.9	62.1	59.8
SW	45.8	46.1	54.8	57.9	67.0	67.2	71.0	71.4	68.0	69.0	63.0	60.5
SC	47.1	45.8	54.4	57.8	67.6	67.2	71.1	71.3	68.6	68.9	63.4	60.6
SE	46.6	45.0	52.4	56.3	66.3	66.0	70.0	71.2	68.6	69.4	63.4	61.4
STATE	42.7	43.2	51.7	55.5	64.2	64.5	68.8	69.1	66.3	66.9	60.7	58.1

1/Preliminary estimates, 2008. *Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1971-2000. Source: State Climatologist

MONTHLY RAINFALL: 2008 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL*

District	April 1/		May 1/		June 1/		July 1/		August 1/		September 1/	
	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal	2008	Normal
	Inches											
NW	4.54	2.39	3.43	3.29	4.44	4.19	3.22	4.29	2.14	4.44	3.12	3.89
NC	4.22	2.40	3.43	3.31	3.35	4.01	3.08	4.06	1.53	4.36	2.71	4.03
NE	4.40	2.65	3.58	3.29	3.84	3.69	3.82	3.70	0.62	3.81	2.03	3.74
WC	6.14	3.05	3.39	3.69	5.47	4.24	4.75	4.45	2.24	4.54	2.08	3.82
C	6.30	3.02	2.91	3.52	7.15	3.88	4.95	4.13	1.41	4.22	2.08	3.72
EC	5.14	2.81	1.59	2.95	7.62	3.51	3.90	3.38	1.61	3.86	1.82	3.42
SW	7.85	3.55	3.60	3.60	10.54	4.35	4.98	4.33	1.63	4.46	2.81	3.42
SC	6.34	3.47	2.42	3.40	11.20	4.19	5.21	4.07	1.75	4.24	3.55	3.51
SE	5.27	3.48	2.30	3.13	9.83	3.76	4.15	3.82	1.32	4.22	4.65	3.48
STATE	5.41	2.86	3.11	3.37	6.28	4.02	4.07	4.07	1.64	4.27	2.68	3.74

1/Preliminary estimates, 2008. *Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1971-2000. Source: State Climatologist

COMPARATIVE TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION DATA

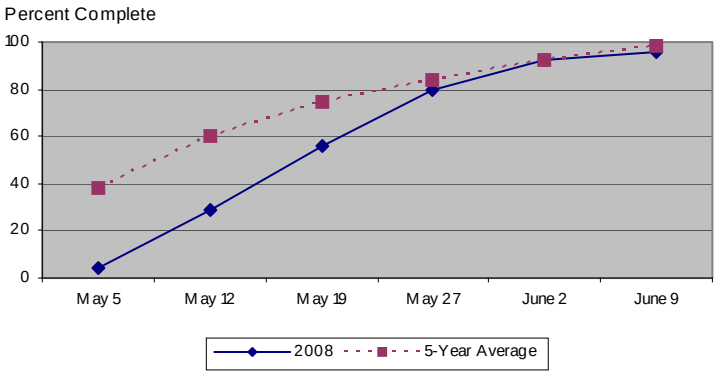
District	Average Temperature						Total Precipitation					
	June - September						April - September					
	Normal*	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 1/	Normal*	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008 1/
	Degrees Fahrenheit						Inches					
NW	63.4	61.7	65.8	64.6	65.0	63.6	22.49	21.99	17.44	15.91	18.55	20.98
NC	61.9	61.2	65.6	63.3	64.1	62.4	22.17	19.96	16.97	18.60	17.17	18.32
NE	62.6	61.7	66.2	63.5	64.9	63.3	20.88	18.09	16.79	20.84	14.58	18.29
WC	66.2	65.0	68.7	66.9	67.8	66.3	23.79	27.90	21.73	21.61	25.48	24.07
C	65.7	64.4	68.8	66.1	67.0	65.9	22.49	24.56	18.27	19.77	21.83	24.80
EC	65.3	64.0	68.7	66.1	66.9	65.9	19.93	21.86	15.04	18.46	16.81	21.68
SW	67.0	65.5	69.7	67.3	68.3	67.3	23.71	27.66	20.08	25.62	33.39	31.41
SC	67.0	66.0	70.3	67.4	68.6	67.7	22.88	25.19	16.78	26.62	28.78	30.47
SE	67.0	65.5	70.1	67.3	68.2	67.1	21.89	24.04	15.06	22.90	24.99	27.52
STATE	64.7	63.4	67.7	65.4	66.3	65.0	22.33	23.12	17.79	20.46	21.58	23.19

1/Preliminary estimates, 2008. * Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1971-2000. Source: State Climatologist

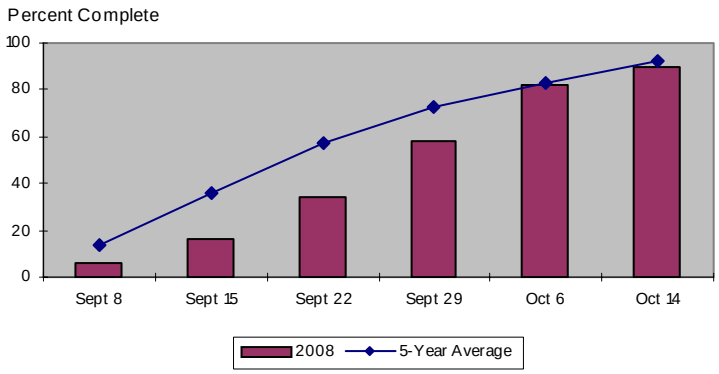
CORN

In the first week of June, corn planting was reported at 96 percent complete with emergence at 84 percent. The cooler temperatures hindered corn progress, and corn on heavy, wet soils was in poor condition. Corn progressed slowly through mid-July, but warmer weather later in the month promoted growth and better color. Silage chopping got underway in early September, later than usual. Reporters were worried that corn would not be mature enough if there was an early frost. Luckily, most areas remained warmer than normal throughout most of September and October, and many areas didn't receive a hard frost until November. As a result, corn for grain lacked good drying weather. Corn yields were variable, and some had lower yields than last year due to dry weather in their area.

Corn Planted
2008 Wisconsin State Average



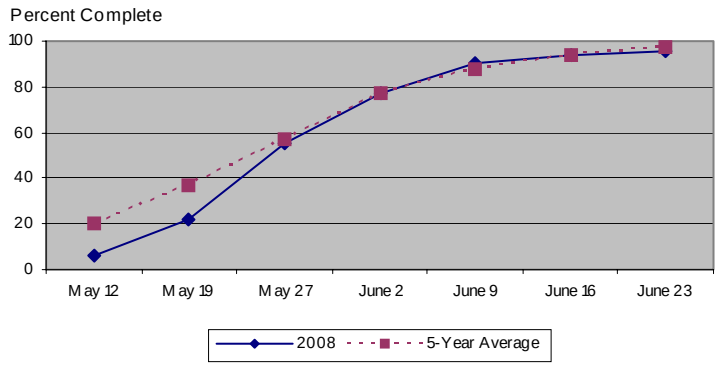
Corn Harvest for Silage
2008 Wisconsin State Average



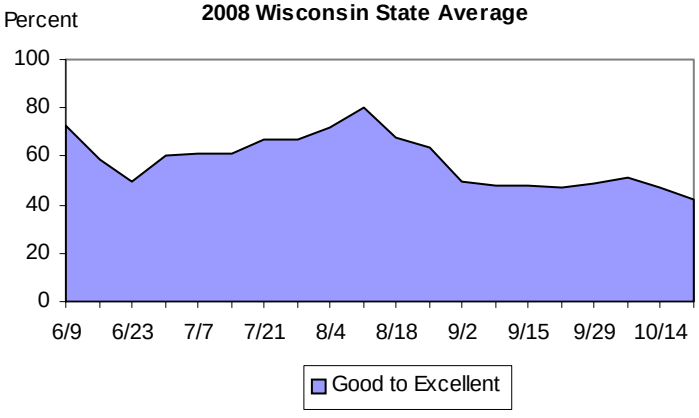
SOYBEANS

Soybean planting was delayed due to cool, wet conditions. Planting was 6 percent complete as of May 11, 2008, below both 2007 and the 5-year average for that time of year, and the slowest rate since 1996. By May 25th, growers had nearly caught up with the average planting rate; and thereafter, planting progress remained close to average. Emergence was slow through mid-June due to cool soil temperatures. Soybeans did well in July with adequate soil moisture. Dry August weather stressed the crop in many areas, and there were reports of light or empty pods. Harvest began in mid to late September with varying yields throughout the state. Many producers noted yields were lower than last year due to the lack of precipitation in late summer. Harvest wrapped up by the beginning of November.

Soybeans Planted
2008 Wisconsin State Average



Soybean Condition
2008 Wisconsin State Average



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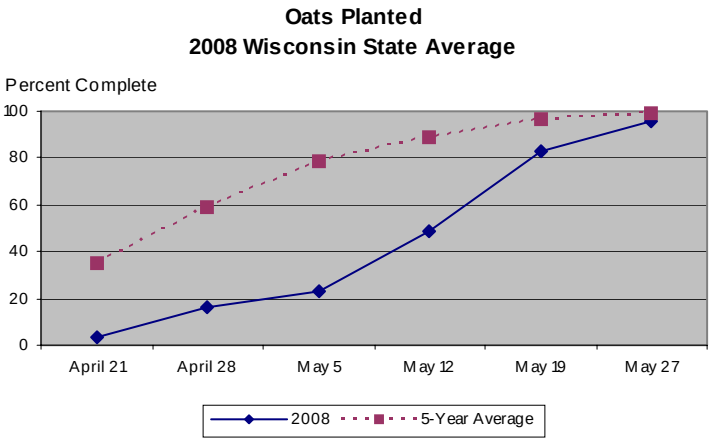
SMALL GRAINS

Very few oats were reported planted as of April 13, 2008. Cold temperatures and spotty areas of frost remained in the ground. Some areas put off planting until May due to cool, wet conditions. By May 4th, planting was at 23 percent complete with 10 percent emerged. This was well below 2007's average of 72 percent complete and 19 percent emerged. By July 13th, some farmers were harvesting oats for forage. Both oats and winter wheat were rated mostly good to excellent throughout July and early August. Oats harvested for grain wrapped up at the end of August with excellent yields.

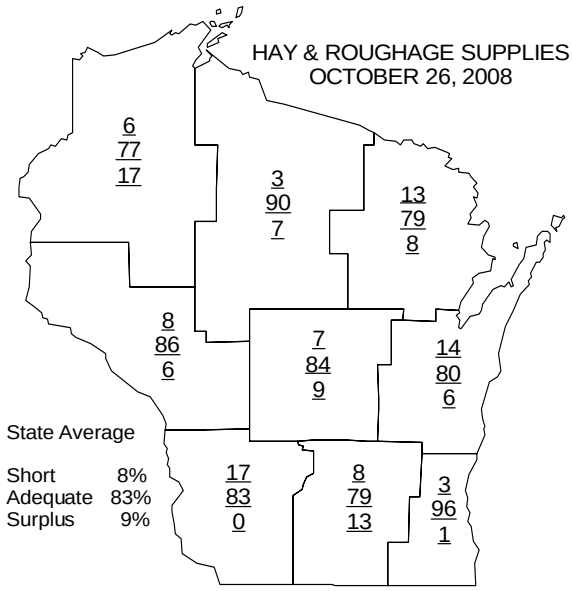
Winter wheat had minimal winter freeze damage. By mid-May most winter wheat had greened up. Very good yields were expected in some southern and central areas. Dry weather helped move along harvest, which wrapped up around August 24th.



HAY & PASTURES

Almost 80 percent of winter freeze damage to alfalfa was reported as mostly none to light. Due to below average temperatures and excess moisture, hayfields were showing slow growth in early May. By the 1st of June, first crop hay cutting was reported at 12 percent harvested with conditions varying across the state. There were reports of high first crop hay yields, especially in the northern half of the state. Generally, hay cutting progress lagged behind normal for first and second cuttings. In late August and September, completion rates for third and fourth cuttings were ahead of normal. Overall, most producers were able to harvest sufficient quantities of hay in 2008.

Pastures were productive until lack of rain slowed growth. By the end of August, many pastures looked dormant as conditions had declined to 82 percent very poor to fair. With September rains, many pastures greened up and conditions improved.



Source: USDA, NASS, Wisconsin Field Office