



Wisconsin Crop Progress

April 30, 2012

Vol. 12, No. 4

Corn Planting Begins Despite Spring Chill

Frosty mornings continued this week as average temperatures dipped below normal for the first time in months. Reporters observed freeze damage to fruit crops and hay across the state, though the extent of damage varied. Producers remained hopeful that cold-nipped crops will bounce back when temperatures warm up. Minimal rain facilitated manure hauling, fertilizer spreading, tillage and planting. Many farmers have begun planting corn despite cool soil temperatures. First crop hay harvest has begun early in the southern parts of the state. There were 4.6 days suitable for fieldwork this week.

Across the reporting stations, average temperatures last week were 1 to 3 degrees below normal. Average high temperatures ranged from 51 to 61 degrees, while average low temperatures ranged from 33 to 41 degrees. Precipitation totals ranged from 0.06 inches in Eau Claire to 0.49 inches in Milwaukee. If you are interested in further weather data, please reference the following sites:

- <http://www.noaa.gov/>
- <http://www.aos.wisc.edu/~sco/>
- <http://www.cocorahs.org/>
- <http://www.weather.gov/>

Statewide, **corn** was 18 percent planted this week. A reporter from Rock County noted that test fields planted in mid-April have not yet emerged.

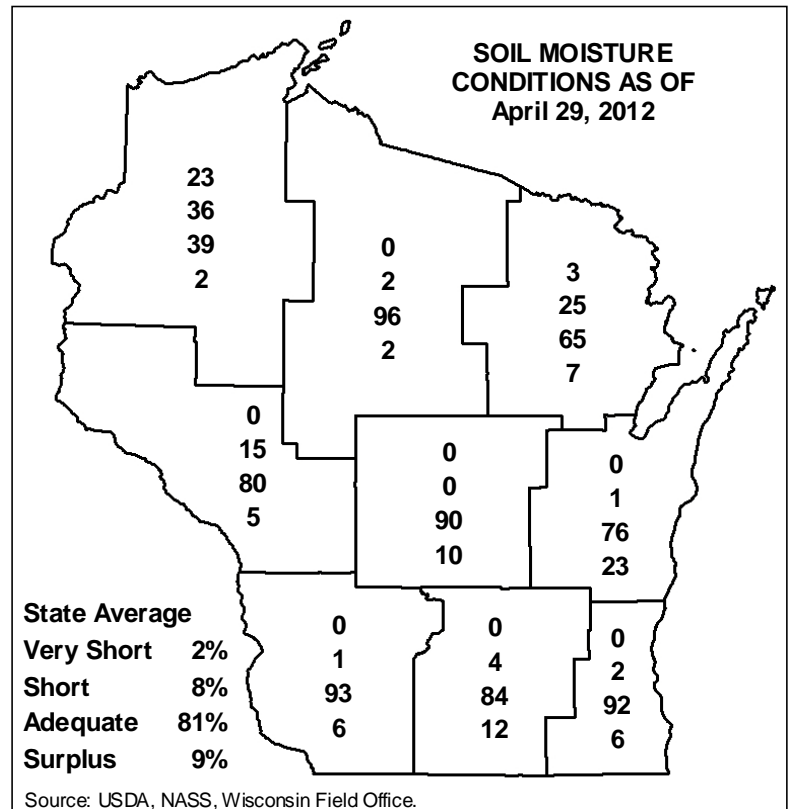
Soybeans were 1 percent planted, compared to 0 percent last year.

Oats were 80 percent planted and 39 percent emerged this week. Reporters commented that emerged oats were looking good despite the cold weather.

Hay and **alfalfa** growth remained depressed by low nighttime temperatures, and concern remained about frost impact on yield and quality. Reporters noted first crop hay being cut in Calumet, Dane, Green, Walworth and Waukesha Counties, with others commenting that first crop harvest will begin soon

Statewide, **spring tillage** rose to 58 percent complete.

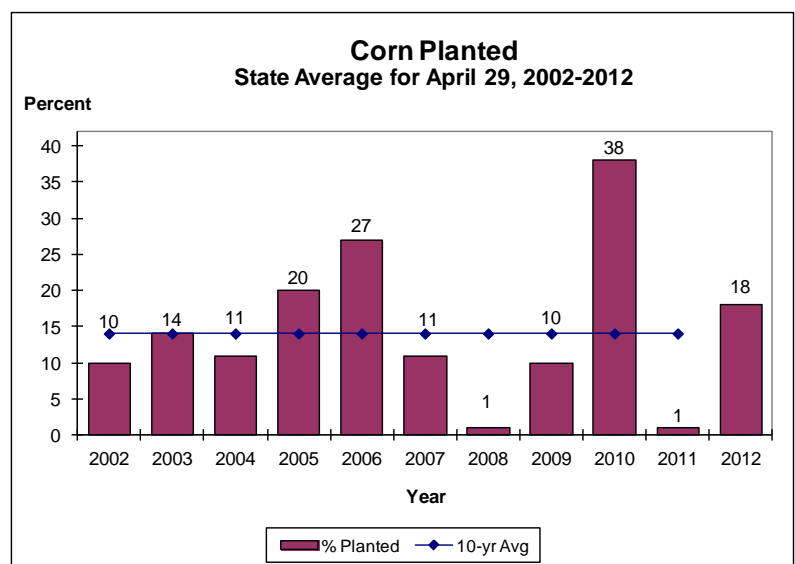
Many reporters commented that **winter wheat** was in good condition, with potential frost damage reported in Rock, Kenosha and Waukesha counties. A reporter in Rock County noted early **rye** being harvested for silage. **Peas** were going into the ground in Shawano and Dane Counties, and emerging in Trempealeau, Marquette and Walworth Counties. **Potato** planting continued in Oneida, Portage, Shawano, Sauk and Dane Counties and was wrapping up in Waupaca County. **Apple** growers statewide were concerned about frost damage to blossoms, though the full extent of damage was unclear in most areas. **Cranberry**, **grape** and **raspberry** growers remained on frost watch as well. A reporter from Waupaca County reported at least a 50 percent loss on **strawberries** in their area.



Wisconsin Crop Conditions as of April 29, 2012

Item	V.-poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pasture	1	3	39	51	6

Source: USDA, NASS, Wisconsin Field Office.



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Crop and percent of acreage	District average									State average			
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE	This week	Last week	Last year	5-year average
Corn planted	12	9	13	22	17	7	27	20	27	18	6	1	12
Oats planted	85	68	80	92	72	75	85	92	71	80	60	15	47
Oats emerged	35	14	30	51	22	29	64	57	36	39	21	3	15
Spring tillage	53	55	50	70	57	38	75	62	43	58	44	10	32

Source: USDA, NASS, Wisconsin Field Office.

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Selected Quotes from Farm Reporters and County Ag Agents

All comments are used in creating this report, but only a few are published below.

CHIPPEWA-G.L.: Frost has hit fruit trees hard. Alfalfa looks good.

WASHBURN-P.H.: Another cool & dry week. Seeded all the alfalfa. Could have started planting corn but waiting till next week.

CLARK-J.B.: Still short moisture in some parts of county. Not much winterkill with alfalfa or winter wheat, producers with fruit trees are concerned about frost almost every day.

LANGLADE-A.K.: Corn planting starting, emergence and growth of small grains has been slow due to cool temps and frosty mornings. Same said for hay fields. Still need that rain that is more than a few 10ths.

OCONTO-N.S.: Conditions have remained dry and cool. Producers reporting that some corn acres have been planted despite cool temperatures. Wheat and alfalfa continues to look good.

BUFFALO-R.S.: Alfalfa doing fine, pasture grasses are adequate to graze, corn planters are ready to go May 1st. Manure spreading and fertilizers are being applied. Soil temperatures must be low because hard wood trees are very slow to get leaves.

EAU CLAIRE-A.B.: The alfalfa has frosted leaves, alfalfa got an earlier than normal start with a record warm March, the growth has slowed considerably since the cold/freezing conditions in April. The blossoms on apple trees have frosted edges, the pollinating insects are working the best they can, some apples are lost. It's too early to determine the extent of the frost damage.

MONROE-P.B.: Some winter kill to alfalfa but most just set back. Tallest alfalfa about 20 inches. Winter wheat is in good condition.

MARQUETTE-D.B.: Corn planters out in force last week. Some peas are up now.

PORTAGE-J.B.: Last week was slow - 22 degrees Friday morning. Been cool so we'll see how the apple blossoms survived last week. Even slowed the potato planting a bit. Oats and seeding going in. Pretty much everyone is holding off on the corn but that will change this week.

CALUMET-B.L.: It was 25-26 degrees again this morning! It was cold for several hours. We can see some damage to tops of leaves of alfalfa, wheat and other grasses but there is probably minimal overall loss due to frost. Growth has really slowed plant development down the last few weeks. Our first scissors cuttings were done April 24th. The five samples ranged from 250-270 PEAQ readings with heights from 11-

14 inches. The lab RFQs ranged from 247-328. We will sample again the first week of May. Oats emerging as are some of the early new seedings. There does not seem to be any losses to date with the freezing temps. More spring tillage is completed and corn planters are moving regularly in the higher drier ground.

SHEBOYGAN-M.B.: The winter wheat crop is looking generally very good this year. Minor alfalfa damage in just a few fields.

GRANT-J.R.: First crop alfalfa will start when we have our next dry stretch for cutting. Recent rain is delaying an early planting season but was needed.

VERNON-K.L.: Alfalfa, winter wheat and oats to date look good. Cooler temperatures have slowed the growth of alfalfa & pastures. Farmers spreading manure and planting corn whenever possible. Waiting for warmer temperatures to determine how much the grapes first budding stage was effected by light frost and cool rains.

DANE-L.J.: There is little if any evidence of winterkill on alfalfa or winter wheat. Conditions have been excellent for field work.

DODGE-R.H.: Farmers just waiting for warmer weather so they can plant corn.

WASHINGTON-G.S.: No evidence of winterkill in alfalfa and winter wheat. Producers are in the fields and the cool weather hasn't seemed to slow them down too much.

WAUKESHA-R.F.: We had a killing frost 4/25. It was snow white all over. Not sure how the winter wheat, alfalfa, and fruit trees are going to come out of this. Hope next week will have warm weather.



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Director

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Wisconsin Weekly Weather, Selected Cities, Ending as of 7:00 a.m. on April 29, 2012

City	Temperature						Growing degree days (modified base 50) 1/		Precipitation				
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal *	Mar. 1 to Apr. 28	Mar. 1 to Apr. 28 normal*	Last Week	Since Mar. 1	Mar. 1 dep. from normal *	Year to date	Year dep. from normal *
Eau Claire	60	37	70	26	48	-1	357	124	0.06	4.45	-0.04	6.83	0.51
Green Bay	56	33	67	28	45	-3	294	104	0.09	4.19	-0.22	6.71	0.07
La Crosse	61	41	71	37	51	-1	414	158	0.34	4.65	-0.40	7.17	-0.07
Madison	57	34	66	28	46	-3	399	158	0.37	4.84	-0.53	7.27	-0.63
Milwaukee	51	38	61	33	45	-3	289	n.a.	0.49	5.65	-0.42	8.50	-1.05

1/ Formula used: GDD = (daily maximum (86°) + daily minimum (50°))/2-50°; where 86° is used if the maximum exceeds 86° and 50° is used if the minimum falls below 50°. *Normal based on 1971-2000 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>. n.a.=not available. T=trace. Source: USDA, NASS, Wisconsin Field Office.