

# Iowa Crops & Weather



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## Unusual Weather–Unusual Activities

**Agricultural Summary:** Unusually warm temperatures in January resulted in unusual activities for the month. Farmers spent time tilling fields, tiling, applying anhydrous and dry fertilizer, injecting manure and disking. Concerns about future pest populations have arisen as a result of unseasonably warm temperatures. Corn is moving, especially to local ethanol plants.

At the end of January, the average depth of **snow cover** across Iowa was visibly 0 inches, compared to 4 inches at the same time last year. The average depth of **frost penetration** for the state was 2 inches, compared to last year's 16 inches. **Soil moisture availability** was rated 20 percent very short, 33 percent short, 46 percent adequate, and 1 percent surplus. **Movement of grain** for the state was 24 percent none, 39 percent light, 33 percent moderate, and 4 percent heavy.

**Availability of hay and roughage supplies** was 6 percent short, 78 percent adequate, and 16 percent surplus. **Quality of hay and roughage supplies** was 6 percent poor, 34 percent fair, and 60 percent good. **Utilization of stubble fields for grazing** rated 33 percent none, 28 percent limited, 28 percent moderate, and 11 percent extensive.

**Hog and pig losses** in January were slightly below last year's state averages at 25 percent below average, 70 percent average, and 5 percent above average. **Cattle and calf losses** were also below last year's state averages at 31 percent below average, 66 percent average, and 3 percent above average. Warm, dry weather in January has resulted in good gains for feedlot cattle. In general, weather has been favorable for livestock producers.

## IOWA PRELIMINARY WEATHER SUMMARY JANUARY 2006

**General Summary.** January temperatures averaged 32.1 degrees or 14.3 degrees above normal while precipitation averaged 1.01 inches or 0.05 inches above normal. This ranks as the second warmest and 59<sup>th</sup> wettest January among 134 years of state records. Only January 1933 at 32.2 degrees averaged warmer than this January. Only 66 percent of the state's temperature stations have reported their January data, thus the 2006 average could change slightly when complete data becomes available.

**Temperatures.** The mild weather pattern that began on December 22 continued through all of January. Among major reporting points only Waterloo recorded any days in the month with below normal temperatures (two degrees below normal on the 21<sup>st</sup>). Waterloo also was the only station to record a subzero temperature during the month (-1° on the 21<sup>st</sup>). Onawa reported the month's highest temperature with a 65° reading on the 15<sup>th</sup>. There were as many days in the state with high temperatures in the 60's (15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>) as with low temperatures in the single digits (10<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>). January

temperatures were above normal over practically the entire lower 48 states with the greatest positive anomalies across the northern plains states. Meanwhile, unseasonably cold weather was the rule over northeastern Europe and northern Asia.

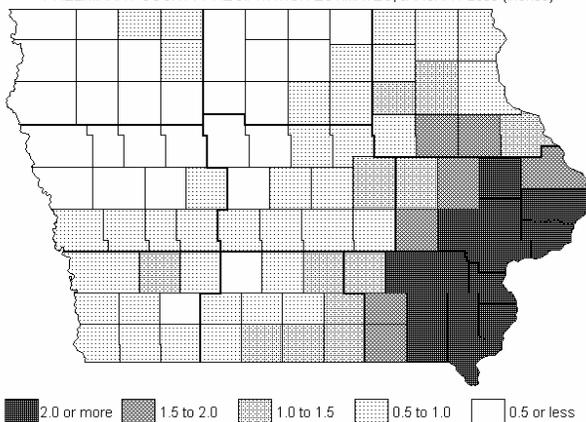
**Heating Degree Days.** Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 29 percent less than last January and 31 percent less than normal. The reduction in heating requirements was about equal to the increase in the unit price of heating energy, thus keeping most heating bills close to normal. Heating requirements so far this winter season are running 5 percent less than last season at this time and 14 percent less than normal. The season-to-date heating degree day total is the lowest in five years.

**Precipitation.** Most of January was rather dry; however, three storm systems accounted for most of the month's precipitation. Showers and thunderstorms on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> brought as much as 1.22 inches of rain at Oelwein and a statewide average of 0.30 inches. The only snow event of consequence came on the 20<sup>th</sup> with snow falling across the southeast two-thirds of the state with Lowden reporting the most with 7 inches. Finally, rain fell statewide on the 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> with more than an inch falling across all of the southeastern one-third of the state. Muscatine Airport reported the most rain with 2.54 inches while the state average was 0.57 inches. Overall, monthly precipitation totals were generally below normal across northern and western Iowa and above normal over the south and east. Monthly totals varied from 0.15 inches at Sioux City Airport, their lowest January total since 1986, to 3.15 inches at Keosauqua, their highest January total since 1965. Snowfall averaged only 1.9 inches or 6.3 inches below normal. This ties for the 7<sup>th</sup> lowest January snowfall total among 119 years of records and is the lowest January total since 1989. Very little frost was in the ground during the month, thus the unseasonably heavy precipitation in southeastern Iowa allowed a substantial improvement in the very dry soil conditions there.

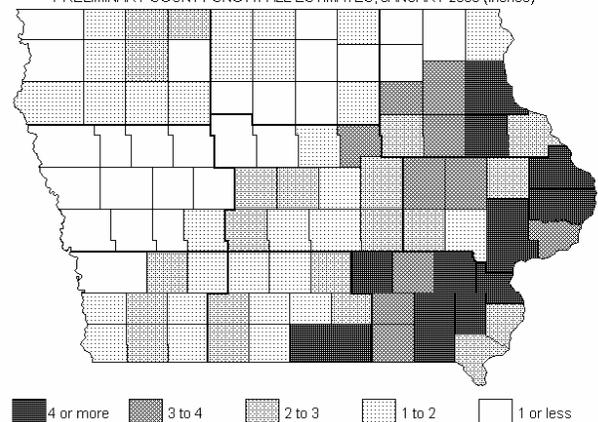
**Severe Weather.** Interaction of a strong low pressure center over Lake Superior and high pressure over the High Plains generated very high winds during the day on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Wind gusts over 50 mph were common across Iowa with Ames Airport reporting a gust to 69 mph.

**Outlook.** Historically very mild January weather in Iowa has been followed by above normal February temperatures two-thirds of the time. However, La Nina years (when tropical Pacific waters are unusually cold such as they are now) have brought below normal February temperatures 59 percent of the time. Additionally, the current two week forecast models are favoring below normal temperatures. Thus, this coming month is more likely to average near or somewhat colder than normal. Normal February temperatures average 24.2, or eight degrees colder than what we experienced this January.

State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship  
PRELIMINARY COUNTY PRECIPITATION ESTIMATES, JANUARY 2006 (inches)



State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship  
PRELIMINARY COUNTY SNOWFALL ESTIMATES, JANUARY 2006 (inches)



## Frost Penetration for the Month of January

Item	Districts									State	Last Month	Last Year
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE			
Frost penetration	Inches 5	Inches 4	Inches 2	Inches 2	Inches 2	Inches 0	Inches 1	Inches 1	Inches 0	Inches 2	Inches 4	Inches 16

**January Weather Summary For Iowa Agricultural Statistics Service**  
**Prepared by AWIS, Inc.**

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			HDD TOT	HDD DFN	DAYS OF 32 COLD	DAYS OF 28 COLD
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS				
North West District											
Estherville	43	3	28	16	0.43	-0.28	5	1,140	-484	28	25
Sioux Center	56	14	33	18	0.41	-0.22	3	975	-558	30	22
Spencer	51	7	30	16	0.20	-0.32	4	1,086	-500	28	22
Spirit Lake	50	7	29	18	0.31	-0.25	4	1,110	-282	30	28
North Central District											
Britt	46	6	27	13	0.36	-0.55	5	1,180	-398	31	26
Humboldt	53	11	30	14	0.45	-0.28	4	1,093	-434	30	24
Mason City	51	7	30	18	0.31	-0.58	5	1,067	-540	26	19
Northwood	49	6	28	17	0.69	-0.13	6	1,134	-520	31	28
North East District											
Decorah	54	7	31	17	0.98	0.24	7	1,035	-509	27	24
Dubuque	52	8	33	18	1.27	0.01	7	1,001	-524	25	15
Elkader	58	1	30	15	0.84	-0.12	7	1,061	-281	28	23
Independence	55	7	31	17	2.14	1.17	7	1,061	-345	27	23
Waterloo	57	-1	32	18	0.86	0.06	7	1,025	-539	26	18
West Central District											
Audubon	57	9	32	13	0.70	-0.18	2	1,027	-390	30	26
Carroll	59	12	32	17	0.13	-0.64	3	998	-495	30	23
Castana	63	15	32	13	0.40	-0.15	3	1,010	-548	31	26
Guthrie Center	57	9	32	15	0.42	-0.42	4	1,001	-459	29	24
Harlan	60	15	33	15	0.97	0.30	3	970	-544	28	20
Jefferson	60	15	33	17	0.57	-0.20	4	993	-500	29	23
Logan	64	13	34	16	0.79	0.01	3	951	-492	28	23
Rockwell City	58	14	31	14	0.41	-0.24	3	1,048	-429	30	25
Sioux City	64	11	35	18	0.19	-0.36	3	934	-534	26	15
Central District											
Ames	60	10	33	18	0.53	-0.21	5	980	-539	27	20
Boone	59	12	31	15	0.43	-0.48	5	1,035	-464	30	23
Des Moines	60	15	36	17	0.66	-0.30	3	897	-517	20	14
Eldora	55	12	31	16	0.96	0.12	6	1,058	-477	30	25
Marshalltown	57	8	32	16	0.57	-0.26	4	1,005	-486	27	17
Newton	58	11	32	14	0.67	-0.17	5	1,019	-429	27	25
Perry	58	14	33	16	1.02	0.32	3	995	-485	29	21
Toledo	56	12	31	15	1.18	0.33	5	1,042	-466	29	23
East Central District											
Cedar Rapids	56	9	33	16	1.56	0.55	7	979	-490	25	17
Davenport	58	16	35	16	2.38	1.31	7	916	-476	21	13
Iowa City	57	14	35	16	2.33	1.33	8	911	-465	22	15
Lowden	56	10	31	15	2.62	1.43	7	1,036	-430	28	22
Maquoketa	53	8	31	15	2.18	1.07	6	1,053	-437	27	21
Muscatine	59	18	36	15	3.05	1.80	7	905	-653	22	16
South West District											
Clarinda	60	11	34	15	0.94	0.06	4	948	-447	28	26
Glenwood	64	12	36	16	0.82	0.08	4	907	-468	26	22
Oakland	61	15	34	17	0.84	0.12	4	940	-509	28	23
Red Oak	62	12	36	15	0.80	0.00	3	902	-448	27	21
Sidney	64	19	36	16	0.61	-0.08	3	886	-473	29	20
South Central District											
Allerton	57	14	34	14	1.57	0.57	4	969	-696	28	22
Beaconsfield	57	14	33	14	1.45	0.75	4	979	-422	28	24
Chariton	58	6	32	14	0.88	-0.07	5	1,015	-406	26	25
Indianola	59	12	34	15	0.65	-0.31	3	953	-454	26	19
Leon	60	13	34	15	0.93	-0.04	5	952	-441	27	22
South East District											
Bloomfield	58	17	35	13	1.65	0.53	4	929	-385	26	20
Burlington	63	23	38	17	2.44	1.20	6	825	-516	16	8
Ottumwa	58	14	36	16	1.51	0.53	5	898	-472	22	15

Precipitation (rain, melted snow or ice) in inches. Precipitation Days = Days with precipitation of 0.01 inch or more. Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit. Copyright 2006: AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.