

January 3, 2007

KENTUCKY: Mild temperatures held snowfall at bay for most of the month and provided below normal rainfall. Louisville, Paducah and many locations set new record high temperatures on December 17th with 70 and 77 degrees respectively. The month came in like a lion as a strong cold front rushed across the region on the morning of the 1st. Wind gusts over 50 mph were commonplace, and some locations had their highest wind gust of the year, including 51 mph at Lexington. Temperatures for December averaged 41 degrees which was 4 degrees above normal. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 2.99 in. statewide which was - 1.29 in. below normal temperatures were below normal during the early portion of the first full week of the month as Canadian high pressure was dominant over the Ohio River Valley. By mid-week, a cold front moved across the region and brought snow flurries and a few snow showers to the Commonwealth. After the cold front passage, a massive rush of arctic air pushed into the already cold Ohio Valley. Temperatures began to moderate towards the weekend; however, no other measurable precipitation occurred. Temperatures averaged 31 degrees, 8 degrees below normal. Extreme temperatures ranged from a maximum in the mid 50s to a minimum in the upper single digits. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 0.00 in. statewide which was 0.95 in. below normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.00 in. at Bardstown to a high of 0.02 in. at Jackson.

Below normal precipitation fell across the Bluegrass the second full week of December, which was the 3rd straight week for this trend. High pressure was dominant over the Ohio River Valley during the early portion of the work week, with temperatures close to normal. Then a warm front swept through the region, which turned the winds in a southerly direction and brought in warmer air from the gulf coast. Mid-week saw the passage of a cold front, which brought some scattered showers to the State. High pressure remained dominant over the region from the end of the work week through the weekend with much above normal temperatures. Temperatures averaged 52 degrees, 15 degrees above normal. Extreme temperatures ranged from a maximum in the low 70s to a minimum in the low 20s. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 0.43 in. statewide which was 0.52 in. below normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.06 in. at Bristol to a high of 1.50 in. at Evansville. For the fourth straight week below normal precipitation fell across the Bluegrass State. It was the second week straight for experiencing mild temperatures. Temperatures averaged 47, 13 degrees above normal. High temperatures averaged 55 and lows averaged 40 degrees. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 0.92 in. which was 0.03 below normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.12 at Cumberland Gap to a high of 1.81 in. at Paducah.

Temperatures for the final full week of December averaged 42 degrees which was 9 degrees above normal. High temperatures averaged from 49 in the West to 50 in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 35 degrees in the West to 34 degrees in the East. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 0.82 in. statewide which was 0.13 in. below normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.00 in. at Mayfield to a high of 2.18 in. at Hardinsburg.

Fieldwork continued to be active in early December as farmers tried to complete the previously delayed corn and soybean harvest. Marketing of both crops remained very active as producers enjoyed good prices for their harvest. Tobacco producers continued to strip tobacco when humidity levels were favorable. Most farmers delivered burley tobacco to fill contracts made directly with the tobacco companies. Only 4 auction markets remain in the State for farmers without contracts and those with production not accepted by the companies. The wild swings in temperature stressed livestock, but dryer weather was welcome after the very wet fall. Soil moisture going into winter was mostly adequate to surplus.