2007 CROP SUMMARY

The winter of 2007 began with warmer than average temperatures throughout the state. Precipitation was at or slightly above average. In **January**, temperatures were well above average across Minnesota as precipitation levels fell below normal through much of the state with the exception of southern regions. Mild winter weather reduced feed supply concerns and livestock were reportedly in good to excellent condition. During **February**, the average temperatures fell and were below normal for the month. Precipitation increased as much of the state was above average during the month, except for a few northern regions. Despite cooler temperatures, feed availability and livestock conditions remained good. Temperatures were above average in **March** as some regions experienced record warmth causing a rapid snow melt in some areas. Calving season was underway with very few problems.

Average temperatures climbed into the mid-50's by the middle of **April.** Topsoil moisture levels were rated three-fourths adequate and subsoil moisture was rated a third adequate. Warm temperatures allowed the ground to thaw and drain, and the average starting date for fieldwork was April 25. Producers in the west worked around wet areas to continue field preparations and fertilizer applications. Fieldwork and planting of small grains and corn advanced, but behind 2006 and the five-year average.

Warm weather and minimal precipitation across much of the state allowed fieldwork progress to catch up with the five-year average in early **May.** Statewide topsoil moisture was rated nearly 75 percent adequate for the first two weeks of May. Much of the state remained at adequate topsoil moisture levels with the exceptions of the northeast, with short levels, and the west central, which had surplus levels. Temperatures remained warmer than normal through most of May allowing producers to make progress ahead of the five-year average pace. Planting neared completion by the end of the month, ahead of average for most crops. The statewide topsoil moisture supply was rated 70 percent adequate by May 25.

Above normal temperatures in early **June** pushed crop development well ahead of the five-year average pace. Topsoil moisture was rated mostly adequate and crop conditions were rated mostly good or excellent. First-cutting alfalfa was 81 percent complete by mid-June, well ahead of average. In the second half of June, topsoil moisture supplies fell significantly in the central area of the state. Topsoil moisture in northern and southern Minnesota remained mostly adequate.

Crop development continued ahead of the average with corn advancing an average of 15 inches in height during the last week of June. Small grains also advanced rapidly in late June, while statewide, average crop conditions were rated mostly good or excellent.

July was notable for average temperatures and well-below normal precipitation. Topsoil moisture supplies began the month at 39 percent adequate and 24 percent very short; and ended the month at 21 percent adequate and 46 percent very short. The two regions spared by the drought were the northwest and southeast, where topsoil was rated mostly adequate for the entire month.

The warm temperatures and dry weather pushed crop development and crop condition ratings fell. Corn completed the silking stage during the month's dry conditions. Pasture condition was rated 67 percent very poor or poor by July 27, a considerable decline from earlier in the month. The dry conditions allowed small grain producers to start the harvest earlier and continue at a rapid pace. The sweet corn harvest was underway well ahead of the five-year average. Barley was over one-third harvested, and the oat harvest was more than 50 percent complete by July 29.

Above normal temperatures and little rain continued to decrease topsoil moisture supplies in the first half of **August.** During the second half of the month large amounts of rain were received across the state, especially in the southeast where flooding occurred. The small grain harvest was virtually complete by mid-August, well ahead of the five-year average pace. Potatoes were one-third harvested by month's end. Crop conditions for soybeans, rated mostly fair or good, held steady through the month. Crop conditions for corn, rated mostly poor or fair during the first week, improved to mostly fair or good for the rest of the month.

September temperatures were well above normal for most of the month. Frequent rains interrupted the dry edible bean, potato, and sugarbeet harvests for short periods of time, but all showed ahead of average progress. Corn and soybean crops matured rapidly during the month and harvest was well underway by month's end. The first frost of the season in central and southern areas was recorded during the second week of September. By the end of the month, the sunflower harvest was underway.

By early **October,** nearly three-quarters of the soybean crop was harvested and one-quarter of the corn crop was harvested, both well ahead of the five-year average pace. By mid-October, the moisture content of corn for grain fell and harvest was in full swing despite increased topsoil moisture levels. The soybean, potato, dry bean, and sugarbeet harvests were wrapping up and good progress was being made on the sunflower harvest. By month's end, corn was 73 percent harvested - well ahead of average. Topsoil moisture supplies remained mostly adequate or surplus, although a pocket in central Minnesota remained short of moisture heading into the winter months.

Above average temperatures and little precipitation in **November** allowed producers to complete most fall tillage and fertilizer operations during the fall season. By November 11, corn was 97 percent harvested and sunflowers were 98 percent harvested. Little precipitation was received during the month, causing producers to remain concerned about topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies.

December temperatures cooled off as needed precipitation was received during the first half of the month. The second half of December saw above average temperatures and mixed precipitation levels across the state. The statewide average temperature for the month was 13.0 degrees, 2.1 degrees below normal. The statewide average precipitation for the month was 1.31 inches, 0.51 inch above normal.