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USDA, NASS, MINNESOTA FIELD OFFICE, IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE - CHANHASSEN MN,  
UNIV. OF MINN. EXTENSION SERVICE, DNR STATE CLIMATOLOGY OFFICE, USDA-FSA, AND USDA-NRCS

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The following comments are from Minnesota's County Extension Educators, FSA (USDA - Farm Service Agency), and NRCS (USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service) Offices

**AITKIN:** Nice cover of snow -seems to be staying. Livestock are wintering well so far. Hay is in short supply and some producers are selling cattle to match hay stocks. Grain producers are happy with their 2007 sales/prices.

**BLUE EARTH:** Snow depth is 4-6 inches with half inch ice layer. Frost at least one foot according to tillers last week. Good supply of feed. Livestock in excellent condition – just 2 nights of cold. I worry about deep soil moisture even after the wet fall. We dried out but never recharged deep. Blue Earth County and area is 13 inches short on last years rainfall. Hope for spring recharge.

**BROWN:** Snow cover is above normal compared to the last several years. Feed availability is good, however, good hay is expensive and milk prices must remain strong to keep ahead of high hay and grain prices. Moisture supplies should be good leading into spring planting. Land rents are at all time highs.

**CLAY:** Snow cover is adequate for most of the county. Moisture supplies should be good going into spring due to late season rains followed by good snow cover.

**CLEARWATER:** Snow cover as of January 3, 2008 about 18 inches, livestock condition generally good with good local feed available.

**CROW WING:** As of January 1, 2008 18 inches of snow has fallen in the area. Depth of frost is deep this year. Good combination of cold weather and snow cover. Feed availability is in short supply. Hay is expensive. Farmers are looking at selling animals. 2007 was lower than average in moisture. Need good snow amount and rain for 2008.

**FARIBAULT:** Faribault County frost depth is 8.5 inches. Grazing livestock and wildlife is still struggling with the ice layer under our snow cover. Snow cover is approximately 9 inches.

**GOODHUE:** Snow cover at 6 inches. Frost depth at 8 inches. Feed availability is good. Livestock condition is good.

**GRANT:** We have about an eight to ten inch snow cover on all the fields. Should have no alfalfa freezing out or soil erosion. Most livestock is in good condition. We could have used more rain last fall.

**HOUSTON:** Snow cover ranging from 6 to 12 inches with ice base. Snow/ice cover preventing winter grazing of corn stalks. Area forage prices are up.

**HUBBARD:** Not much for farm activities going on right now. Approximately 12" of snow cover which has kept the frost depth at 2 to 3 feet right now. There is somewhat of a shortage of hay in the area due to the dry summer and low forage yields.

**ITASCA:** Had cows grazing stockpiled and windrowed pasture until December 26. Snow cover was between 10-15 inches. Frost was down 6 inches on December 14. Fall calves are doing well. A few late ones were born early in the month. Hay supplies will be tight. Livestock conditions are good.

**JACKSON:** Fields have 4 – 6 inches of snow cover. Livestock are in good condition. Hay is available, but prices are over twice as much as last year. Soil moisture is good to excellent for next years crops.

**KITTSOON:** Snow cover is adequate. Feed stock availability is good. Weather conditions for livestock have been good. Subsoil and topsoil moisture levels were normal at freeze-up. Producers have been delivering contracted grain. Concerns with costs of fertilizer and seed have been heard. Hopefully, markets remain strong.

**LAC QUI PARLE:** There is approximately 4 to 6 inches of snow cover throughout the county, with very little melting occurring during the month as temperatures stayed below freezing for most of the month. With the amount of snow cover it has kept many of the livestock producers from grazing the crop land as long as they would have liked.

**LINCOLN:** About 3 inches of snow cover. Lakes have good ice. Activities include livestock feeding, tax planning, arranging for seed and fertilizer, land leasing, and watching prices to determine when to contract parts of the 2008 crop and sell the rest of the 2007 crop. Some new leases are at much higher rates and often for one year. A good winter for livestock so far. Temperatures haven't fluctuated widely and have not had bitter cold weather or high winds yet. Hog prices are very low. More people are using anhydrous ammonia than past years for their nitrogen source to save a little money on input costs.

**MCLEOD:** Snow cover is 10-14 inches. Depth of frost is 18-24 inches.

**MARTIN:** Snow cover of 4-6 inches. With exception of a cold snap at the first of the year temperatures have been average. Moisture supplies should be good going into spring with the rains received in October of 2007.

**MEEKER:** Five inches of snow on level protected areas. Feed will be short especially hay. Corn and silage in good supply. Livestock are in fair to good condition. We are still short of subsoil moisture. Lakes are still down.

**MORRISON:** Twelve inches of snow on the ground. Cold conditions and lower amounts of livestock feed due to worst drought since 1976 causing some farmers to sell off their herds. Soil moisture was recharged this past fall with good rains. Most farmers are pre-buying seed, fertilizer, and herbicides to take advantage of early order discounts. Cattle are doing well some farmers have to purchase feed this year due to the drought and hail that we had.

**NOBLES:** As of January 3rd all of the fields have good snow cover and activities have pretty much stopped. Livestock is starting to show signs of being affected by the cold weather. Many farmers are pleased with the amount of snow we have had so far. There was a 3 day stretch that we had fog all day long.

**OLMSTED:** Twelve inch snow cover. Frost depth is two feet. Corn stalks are available for feed. Livestock conditions are good. Corn and beans are very high. Fertilizer prices are 40 percent higher than last year.

**OTTER TAIL:** Feed stocks short for some operations livestock faring well. Snow cover is 12-18 inches. Subsoil is short moisture going into spring. Most fall tillage work was complete prior to freeze up. 2007 crop yields ranged from very poor to very good depending on soil types and area of the county.

**PENNINGTON:** We've had several inches of snow that should help protect winter wheat and forage. Hay supplies and forage for those buying their hay are getting short and expensive. Good grain prices have created optimizing for 2008, even with very high input costs. Snow depth is 6-10 inches in the county. Bare fields in open country have 3-6" while seeded fields (hay, winter grain) have more. Livestock are faring well with good feed availability so far. Temperatures have averaged near normal to slightly above for December and the earlier part of the winter. Farmers are busy ordering seed and fertilizer for spring. Many livestock producers are gearing up for calving season.

**POLK:** About a foot of snow covers the ground. Temps have been on both sides of zero degrees Fahrenheit by 30 degrees. Sugarbeet processing and the steady flow of transport trucks is occasionally joined in by farmer trucks hauling in wheat, corn, and soybeans in erratic bursts when the terminal or elevator gets room after loading out unit trains. Not much livestock in this area but nothing out of the ordinary for feed or conditions for them. Frost depths are about 6 inches in areas where cover crop or sod was established and about 24 inches where snow was removed or plowed.

**ROCK:** The month of December has had a lot of fog. Some days it doesn't clear. Snow accumulation is 6+ inches. No wind to make drifts. Cattle are healthy and still in the corn fields. Feed availability – no shortage. Livestock conditions – no concerns. Farmers are buying seed and fertilizer for next spring. Lots of grain is being sold and hauled in, many producers are contracting new crop.

**ST LOUIS:** Snow depth 14-18 inches. Depth of frost with snow cover is 1.0-1.5 feet; without snow cover 3.0 feet. Feed availability excellent to date. Livestock condition is excellent. Moisture supplies, we're OK, lots of rain before freeze up.

**TRAVERSE:** Snow depth for the county remains in the 6-8 inch range. Recent snow events have missed the area. Blowing and drifting snow remains a concern, but livestock and feed supplies remain good.

**WADENA:** The area had two significant snow falls in December giving the area a good blanket of snow. There is a shortage of hay in the area and much hay is being brought in from other areas. Two years of only one cutting have led to this. Livestock in the area are doing well.

Thank you for your comments.

PRECIPITATION AND TEMPERATURE SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER, 2007:

Temperatures during December averaged from 3.0 degrees below normal in the West Central District to 0.2 degree below normal in the North Central District. Temperature extremes included a low of -29 degrees at Hibbing, and a high of 40 degrees at Grand Marais and Canby. Precipitation averaged from 0.27 inch above normal in the West Central District to 0.97 inch above normal in the Northeast District. Greatest monthly precipitation of 2.45 inches was recorded in Duluth.

Precipitation and Temperature Summary for December  
2007

	Temperature			Precipitation	
	High	Low	Month Ave	Month Total	Dept. for Month
<u>NW DIST 1</u>					
Crookston	31	-24	7.4	-3.2	.50 .00
Moorhead	33	-20	10.4	-2.1	1.59 1.02
Warroad	29	-22	8.0	-.6	.93 .30
<u>NC DIST 2</u>					
Grand Rapids	34	-21	12.0	-.1	1.69 .83
Intl. Falls	32	-25	8.6	.1	1.09 .39
Itasca	31	-24	8.8	-.6	1.46 .71
<u>NE DIST 3</u>					
Duluth	34	-14	13.2	-.8	2.45 1.51
Grand Marais	40	-10	19.0	-.4	1.83 1.04
Hibbing	33	-29	8.5	-2.3	1.10 .37
<u>WC DIST 4</u>					
Alexandria	33	-15	11.0	-2.7	1.07 .49
Browns Valley	37	-11	12.4	-3.1	.55 .02
Canby	40	-6	16.6	-2.3	.66 -.04
Fergus Falls	34	-17	10.7	-2.1	1.23 .73
Montevideo	36	-17	13.0	-2.5	.42 -.29
Morris	33	-12	9.6	-5.0	1.28 .70
<u>CENT DIST 5</u>					
Becker	35	-13	13.0	-1.4	1.34 .51
Collegeville	36	-9	14.2	-2.3	1.35 .61
Hutchinson	36	-9	14.2	-1.5	.59 -.16
Olivia	35	-9	12.3	-3.0	.91 .39
St. Cloud	35	-16	11.5	-2.9	1.01 .32
Staples	33	-23	8.5	-4.0	.78 .18
Willmar	35	-7	12.2	-2.5	1.04 .38
<u>EC DIST 6</u>					
Aitkin	33	-18	12.2	-.8	2.20 1.38
Forest Lake	39	-13	15.4	-.6	1.95 .98
MSP Airport	36	-4	16.5	-2.2	1.39 .39
St. Paul - UofM	36	-5	17.1	-2.3	1.00 -.04
<u>SW DIST 7</u>					
Lamberton	38	-8	14.9	-2.3	.42 -.16
Pipestone	35	-6	12.1	-4.4	1.07 .47
Redwood Falls	34	-6	13.9	-4.1	.62 .02
Worthington	33	-1	15.4	-1.1	1.23 .53
<u>SC DIST 8</u>					
Faribault	36	-6	15.5	-2.2	1.42 .40
Mankato	35	-3	15.4	-2.5	1.24 .25
Waseca	35	-6	14.6	-2.2	1.61 .21
Winnebago	33	-1	14.8	-2.5	1.53 .52
<u>SE DIST 9</u>					
Preston	37	-13	16.8	-1.7	2.01 .72
Red Wing	37	-8	15.8	-2.7	1.28 .42
Rochester	36	-8	17.0	-.3	1.08 .06
Rosemount	35	-11	14.4	-1.5	1.76 .63
Winona	37	-7	18.4	-3.0	1.82 .79

m=some data missing

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