



Minnesota Ag News – Crop Weather

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Cooperating with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture

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COOPERATING WITH THE MN DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE - CHANHASSEN MN,
UNIV. OF MINN. EXTENSION SERVICE, DNR STATE CLIMATOLOGY OFFICE, USDA-FSA, AND USDA-NRCS

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

BIG STONE: Everything looks pretty good at this time. No snow, frost coming out. Feed is good and moisture is great going into spring.

BROWN: Snow is gone. Recent rains have assisted in frost going away. No issues in feed availability. Livestock conditions are good. Moisture is adequate.

CARVER: Recent rains have helped to speed the spring thawing process. Tile lines are now flowing. Snow is all gone. Feed availability and livestock conditions are good. Some field work on corn ground that did not get worked last fall. Manure being hauled on fields.

CROW WING: It seems to be plenty cold for March. Nobody in fields anymore but folks were picking corn and feeding it earlier in the month. Snow is gone. Been raining quite a little, so the frost is going out and the field work will stop until it dries. Many fields flooded.

DAKOTA: Received much needed rain. No activities to report at this time.

DODGE: Snow is almost all gone. Got some rain that will help bring the frost out. Moisture is good but will need some more moisture before planting. Livestock are in good condition and feed supplies are good.

DOUGLAS: Corn harvest has been taking place on several of the remaining fields. Snow cover is mostly gone on area fields. Ground is still frozen and runoff has filled many ponds and wetlands beyond their banks. Soil moisture is in surplus.

FILLMORE: No snow cover. Frost depth 2.5 feet. Some manure application taking place.

FREEBORN: We have had a long cold winter and at the moment it doesn't look like we'll be getting into the fields early.

GRANT: Conditions for livestock farmers are difficult at best. Abrupt and constant temperature changes, moisture and wind changes and snow, ice, rain, and high velocity winds making calving and lambing difficult. Feedstuffs and feeding rations, bedding, facilities and so on need to be constantly changed to reflect the "present" weather conditions. A late harvest and resulting trash and unharvested crops, compounded by the adverse weather conditions, are going to make it difficult to determine what to plant and where until the last minute for many farmers. This planting "dilemma" also is influenced by the input costs for each crop and potential for planting "on time" for each crop leading to the highest potential yield per acre.

GOODHUE: This week, with the rains, we have seen the isolated spots of snow and frost dissipate from the fields. There has not been field work done but, with the right weather, it could open up fast, in the light soils, for small grain seeding. There is a lull with the preparation in planting needs being finalized, equipment given the final once over, and waiting for the weather to open up the fields for Spring work.

HOUSTON: Snow cover has melted. No flooding problems were reported.

HUBBARD: Snow cover is nearly gone in the cropland of the county. It has been replaced by water from the melting snow. In some of the low areas of these fields, the frost has gone out with the remaining areas still frozen. Moisture supplies would be considered surplus. Livestock condition and feed supplies are good at this time.

ITASCA: Winter continues to linger. Received six plus inches of snow on March 10th. Warm temperatures melted most of that snow and caused flooding in low areas. Now it has cooled off again and has been snowing for the last couple days, no accumulation though. Aside from the challenge of the weather, calving is in full swing and going well. Feed supplies are high.

JACKSON: Warm weather in the middle of March melted most snow. Significant rain was received after the warm weather. Frost has started to breakup, but cold nights during the last seven days has slowed the thaw. Soil moisture supplies are adequate. Livestock are in good condition, but feed yards are getting sloppy with mud. Feed supplies of hay are above average.

KANABEC: Snow cover has melted, just a light dusting of cover in places. Frost is coming out. Feed is plentiful. Livestock are doing fine except for muddy places. Moisture is plentiful at this time.

KANDIYOHI: Received 5 inches of rain in the last several days. The drainage ditches have crested and starting the slow downward trend. Some tile lines still seem to be frozen, but the water is slowing leaving. Farmers are hoping for warmer weather to get ready for the planting season.

KITTSON: Recent snowfall has the ground covered once again with a white blanket. Prior to the snow, the majority of the snow cover had melted away. Some of the ditch systems have opened and are flowing. The rivers are open and flowing. Concerns exist with flooding. National Weather Service projections show near record level crests are coming. Due to the freeze thaw cycles there are concerns with winterkill on fall seeded crops and forage. Livestock producers report adequate feed supplies at this time. Calving season is in full swing, weather conditions have proved to be challenging at times for livestock producers calving.

KOOCHICHING: The snow was almost gone until last Wednesday when much more snow fell. The water was everywhere, 2 to 3 feet in the pastures in places. Now, most of that has gone, after the cold temps the past few days, The rain on Monday and Tuesday got things moving, the cold and snow slowed things down before they got out of hand. The cows are doing well, calves are coming and looking very good. Hay is holding out. And the pastures should have enough moisture from the rains last fall to get things growing although it is still frozen hard. The spring is slow, but that makes it better to put hay out and the cows can also find places to lie down.

(Over)

LAC QUI PARLE: Flooding and too much water seem to be the biggest issues right now in the county. Over a two day stretch much of the county received over 3" of rain. That, in combination with a lot of snow melting, caused flooding that parts of the county has not seen since the 1997 floods.

LE SUEUR: Recent rains have helped bring the frost out and bolstered soil moisture. Snow is pretty much gone. Feed supplies are good and livestock is in excellent condition.

LINCOLN: Most snow has melted. Some spring rains. Calving has started. If weather cooperates, some will be planting wheat in early April. Livestock are in good condition. Hay is available. After some very warm weather, temperature is below normal again.

MCLEOD: Nearly all of the winter snow cover has melted off. Moisture levels are above average, and recent rains have contributed to standing water in fields. Streams and rivers are roughly 2 feet above flood levels. There is good availability of feed for livestock and even some green grasses in spots due to warmer than average temperatures in late March. Overall, livestock are in great condition and spring calving has begun. The depth of frost is roughly 42" and the depth of thaw is roughly 30".

MAHNOMEN: Early march snowstorm added another foot of snow. Mid March warm up caused snow to melt rapidly and, along with added rain, has led to overland flooding. Excess moisture along with saturated frozen soil is causing the Wild Rice and Red Rivers to reach high flood stages. Most cattle, grain, and bales have been moved. A lot of the remaining corn came off the week of March 16-21. Still some corn left in the fields. Many roads are currently closed. Producers are preparing for flooding. Clean up of fields will need to be done. Farmers are still unsure of planting plans as many fields, especially corn, have a lot of crop residue.

MARSHALL: Overland and river flooding is occurring. There have been power outages caused by ice breaking power line poles in the flooded area near Oslo. A number of farm families are living on their farmsteads within their ring dikes, surrounded by water at this time.

MEEKER: Meeker County received snow early in the month but with recent rains (3" this week) most snow is melted and frost is going out. Some fields have standing water.

MORRISON: As of March 30th, no snow cover. Some frost remains in the soil. Livestock conditions are fair, although the continued wet weather is causing some beef producers to lose some calves.

NOBLES: In open areas there is no snow cover. Moisture is adequate at this time. Livestock condition is good. Planning activities, equipment repair, input purchases, and general readiness are occurring in preparation for spring planting.

OLMSTED: Cold, wet, still snow in woods, north hillsides and ditches. Thawing ground about 2 feet down and greasy driving. Dry, need rain. No one in the fields around here. Farmers getting seed, fertilizer and working on equipment. Growers and ag-retailers are preparing for spring field work. Winter rye seeded as a cover crop is starting to green up.

OTTERTAIL: Snow depth 0 to 10 inches. Fields open, frost is out in some low areas and hilltops. Good feed availability. Livestock look good. Excess moisture.

PINE: Snow cover is at 1/2 inch. Frost out of about 1/3 of county but still in corn stubble and behind groves. Livestock doing well, some have started calving in mud. Topsoil and subsoil have plenty of moisture. Signup is slow for DCP, some are waiting for ACRE program information.

POLK: Concern over saturated fields from last fall. Plenty of field work needs to be done yet. Many fields with corn stubble or corn yet to be harvested. Expecting more snow accumulation yet this week.

ROSEAU: Warmer temperatures as well as up to 2 inches of rain and 4 to 6 inches of snowfall have resulted in flood condition across much of the county. Unless the precipitation ceases for the next two months, spring planting conditions will be less than ideal. Prevented planting is expected, because of the saturated soil conditions last fall and above average snowfall this winter.

STEARNS: I measured over 4.5 inches of rain from Sunday to Wednesday this week. Some localized flooding over township roads. Tiles are running, and soils are saturated. Snow nearly all melted. There has been ponding on alfalfa fields since the February thaw, concerning dairy farmers.

WILKIN: Overland flooding and flooding from the Otter Tail and Red Rivers occurred between the middle and the end of March. Warm temperatures in mid-March caused rapid snow melt. Heavy rain received March 23, followed by colder temperatures and snow during the last week of the month. Very wet, saturated soils. With no fall tillage completed, spring planting will be challenging.

WINONA: No or little snow cover. Four to five foot frost. Feed availability adequate, some hay being shipped in for big dairies. Adequate moisture.

WRIGHT: Snow cover is gone, about 2 inches of rain fell week of March 22nd. Some field work is beginning. We're ready for spring!

Thank you for your comments.

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