

Texas Crop Weather



Released: February 24, 2003 (3:00 P.M. CST)

For the week of February 17 - 23, 2003

TX-CW0803

1-800-626-3142

www.nass.usda.gov/tx

Crop Progress Table - February 23, 2003

Crop	2003	2002	Average 1998-2002
	<i>Percent</i>		
Corn			
Planted	2	6	6
Emerged	1	1	1
Sorghum			
Planted	2	6	4

Crop Condition Table - February 23, 2003

Item	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
	<i>Percent</i>				
Wheat	9	48	32	8	3
Range & Pasture	3	24	37	24	12

Agricultural Summary: The week started with seasonal temperatures and little precipitation. That all changed later in the week, when a cold front collided with moisture from the Gulf to create torrential downpours over a large part of the state. Rainfall amounts ranged from one to three inches in the Edwards Plateau, and totals were generally heavier in parts of Central, Southeast, and East Texas. A swath of very heavy rain spanned from Austin northeast to the Louisiana border. Rain gauge readings in this area ranged from a minimum of four inches to as much as eight inches in some locations. The Panhandle received minimal precipitation ranging from traces to three-quarters of an inch. Isolated locations of the Trans Pecos reported over an inch of rain, but most of the area received less than a half inch. Trace amounts of rain were received in the Rio Grande Valley. Flooding occurred where the heaviest precipitation fell, but was generally minor due to the fact that this was only a two day rain event. Soil moisture levels improved or remained adequate in areas where light precipitation was received, but were at surplus levels over a large part of the state. More rainfall was needed in areas of the Plains to sustain growth of small grains and for summer row crops. Field work in regions where downpours occurred were suspended until conditions improve. Where conditions allowed, producers were deep breaking and fertilizing for summer crops. Some insects were reported on small grain fields and treatments continued for controlling these pests. Livestock were grazing on winter wheat and pastures. Supplemental feeding was still very active across the state. Hay supplies were still adequate, but dwindling in some locations.

Field Crops Report

Small Grains: Mild temperatures early in the week and rainfall benefitted small grain growth in some locations. The lack of soil moisture in the Plains remained a problem. In some areas, irrigation may have to start earlier than normal due to lack of significant rain. Producers continued to apply nitrogen top-dressing. Greenbugs and

other pest problems were reported. Statewide wheat condition was rated at 74 percent of normal compared with 51 percent last year.

Corn: Land preparation in Central Texas was at a standstill due to heavy rain. Planting in this area could be delayed a couple weeks. Planting was on hold along the Coastal Bend due to excess moisture. Planting continued in the Rio Grande Valley, and early plantings were emerging.

Cotton: Producers in drier locations of the High Plains were pre-watering fields due to a lack of winter moisture. Land preparations were delayed in the Coastal Bend due to weather. Early planting continued in the Rio Grande Valley.

Sorghum: Planting was at a standstill in the Coastal Bend and could be delayed by more than a week. Limited planting had begun in parts of the Valley and a few other isolated areas.

Peanuts: Land preparation and field work were active where conditions allowed.

Fruit, Vegetable and Specialty Crop Report

In the **Rio Grande Valley**, harvest of sugarcane, citrus, greens, and cabbage continued. Spring melons were progressing well. Preparations for onion harvest were beginning. Producers were preparing ground for spring planting.

In the **San Antonio-Winter Garden**, spinach and cabbage harvest was delayed due to weather conditions. Producers were concerned with the inability to get into wet fields when spinach was at its peak of maturity. Irrigated carrots and onions were making good progress.

In **Trans Pecos Region**, the fall onion crop was progressing well. Land preparation began for potato planting. Pecan producers were pruning trees and vineyards were busy pruning vines.

In **East Texas**, rain delayed land preparations for early spring vegetable planting. Watermelon planting began in the early half of the week before the weather turned wet. Pruning of fruit trees continued. Planting of cool season onions continued when conditions allowed.

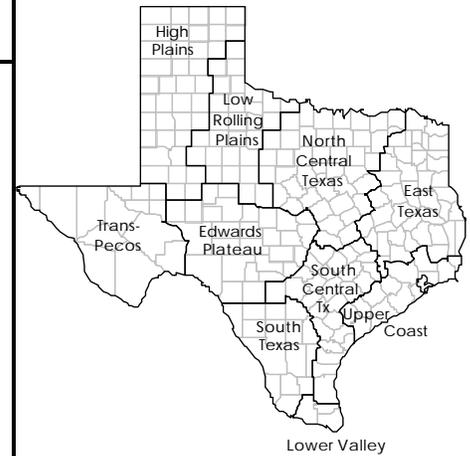
Pecans: General maintenance continued in orchards across the state.

Livestock, Pasture and Range Report

Cattle continue to graze on small grains. Range and pasture conditions improved slightly where needed precipitation fell. Rainfall was still needed in many areas. In regions where rains were heaviest, pastures were extremely wet, and supplemental feeding increased as cattle were bogging down in mud. Hay supplies were beginning to run short in areas that have been consistently soaked by rain during the winter. Supplemental feeding of cattle was heavy in the Plains, East Texas and West Texas, but began to decrease in South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley as temperatures warmed and days got longer. Spring grasses continued turning green and emerging in some locations. More moisture was needed in some Western areas. Spring calving and lambing was underway in many areas. Cattlemen were busy checking cows that were calving and tending to their needs.

Weather Information Table ¹

National Weather Service Climatic Divisions	Previous week (Feb 17 - 23) Accumulation	Month-to-date (Feb 1 - 23) Accumulation	Year-to-date (Jan 1 - Feb 23) Accumulation	1961-90 Annual Normal	Previous three months (Nov - Jan) Percent of Normal
High Plains	0.19	0.24	0.30	18.87	78
Low Rolling Plains	0.44	0.50	0.99	23.78	101
North Central Texas	1.41	2.00	2.43	34.00	74
East Texas	0.98	2.39	3.37	45.69	46
Trans Pecos	0.75	0.89	1.00	12.96	59
Edwards Plateau	1.02	1.33	1.57	24.01	51
South Central Texas	0.37	1.34	2.72	34.48	84
Upper Coast	0.26	2.11	3.87	47.63	68
South Texas	0.34	1.32	2.06	23.49	91
Lower Valley	0.08	0.58	1.25	25.34	93



¹ Average of all stations reporting precipitation data.

Top Soil Moisture by District* - February 23, 2003

Condition	1-N	1-S	2-N	2-S	3	4	5-N	5-S	6	7	8-N	8-S	9	10-N	10-S
	Percent of Acreage														
Very Short	21	23	17	44	8	3	0	0	52	25	0	0	0	2	0
Short	49	37	63	20	28	9	0	0	28	24	0	0	0	9	12
Adequate	30	40	20	36	41	36	54	25	20	39	15	30	4	68	88
Surplus	0	0	0	0	23	52	46	75	0	12	85	70	96	21	0

* High Plains: 1-N, 1-S; Low Rolling Plains: 2-N, 2-S; North Central Plains: 3, 4; East Texas: 5-N, 5-S. Trans-Pecos: 6; Edwards Plateau: 7; South Central Texas: 8-N, 8-S; Upper Coast: 9; South Texas: 10-N; Lower Valley: 10-S.

**Cooperating Agencies:
Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Department of Agriculture, National Weather Service.**