

**REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY
(continued)**

Comments are based on comments reported by extension agents, farmers, commodity specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals.

CENTRAL

APPOMATTOX (Bruce Jones)

Dry conditions continue in Appomattox County. Corn silage harvest continues at a rapid pace due to lower than usual yields. Corn is drying down rapidly. Early planted soybeans are dropping leaves and the first harvest may take place this week. Dark tobacco still looks good but mainly due to irrigation. Water is becoming an issue for some cattle producers. Producers now pricing winter feed are becoming very concerned and many are downsizing their herds to match hay and feed on hand.

CAROLINE (McGann Saphir)

Moisture conditions have been critical for soybeans for a couple of weeks. We have had no rain in that time. Plants are under major stress and are dropping their flowers without forming pods. Continued dry weather will mean major loss of yield which is already down an estimated 40%. Hayfields and pastures are dormant and have browned out. Livestock farmers are feeding first cutting of hay and green chop silage. Vegetable farmers are irrigating heavily and harvesting melons, eggplant, blackberries, and tomatoes. Strawberry producers are laying down plastic and preparing to plant next season's crop. Fall pumpkins and winter squash are maturing--mostly under irrigation.

NELSON (Michael Lachance)

Severe drought conditions are setting in. Cattle are beginning to be fed with hay. The County is seeking drought declaration.

SPOTSYLVANIA (John Howe)

Corn silage harvest is underway and some hay is being cut and harvested. Very dry conditions. No material rainfall for the month of August. Soybean production is in doubt due to the dry conditions.

SOUTHERN

CHARLOTTE (Bob Jones)

Charlotte County has adopted a resolution requesting a drought/disaster designation at the request of the Extension Service.

MECKLENBURG (Taylor Clarke)

Moisture conditions have worsened rapidly since the beginning of August. The tobacco crop is in need of moisture to improve curing conditions and mature later plantings. Crop progress remains two to three weeks behind normal. Producers are exhausting or have exhausted their irrigation water. Soybeans are in dire need of moisture to salvage some yield. With no prospects of moisture in the forecast, soybean yields will most likely be well below last year. Corn silage is drying down faster than harvest is progressing.

PRINCE GEORGE (Scott Reiter)

Rain is the discussion topic everywhere you go. A localized thunderstorm dropped 2 inches of rain in a small area last Friday, but crops are showing stress again this week. Soybean growers are starting to look for corn earworm and the first ones have been found this week. Beef producers are feeding hay regularly since July.



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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**WEATHER
&
CROPS**



Week Of: August 18- 24, 2008

Number: 24

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CROP SUMMARY FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 24, 2008

Dry conditions persisted throughout the Commonwealth. Corn and soybean conditions worsened. Days suitable for field work were 6.9. Late planted soybeans are in danger of not making decent yields without rain. Some of the soybean crop is dropping flowers prematurely. In at least one county, soybean producers expect a 40% decrease in yield when compared to last year. The drought-like conditions have cattlemen downsizing beef herds. Vegetable and tobacco growers have been irrigating heavily. In some places, the irrigation water has been exhausted. Other farming activities included harvesting corn silage, feeding livestock, picking tomatoes, and preparing fields for strawberry plantings.

Week Ending	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
August 24, 2008	41	44	15	0
August 17, 2008	28	42	30	0
August 10, 2008	17	43	40	0
August 3, 2008	15	35	49	1
July 27, 2008	7	35	56	2

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CROP CONDITION PERCENT					
Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pasture	23	28	36	12	1
Livestock	2	5	34	51	8
Hay, Other	12	29	38	19	2
Hay, Alfalfa	3	18	44	32	3
Corn	10	19	25	34	12
Soybeans	11	19	42	25	3
Tobacco, Flue-cured	7	18	39	34	2
Tobacco, Burley	1	10	19	50	20
Tobacco, Fire-cured	2	50	25	23	0
Peanuts	0	11	22	60	7
Cotton	0	8	46	40	6
Apples, All	0	0	19	62	19
Grapes	0	1	5	74	20

CROP PROGRESS PERCENT – WITH COMPARISONS				
Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5 Year Avg.
Corn Dough	83	80	85	85
Corn Dent	70	58	66	59
Corn Mature	35	22	21	25
Corn Silage Harvested	36	26	38	33
Soybeans Blooming	92	72	86	92
Soybeans Setting Pods	72	42	65	74
Tobacco, Flue Cured Harvested	28	25	37	35
Tobacco, Burley Harvested	10	4	10	10
Tobacco, Dark Fire Cured Harvested	38	30	NA	NA
Cotton Bolls Opening	10	8	32	31
Summer Apples Harvested	63	43	92	93
Peaches Harvested	72	69	92	90
Oats for Grain Harvested	71	68	NA	NA

VIRGINIA WEEKLY WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK OF August 17 – 23, 2008													
City	Temperature						Growing degree days (modified base 50) 1/		Precipitation				
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal *	Mar. 1 to Aug 23	Mar. 1 to Aug 23 normal	Last Week	Since Jun. 1	Jun. 1 dep. from normal *	Year to date	Year dep. from normal *
Lynchburg	87	62	93	56	75	1	2835	2832	0.00	2.97	-7.63	17.02	-11.82
Norfolk	84	70	88	68	77	0	3312	3117	0.00	6.38	-6.12	21.78	-9.33
Richmond	89	64	96	61	76	0	3274	3070	0.00	7.79	-3.49	29.11	0.00
Roanoke	87	63	91	58	75	1	3004	NA	0.00	8.91	-1.45	20.89	-7.33
Wash/Dulles	87	59	92	56	73	-1	2826	NA	0.00	7.64	-2.68	29.38	2.18

1/ Formula used: GDD = (daily maximum (86°) + daily minimum (500)); where 86° is used if the maximum exceeds 86° and 50° is used if the minimum falls below 50°. * Normal based on 1971-2000 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>. NA = not available. T=trace. Source: USDA, NASS, Virginia Field Office.

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NORTHERN

CLARKE (Jake Grove)

Continued dry weather is starting to hurt pastures and later planted crops

FAUQUIER (Tim Mize)

Dry conditions continue throughout the County. Late season soybeans are in danger. Cutting of corn for silage is well underway. Pasture conditions continue to deteriorate. Late dry weather has helped vineyards and orchards.

FREDERICK (Michael Clem)

Early apple varieties are being harvested. Frederick County had 0 inches of rainfall this week.

WESTERN

AUGUSTA (Brian Jones)

Dry weather continues to grip the southern and eastern portions of the County. Corn that was planted early is nearing silage maturity. Silage harvest has already begun on many farms. Late corn is really suffering in the dry areas of the county. Rain at this point will probably not help any of the corn in the area. Pastures and hay fields are also desperate for rain, and many farmers have been feeding hay for two weeks already.

EASTERN

ACCOMACK (Jim Belote)

The lack of rain is beginning to affect soybean crop. Storms predicted for next few days. If they are widespread and of an inch or more immediate threat to soybean crop will be alleviated but timely and significant rains will still be needed. Corn crop is about done. Early corn harvest should start in a week or so. Yields will be off significantly in some areas due to lack of rain but close to average in areas where thunderstorms hit. The price of inputs is of great concern for fall and next year's crops. Some farmers are not contracting and being very cautious because they cannot price inputs for next crops.

Tomato harvest is still going on. Farmers are scouting soybean fields and finding worms like the corn earworm but at threshold levels below the need to spray so far. If dry weather continues it could be a major problem.

ESSEX (Keith Balderson)

Lack of widespread rains is taking a toll on soybean yield potential and pasture and hay production. The soybean crop is in a critical stage right now, and rain is needed very soon to avoid very significant yield loss. Producers spent the week scouting soybeans for corn earworm, attending field days, and getting equipment ready for harvest. Earworm pressure has been spotty with some acreage being treated as economic thresholds were reached. Some early corn was harvested during the week with yields of 70 to 140 bushels per acre reported.

SOUTHWESTERN

GRAYSON (Kevin Spurlin)

Pastures that were improving a month ago are gone. Hay is being fed and with last year's hay shortage, beef herds have already started downsizing. The prolonged drought is again creating water shortage concerns as springs are failing. Corn will start entering the silo this week barring substantial rain.

TAZEWELL (John Blankenship)

The county is relying on scattered thunderstorms for moisture. The second cutting of hay is very short with many weeds due to dry conditions