

**REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY  
(continued)**

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

**EASTERN**

**ACCOMACK (Jim Belote)**

Two inches of rain received from storm last night will benefit the late planted soybeans. Early soybeans turning yellow and are dropping leaves. Corn moisture high once again so, harvest will be delayed. Rains will help greatly in the preparing of seedbeds for wheat crop. Some farmers are spraying for Johnson grass. Decreased worm activity in soybeans and other crops and as a result spraying quite a bit less than last week. Farmers were attending meetings because heavy rains have kept them out of the fields. The rain came in perfect timing for the fall wheat crop and very late planted soybeans.

**ESSEX (Keith Balderson)**

Rain late in the week replenished soil moisture and will help some late soybeans. Pastures and hay fields will benefit greatly also. Corn harvest has progressed well. Depending on the locality, county yields will be better than average to below average with a very wide range of yields being reported. Local grain elevators have done a good job of handling the crop. An increase in on-farm storage has also reduced the strain on elevators. Some producers have started taking soil samples in preparation for small grain planting. Wheat acreage may be down as wheat prices have dropped dramatically in the past 2 months and input costs have continued to increase.

**MIDDLESEX (David Moore)**

Rain and wind at week's end stopped corn harvest. Corn harvest continued for the week. Yields are poor to excellent depending on where the rain hit and what soil type you have. Some land preparation continues to prepare corn fields for small grain planting. Double crop soybeans continue to fill pods and recent showers will help. Full season soybeans have been hurt by summer drought and will yield less than double crop soybeans. Producers are making plans for small grain planting. High input costs are causing concern among producers and

will have an affect on number of wheat acres. Sweet potatoes and pumpkins have been harvested.

**SOUTHEASTERN**

**BRUNSWICK (Cynthia L. Gregg)**

Rain last week helped some more. Some producers are trying to get in a last cutting of hay. Pastures have responded well to the rain, speculating that the early heat made the cool season grasses go dormant. Crops are still in tough shape, corn ears are small with little kernel, soybeans are still slow in pod fill. Some fall planted alfalfa is coming up nicely as are some cool season grasses.

**DINWIDDIE (Mike Parrish)**

Ninety percent of our grapes have been harvested.

**SURRY (Glenn Slade)**

Recent rains have replenished soil moisture and helped peanuts fill out. I haven't heard of any diggers in the field yet. Cotton defoliation has begun and some pickers may hit the field this week.

**SUSSEX (Kelvin Wells)**

We got some heavy rain last week which has stopped field work. Most of the rain came Friday. It will be another 3 or 4 days before farmers can get back into the fields. In the next few days, farmers will start shredding corn stocks, planting cover crops, and defoliating cotton. Corn yields are about 50% - 60% of last year's yield. Peanuts yields will probably be above state average. Cotton yields will be between 800-900 pounds.

**VIRGINIA BEACH (Cal Schiemann)**

The recent storm brought 4 - 5 inches of rain. The rain will help late season beans and fall vegetable crops, but corn harvest is at a stand still. Strawberry growers will start planting as soon as fields are dry enough for equipment.



NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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**WEATHER  
&  
CROPS**



**Week Of: September 22 - 28, 2008**

**Number: 29**

**Released: September 29, 2008**

**CROP SUMMARY FOR WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 28, 2008**

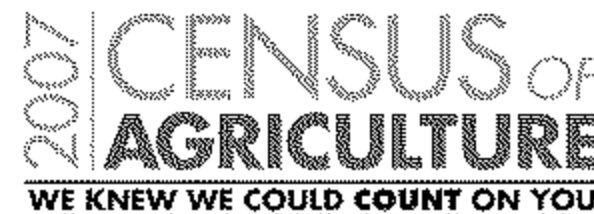
Most of Virginia experienced rains this week, except for parts of southwestern Virginia. Continued hot temperatures and lack of rain have southwestern Virginia cattlemen worrying about a feed shortage. Days suitable for field work were 4.7. The recent rains improved livestock forage, improved seedbeds for wheat, and improved late season soybean conditions. However, rains also delayed fieldwork. The corn and apple harvests were delayed, as well as the planting of cover crops. Farmers are using this down time to attend meetings and to make plans for next year's crop. Other farming activities included chopping corn stalks, planting strawberries, reseeding pastureland, taking soil samples, and harvesting sweet potatoes and pumpkins.

TOPSOIL MOISTURE PERCENT				
Week Ending	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
September 28, 2008	5	19	68	8
September 21, 2008	10	29	58	3
September 14, 2008	5	19	68	8
September 7, 2008	5	20	67	8
August 31, 2008	26	32	40	2

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CROP CONDITION PERCENT					
Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pasture	6	18	37	37	2
Livestock	1	4	29	59	7
Hay, Other	3	25	32	38	2
Hay, Alfalfa	0	16	36	42	6
Corn	11	21	27	35	6
Soybeans	5	19	37	34	5
Peanuts	0	13	41	40	6
Cotton	0	13	38	40	9
Apples, All	0	1	21	67	11
Grapes	0	1	7	77	15

VIRGINIA WEEKLY WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK OF September 21 - 27, 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 Sept 27	Mar. 1 to Sept 27 normal	Last Week	Since Sept. 1	Sept. 1 dep. from normal *	Year to date	Year dep. from normal *
Lynchburg	70	54	80	47	62	-3	3507	3514	0.85	2.27	-1.16	22.02	-10.84
Norfolk	74	66	80	63	70	0	4173	3911	2.79	7.22	3.58	29.03	-6.80
Richmond	75	59	82	53	67	0	4058	3798	2.15	5.27	1.74	40.01	6.39
Roanoke	73	55	80	48	64	-1	3709	NA	1.17	2.16	-1.26	27.10	-5.94
Wash/Dulles	74	54	81	46	64	-1	3534	NA	0.95	6.45	3.02	37.07	5.39

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.

### REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY

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#### NORTHERN

##### FAUQUIER (Timothy Mize)

Plentiful moisture late in the month has stockpiled forages off to a good start. The apple harvest was off to a good start; however, rains late in week have delayed harvest. The apple crop looks to be above average in quality and quantity. The grape harvest appears healthy also. Corn silage yields are average to slightly lower.

##### PRINCE WILLIAM (Paige Thacker)

The County has submitted a drought declaration resolution for the BOCS to consider October 7th. This season's spring moisture delayed crop planting, and once crops were planted, we had a decrease in rainfall. We had no rain from July 4th through August 28th resulting in a 30% crop reduction for soybeans, corn and pasture.

#### CENTRAL

##### CAROLINE (McGann Saphir)

Grain farmers are finishing up corn harvest. Farmers are also chopping stalks and planting wheat and barley. The majority of soybeans are still too green to harvest. Farmers are preparing to switch over to soybean headers and mowing field margins to move to soybeans as soon as corn harvest is done. Some early beans may have to be harvested sooner to avoid losses from dropping seed. Strawberry producers are planting next years crop and vegetable farmers are still harvesting the last of the tomato crop and starting to pick winter squash and pumpkins. Pastures and hayfields have rebounded very well due to the recent rains. Soil moisture has also improved yield prospects for soybeans.

##### NELSON (Michael Lachance)

Hay is being cut with difficulty in curing due to the rainy weather. Orchards are holding apple festivals. Good portion of harvested fruit has small size due to heavy crop load and inadequate thinning.

##### POWHATAN (Eric Bowen)

Recent rains will be very beneficial as producers are reseeding drought stressed pastures. Pastures are recovering although producers are still feeding hay to allow adequate re-growth prior to grazing.

#### SOUTHWESTERN

##### LEE (Harold Jerrell)

No rain since 1.3 inches fell the first week of September. Fall cutting of hay is poor to none available. It was hot, dry, and dusty.

##### SCOTT (Scott Jerrell)

Rain potential for this week is encouraging to farmers looking to make late 2nd cutting or 3rd cutting of hay. Many are on edge looking at feed supplies vs. cattle numbers and reducing herd size to match feed.

#### SOUTHERN

##### PITTSYLVANIA (Stephen Barts, Jamie Stowe)

Late season rains have slowed tobacco maturity and harvest. Frost date is a growing concern for tobacco producers. Corn yields were low. Winter wheat seeding will begin as soon as tobacco harvest is finished for most producers. Pasture and hay lands have benefitted from the recent rains, but we still expect yields to be lower than normal. Most producers have begun or will begin fall hay cutting in the next week.

CROP PROGRESS PERCENT – WITH COMPARISONS				
Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5 Year Avg.
Corn Mature	92	81	94	86
Corn Harvested for Grain	41	29	51	40
Corn Silage Harvested	84	74	99	89
Soybeans Dropping Leaves	35	23	44	44
Winter Wheat Seeded	8	7	6	8
Barley Seeded	25	18	32	24
Tobacco, Flue Cured Harvested	58	45	83	83
Tobacco, Burley Harvested	70	50	89	88
Peanuts Dug	5	4	27	21
Peanuts Combined	2	0	14	9
Cotton Bolls Opening	87	77	98	85
Cotton Harvested	3	0	7	6
Fall Apples Harvested	48	30	69	67
Winter Apples Harvested	30	NA	28	20
Oats for Grain Seeded	19	NA	NA	NA