

WASHINGTON CROP WEATHER

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Crop and Weather Information for the Month of February 2002

WESTERN

Clallam/Jefferson: The weather was mostly normal for mid-winter. A few days of heavy rain caused serious flood damage along the Dungeness River. Heavy snowfall in Clallam County was above average for the area. Several days of beautiful sunshine inspired thoughts that spring is on it's way. There were no reports of crop or cropland damage reported.

Grays Harbor/Lewis: Fields started drying out after a week of sunshine. Sod was dry enough to be plowed in many areas, but tilled fields were still too wet to be worked. Temperatures in the 20's held up spring activities. Grass growth was starting slowly.

Pierce/S. King: The weather has been normal for this time of year. There were no reports of damage to any crops that winter over.

Skagit: Very little fieldwork was accomplished, due to saturated fields. Growers attended meetings and got their equipment ready for the season. Hand harvest of daffodils began on schedule. The crop was looking very good, having come through the fairly mild winter months with little damage. Overwintered vegetable seed crops looked good.

Snohomish/N. King: The weather has been mostly normal for mid-winter. A few days of heavy rain and above normal temperatures caused moderate flooding in several areas. Several days of sunshine and moderate temperatures helped late winter, early spring flowers, and trees start to bloom. There were no reports of crops or cropland damage.

CENTRAL

Benton: Fruit tree pruning was finishing up. Wine grape pruning got into full swing. Fields were being prepared for planting.

Douglas/Chelan: Total precipitation received was between 8-9 inches in Douglas County, which is 65 percent of normal precipitation. Drought conditions for the upcoming crop year continues to be of great concern for dryland crops and pasture. However, due to mountain snowpack, it is estimated that the irrigation supply will be adequate. Fruit trees fared well this winter with no frost

damage.

Franklin: The temperature has been cold and very little fieldwork was going on. Fields had little snow cover.

Yakima: Above average temperatures varied from 9 degrees below normal to 17 degrees above normal, with .84 inches of precipitation. There were no suspected crop losses due to weather conditions.

EASTERN

Asotin/Garfield: Limited fieldwork started in the lower elevations the third week of February, but was halted by cold weather this past week. Soil samples indicated that moisture was below normal in most parts of both counties, except in the higher elevations. Snow pack in the mountains was considered good this year and will help with stream flows later in the year. Winter wheat was small, but survived the winter to this point. Pastures were in poor condition due to last year's drought and have the potential for poor growth this year due to below normal moisture in many areas.

Lincoln: For a few days, water was running off frozen ground, but erosion was minimal in most cases. Soil moisture conditions were satisfactory, although it was reported that the sub level was somewhat less than normal. Although a few abnormally cold days were experienced, temperatures on the whole have been normal. Crops looked fine.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: The winter moisture was pretty good this year for both counties. In Spokane County, the snow came and went numerous times this winter. Most of the snow, was off the fields except on the north side of the hills. There is frost on the ground, which has been around on and off all winter. Moisture from snow melt and rain has mostly soaked into the ground. The winter wheat crop looks like it will make it through the winter okay. There were concerns that temperatures were not cold long enough to winterkill volunteer barley and wild oats. Bluegrass stands did not look very green except the new seedings and first year crops. No fieldwork has begun in either county. Pend Oreille County was for the most part still under snow.

Stevens: Hay was in very short supply and very expensive (\$140 to \$150 per ton).

Walla Walla: Overall, weather and growing conditions are favorable at this time.