



United States Department  
of Agriculture

National Agricultural  
Statistics Service

NASS

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# Washington Crop Weather

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## Crop and Weather Information for the Month of February 2005

### Western

**Clark/Skamania/Cowlitz/Wakiakum:** February was extremely dry in southwest Washington. Daytime temperatures in the high 50's and low 60's caused concern for the upcoming season. Fruit and berry producers were very concerned that the warm temperatures will bring premature budding and possible frost damage.

**Grays Harbor:** Although February began with almost daily rainfall, by mid-month unseasonably warm, dry conditions prevailed. Agricultural producers took advantage of the spring-like weather and began doing field cultivation. The lack of rainfall greatly reduced soil moisture and allowed early soil cultivation. Christmas tree growers continued planting trees and preparing to make herbicide applications due to the rapid growth of weeds. Livestock producers were jubilant that accelerated forage growth reduced the amount of supplemental hay needed by livestock. Greenhouse tomato growers were pleased with the additional heat units that resulted in rapid plant growth. Home gardeners took advantage of the beautiful weather to begin spring garden activities. Most lawns received their first mowing of the year. It appears that February broke all existing records for an extended dry spell and daily high temperatures.

**Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific:** Conditions have been dry, which allowed crop farmers to begin spring tillage. Everyone was concerned about the lack of snow pack in the mountains and the impact it will have on subsoil moisture. Dry conditions are normal for this time of year, but if the pattern persists it could be a disaster by early summer.

**Skamania:** Abnormally dry, warm weather continued.

**Snohomish/ King:** In early February a couple of inches of precipitation was received, which left standing water in many fields. The last half of the month was very dry with virtually no precipitation. Pruning of fruit trees and caning of raspberries was nearly complete. Many ornamental plants were blooming several weeks ahead of schedule.

**Thurston:** A month of unseasonably dry weather provided a tremendous bonus to agricultural producers. Soils were much easier to work due to the lack of rainfall, with some producers doing some very early plowing. Pastures began to grow, reducing the amount of supplemental hay needed. Christmas tree growers were jubilant with the dry conditions which greatly facilitated tree planting. The unseasonably warm temperatures resulted in the accelerated bloom on flowering trees and shrubs. Some early blooming rhododendrons and ornamental flowering cherries in Olympia were in full bloom. Home gardeners were kept busy mowing lawns to keep up with the rapid growth of turfgrass. Retail garden stores and nurseries reported strong demand for primroses and other early blooming herbaceous plants. Initial reports suggest that the current dry spell may have been a record for the lack of rainfall.

### Central

**Benton:** There was growing concern for the lack of snow pack in the mountains and what consequences it will have on the irrigation season. There were no reports of cold injury on tree fruit or grapes. Pruning continued.

**Chelan/Douglas:** Snowfall was very minimal, so precipitation levels were considerably short. Warmer than normal temperatures were received during the month, which caused concern for the condition of the winter wheat. Fruit producers were pruning. Chemicals were expected to be applied a month early due to the warm weather and early spring bloom. Mountain snow pack levels caused fear that irrigation water will be cut back during the growing season. Many producers do not have supplemental water supplies. Several livestock producers reported they were hauling water to winter pastures where well water was normally available.

**Ferry/Okanogan:** The month of February brought minimal precipitation. Snow pack was near normal in the Kettle River Basin but was only 45 percent and less in other areas. Temperatures have been warmer than normal. Cattlemen began calving season.

**Grant:** The month of February was very dry. Spring wheat planting proceeded earlier than normal. Shearing sheep is scheduled to begin in mid-March.

**Yakima:** Average temperatures in February varied from 5 degrees below normal to 10 degrees above normal, with 0.18 of an inch of precipitation. No crop losses were reported, but producers were concerned about the potential effects of the ongoing dry weather conditions.

### Eastern

**Adams:** Dry conditions persisted. Spring wheat seeding began, but will be limited due to the lack of soil moisture.

**Asotin:** February 2005 was the driest on record. All crops and pastures were in need of moisture. Many producers decided not to plant spring crops or cut back substantially on acreage. Winter wheat was still in good condition but needs additional moisture to make a normal crop. Snow pack in the mountains was at historical lows, causing stream flows to be well below normal. There is much concern about whether streams, springs, and wells may dry up due to the drought.

**Lincoln:** Dry conditions persisted. Spring wheat seeding will begin within the next two weeks but will be limited because of the lack of soil moisture.

**Lincoln (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Fieldwork began in some parts of the county. Lack of accumulated precipitation resulted in very dry soil conditions, which will limit spring plantings for some producers. Spring calving was in progress.

**Whitman:** Conditions remained very dry, and concern was mounting with regard to the impact on fall seeded crops and pastures. Some producers were discussing whether to limit the acreage of spring crops or whether seeding spring crops will even be feasible. Precipitation in the next 30 days will be critical to spring planting decisions and fall crop conditions.

Monthly Weather Statistics  
 Tuesday, February 1 to Monday, February 28, 2005

Station	Air Temperature			Precipitation			HDD TOT	HDD DFN	Days of 32 Cold	Days of 28 Cold	
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN					DAYS
WEST											
Bellingham	:60	23	40	-2	1.64	-2.00	8	695	+27	19	15
Everett	:61	27	42	-1	1.61	-1.62	8	644	+0	12	2
Hoquiam	:64	28	44	-1	1.50	-6.74	7	588	+8	12	4
Kelso	:70	21	42	+0	1.10	-3.84	8	636	+3	17	14
Olympia	:65	20	40	-2	0.84	-4.93	6	703	+34	20	16
Sea-Tac	:61	26	43	-1	1.09	-2.90	5	619	+16	11	3
Shelton	:63	21	41	-2	2.09	-5.96	6	660	+26	17	14
Tacoma	:63	21	40	-3	0.46	-4.00	6	691	+64	20	16
Vancouver	:65	22	43	+2	1.14	-3.39	7	615	-37	17	10
CENTRAL											
Ellensburg	:63	15	38	+6	0.15	-0.74	2	758	-146	22	20
Omak AP	:58	16	35	+6	0.01	-1.39	1	833	-165	28	24
Stampede Pass	:58	17	36	+10	1.67	-7.52	8	793	-272	18	13
Wenatchee	:59	20	37	+4	0.17	-0.59	3	773	-94	25	18
Yakima AP	:61	14	37	+2	0.16	-0.58	6	772	-29	27	24
NORTHEAST											
Colville	:61	13	34	+3	0.57	-1.29	3	867	-91	28	27
Deer Park	:58	11	33	+2	0.10	-1.57	3	901	-45	28	27
Republic	:56	7	30	+2	0.04	-1.18	2	970	-48	28	28
Spokane AP	:57	16	35	+2	0.04	-1.45	2	843	-46	26	22
EAST CENTRAL											
Ephrata	:62	17	37	+3	0.01	-0.69	1	791	-69	27	20
Moses Lake	:63	16	36	+3	0.03	-0.67	1	798	-62	27	21
Quincy	:61	17	37	+3	0.00	-0.69	0	783	-77	27	22
Ritzville	:61	19	36	+3	0.00	-1.09	0	796	-71	27	22
SOUTHEAST											
Hanford	:59	18	38	-2	0.03	-0.57	1	741	+17	26	21
Pasco	:62	14	38	-2	0.05	-0.65	2	752	+31	28	20
Pullman	:60	15	37	+3	0.05	-2.10	2	790	-78	22	19
Walla Walla Rgn	:63	23	40	+0	0.16	-1.68	3	704	+0	19	13
Whitman Miss.	:63	14	36	-4	0.10	-1.11	3	811	+73	27	26
ID PANHANDLE											
Coeur D'A' AP	:57	18	36	+2	0.04	-2.44	2	812	-36	26	23
Lewiston	:61	22	40	+2	0.11	-0.78	4	686	-41	20	11

Summary based on NWS data. DFN = Departure from Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period). Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.  
 Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.  
 Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit. HDD = Heating Degree Days (Base 65).  
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