



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

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Washington Crop Weather

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Crop and Weather Information for the Month of January 2006

Western

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: January weather was very, very wet. Precipitation was more than twice the normal average. Amazingly, in spite of the saturated soil conditions, only minor flooding occurred and no known crop losses were experienced.

Kitsap: Second highest record of rainfall received for January since 1953 with nearly 20 inches. Soils were saturated and no field work was possible.

Mason: With almost 40 inches of rain during January, there was a surplus of water almost everywhere. In the Skokomish River valley, flood watches were an almost daily occurrence and other local water bodies experienced high flows and flooding as well. Mud became a serious issue for livestock producers, with many pastures left under water. Vegetable producers who planted cover crops were happy to retain soil in their fields, with several experiencing standing water in their fields. Evening temperatures were relatively cool, with a few nights dropping below freezing. Daytime temperatures hovered around the 50 degree mark, bringing spring bulbs and deciduous trees and shrubs into bud. Many farmers are looking forward to a break in the rain, so they can return to getting some much needed work done in preparation for spring.

Mason (2nd Report): January was the second wettest January on record according to the local newspaper, and some areas had recorded 23.1 inches of rain for the month. In the lowlands and riverlands flooding was apparent. There was a lot of wind and trees were dropping as a result. Producers were not able to stay on schedule with pruning and staking of berries. Temperatures have been mild all winter.

Pierce/King: There was a lot of rain during January. It rained nearly every day. Rhubarb fields were being pumped to prevent rotting from flooded fields.

Pierce/S. King: Rain, rain, rain and more rain. There were reports of possible crop damage due to excessive rain and flooding in the South Puget Sound area. Producers will have to wait until Spring to know for sure.

Snohomish/King: Very wet all month with several inches of precipitation every week. There was standing water in most lowland fields and some flooding. Temperatures were mostly mild with some light frosts.

Thurston: Livestock were doing well. Lots of rain makes for some mud in feedlots, but overall conditions were favorable.

Central

Benton: The area continued to get some rain with wind. The area during the month of December received an average of 2 inches of precipitation.

Chelan/Douglas: More than normal moisture in the form of rain, and snow in the higher elevations was received in January. Warmer than normal temperatures were experienced. Fruit producers were beginning to prune their orchards.

Franklin: Like December, January's precipitation was above normal around 1.2 inches which is 136% of normal. It was also quite a bit warmer averaging 38.4 degrees which is 6.6 degrees above normal. Snowfall was down considerably at .5 inches compared to a normal measure of 4.2 inches. Wind, especially during the last week of the month was extreme. The rains were excellent, but there were concerns that if we head into a beginning of spring type weather pattern it could pull some crops, particularly fruit trees out of dormancy a little to early making them and/or fruit buds susceptible to frost damage. Hard frosts do come in later February, March and even April. There was no field activity occurring except perhaps in orchards and vineyards.

Grant: Cool season grasses began spring growth. Cheatgrass on dryland range was approximately 2 inches tall.

Klickitat: Precipitation (rain) received was way above normal. Winter wheat and barley should benefit greatly, but there was concern about lack of snowpack and water availability for later in the growing season. The mild winter has probably helped many pests and pathogens survive. Producers also anticipate significant frost heave from frequent freezing and thawing.

Okanogan/Ferry: The counties received higher than normal precipitation accompanied with warmer temperatures than normal. Fruit producers were in the process of pruning their orchards.

Yakima: Average temperatures in January ranged from 1 degree below normal to 19 degrees above normal, with 1.81 inches of precipitation. No crop damage due to weather conditions was reported.

Eastern

Adams: One of the wetter January's in recent memory provided great relief to dryland wheat growers, who now face the prospect of average or above average crops. Weather over the month was typically above normal in temperature. Most precipitation was received as rain on open soils, netting lots of subsoil moisture, and minimal erosion.

Adams (2nd Report): Precipitation during the last month has been well above average and will go along way to replacing depleted soil moisture conditions experienced during the past few seasons. Winter wheat remained in mostly fair/good condition and will benefit greatly from recent precipitation.

Asotin/Garfield: January's temperatures were well above normal for the entire month. Precipitation was above normal in some areas and below normal in other areas. Winter wheat was in good condition, but was smaller than normal due to last fall's drought. It is also vulnerable to winter damage if cold weather returns, as there is not snow cover on the crop. Snowpack in the mountains was normal to above normal, which will aid in stream flows, wells and springs returning to normal this year.

Columbia: Field activity was minimal with rain keeping the soil upper profile too wet for wheeled traffic most days. Soil moisture was now adequate to surplus in most areas. Winter wheat was greening and some aerial top dressing had occurred. Winter wheat was looking good to excellent. Winter annual weed problems were developing. Cattle operations were feeding hay to get through the winter, following the dry summer and fall.

Lincoln: Precipitation was good with the majority of it soaking into the soil, although there were some reports of runoff and erosion on irrigated land. Pastures conditions also benefitted from the snow and rain, with some previously dry livestock ponds now beginning to fill up due to the increased precipitation.

Lincoln (2nd Report): Precipitation during the last month was well above average and will go along way to replacing depleted soil moisture conditions experienced during the past few seasons. Winter wheat remained in mostly good condition and will benefit greatly from recent precipitation.

Lincoln (3rd Report): Rain fall was plentiful in January. All moisture was going in the ground. January rainfall made up for the dry November.

Pend Oreille: January 2006 had temperature high of 45 degrees and low of 16 degrees. Ten days of weather suitable to work but no days worked due to either snow on the ground or lots of mud. Most snow days ended with rain, leaving standing water which turned to ice. All livestock and poultry were on feed, no pasture available with mud, ice, and snow. Very unusual winter so far. Greatest mixture of rain and snow seen in eleven years in this area.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: The month of January received approximately 4 inches of rain/moisture in the Spokane area. Pend Oreille County they had upwards of 5 inches in the month of January. For the most part the snow had come and gone but did not stick around. The higher elevations received snow fall and have a pretty good snowpack generated at this time. Winter wheat looked good for this time of year and the weeds have been growing with the warmer than normal temperatures. Feed situations should not be that bad due to moderate temperatures. Calves were being born on most ranches.

Stevens: Chewelah recorded 5.24 inches of rain. Temperatures were warmer than normal.

Stevens (2nd Report): Mild temperatures and abundant precipitation have led to saturated ground. Calving has begun.

Walla Walla: Quite a bit of rain received earlier in the month. Milder temperatures experienced with heavy wind. Crops were greening up and looking good. Rangeland looked good at this point.

Whitman: Conditions were warm and wet. Precipitation at Colfax was 175% of normal for the month of January. The extra rainfall will go a long way to help recharge depleted subsoil moisture. Temperatures were above normal with very little snow, but lots of rainfall.

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