



United States Department  
of Agriculture

National Agricultural  
Statistics Service

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# Washington Crop Weather

Released: January 7, 2008  
Month Ending: December 2007  
CWP WA-CW0107

## Crop Progress and Condition for the Month of December 2007

### Western

**Clallam:** December was wet, but unseasonably warm for the area. No deep freezes thus far and what little snow was received did not stick for long. Two big wind storms have been about "it" as far as severe weather. The area dodged a bullet compared to many other areas when it comes to flooding from the recent heavy rains and warm fronts that hammered Southwest WA.

**Clark:** It had been a slow time for area garden centers. Public garden shows will begin in February in Portland.

**Clark/Skamania/Cowlitz/Wahkiakum:** Wild weather, including flooding and wind storms in SW Washington caused major damage in coastal counties, and in Lewis County. Some flooding in Wahkiakum County was reported. There was blown-down timber reported in Wahkiakum County as well.

**Grays Harbor:** Agricultural producers were involved in a massive cleanup project as a result of a record breaking flood on the Chehalis River and a hurricane force windstorm in early December. Wind speeds were clocked in excess of those occurring during the Columbus Day storm of 1962. Major structural damage to farm buildings, fences and flood damage were all prevalent. The clean-up effort will take years to accomplish.

**Mason:** December floods took their toll on producers in the Skokomish Valley and Belfair/Tahuya areas. Many producers lost fences, received tons of debris on fields, and some even lost animals. Several bridges also washed out. Shellfish producers in the Hoodspout area received sediment on their shellfish beds. The toll there will not truly be known until daytime low tides return and damage can be more accurately assessed. Christmas tree growers in affected areas were still unsure of their damage as well. Nursery stock growers lost some potted stock in the floods, and at least two greenhouses fell in the snow that preceded the rain. Many folks throughout the county, however, counted themselves lucky with only incidental damage. Everyone hopes that will be the last big winter storm for this year.

**Pacific:** High winds and rainfall caused major damage to coastal counties early in the month. Growers were forced to deal with everything from damaged buildings, to flooding conditions on their farms. High waves within Willapa Bay caused damage to oyster beds, and shoreline erosion. However, by month's end, producers were back to fairly normal conditions, and had completed at least preliminary repairs. Christmas tree sales were slow due to soft market conditions, but oyster harvesting and processing was in full swing with strong holiday demand.

**Pierce/S. King:** The month of December has been hard on some producers in the South Puget Sound area. Many farms in Thurston and Mason Counties had substantial damage to their fields and crops due to flooding caused by heavy rains and high winds. A couple of Kitsap County producers also reported damage to their fields. The majority of the damage was debris and silt on the fields and downed fences. Also, there was some scouring and structural damage. Let's hope the New Year is a little easier on producers.

**Skagit:** High temperatures for the month averaged 42 degrees Fahrenheit. There were 3.71 inches of precipitation recorded at the WSU North West Research and Extension Center in West Mount Vernon. With 3.71 inches of rain in December many potato farmers left a portion of their crop in the field. If the temperature drops below 20 degrees without a snow cover the potatoes will be lost. Area bulb farmers had their crop in the ground and things were looking good. We will begin to see the plants popping out of the ground as early as February. Wheat farmers planted the most wheat we have ever seen in Skagit County this year. Apple farmers had a tough go of it in 2007 but prices are beginning to turn around for this crop and if we can resolve some of the pest and disease problems associated with the fruit it holds promise

for the future. Skagit County wine grapes had a good year despite having a low amount of degree days to ripen. The 2008 cabbage seed crop looked good, but keep your eye on the thermometer. If temperatures drop below 20 Fahrenheit without a snow cover the crop will be lost.

**Snohomish/N. King:** December opened with a skiff of snow but was mostly just wet. There was a total of 13 inches of precipitation recorded in Granite Falls for the month. The heavy rain early in the month caused some flooding and road damage but not too bad in most of the area. Temperatures dropped into the 20s mid-month but moderated by month's end with a little more snow. There was little field work done. There was standing water in most lowland areas and lots of pumpkins remained rotting in the fields. Large flocks of snow geese and trumpeter swans caused some problems for farmers in the Stanwood area.

**Thurston:** A record breaking flood on the Chehalis River occurred on December 4 resulting in devastating damage to farms in South Thurston County. Agricultural producers continued to be involved in a massive clean-up effort. Agricultural producers seemed to be in consensus in saying the cleanup effort is going to be a multi-year project.

**Whatcom:** Heavy snowfall the first two weekends of December hindered sales for the U-cut Christmas tree growers. Flooding occurred due to warmer temperatures which caused rapid snow melt. Some CREP trees along the Nooksack River were damaged from the flood waters. December was a very wet and cold month.

## Central

**Benton:** The area experienced normal winter weather.

**Benton (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Most all winter wheat seeding was completed. Rain and snow mixed for the past month had brought topsoil moisture levels up.

**Chelan:** The area had excellent fall and winter weather for fruit trees. Pruning was the main winter activity, which was handled well by local crews.

**Douglas/Chelan:** Precipitation continued to be received in Chelan and Douglas Counties, mostly snow with some rain. High winds were experienced in some areas causing blowing and drifting snow. Fruit growers were pruning their orchards. The winter wheat was snow covered throughout most of Douglas County. Livestock were on full feed which was normal for the time of year.

**Franklin:** The region experienced normal weather. Temperatures were beginning to cool. Very little precipitation was received.

**Grant:** Dry land winter wheat acreage covered up nicely with a 6 inch cover of snow. This will help moisture conditions later in the spring. More precipitation was expected.

**Grant (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Seedling fall wheat was in good shape. There was some snow cover.

**Kittitas:** With 7 inches of new snow for the month of December, the Kittitas Valley looked good for precipitation. No heavy freezes received to date.

**Kittitas (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Decent precipitation was received for December. Freeze-thaw conditions resulted in some water infiltration to topsoil.

**Yakima:** Average temperatures varied from 7 degrees below normal to 17 degrees above normal, with 1.43 inches of precipitation. No crop damage due to weather conditions was reported.

**Yakima (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Some snowfall received during the month of December in the Yakima Valley, but total accumulation did not exceed more than 2 inches. The area experienced cool temperatures, but minimum low temperatures during the second week of December barely reached below 20 degrees. There were no tree losses reported from cold temperatures and very little loss from snow weighing down trees throughout the production areas in the Valley.

## Eastern

**Asotin:** Rain and snowfall blanketed much of the county during the month of December. Continued moisture is needed to replenish the top and subsoils, following several months of extremely dry weather.

**Asotin/ Garfield:** Rain and snow amounts during December were normal to slightly above normal, helping replenish soil moisture that was depleted by drought conditions. Additional precipitation is needed throughout the winter months to continue recovery from the drought.

**Garfield:** Wheat growers were concerned with the ice, snow, rain, and very high winds on windward slopes. The area was still 7 inches behind on precipitation since September 1.

**Lincoln:** Adequate snowfall was received in December which will be a benefit in terms of the accumulation of precipitation, and also provide cover for crops planted last fall.

**Lincoln (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Precipitation levels were adequate to maintain current soil moisture conditions. Winter wheat conditions remained unchanged with most of the crop remaining in fair conditions.

**Pend Oreille/Spokane:** The month of December had a fair amount of moisture with the ground having a fairly large period of time with snow cover. In Mid December a warm weather front came through and melted all the snow with rain and high winds. Most of the moisture went into the ground and the soil moisture was starting to look better. Winter wheat looked pretty good when it came out from under the snow. No real severe cold weather to date so things looked pretty good so far this growing season. The mountains had received very good snow fall with ski resorts having an excellent holiday vacation period.

**Stevens:** December featured plentiful snowfall with temperatures in the teens and low twenties most of the time. Local hay was in very short supply, although a few ads occasionally appeared with prices of \$150 to \$200 per ton. Cattle producers continued to talk about moving cows to slaughter rather than pay the high feed prices. Wheat prices topped \$13 at Portland with a few local grain producers still holding '07 crop.

**Walla Walla:** The area received good moisture, and the weather was favorable overall. Temperatures were cool but no real extremes to date. The severe winds received Friday, January 4 in Walla Walla resulted in significant damage within the city of Walla Walla and Milton Freewater. There were trees down on houses and power-lines throughout the city. No information was received as of yet regarding damage to crops or farm equipment.

**Whitman:** December was a very snowy month with precipitation totals for the month above average. The extra precipitation and snow cover was welcomed due to most of 2007 being below average. Temperature ranges were normal with no damaging freezing weather reported.

National weather summary: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/waobr/weather/2007/summary/weth1606.pdf>  
Washington Agricultural Statistics Service website: [http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics by State/Washington](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Washington)  
E-mail: [nass-wa@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass-wa@nass.usda.gov)

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**Weather Statistics**  
**December, 2007**

For the Period: Saturday December 1, 2007  
To: Monday December 31, 2007

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			S	HDD TOT	HDD DFN	DAYS OF	DAYS OF
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS				32 COLD	28 COLD
<b>WEST</b>												
Bellingham Intl	59	22	38	+0	5.13	+0.15	21	826	-2	15	7	
Everett	56	27	39	-2	8.24	+3.11	23	809	+20	8	1	
Hoquiam	58	31	43	+2	12.28	+1.84	29	661	-43	2	0	
Kelso	61	25	40	+2	9.08	+1.96	21	752	-34	5	2	
Olympia	58	21	39	+1	11.90	+3.78	24	804	-28	12	4	
Seattle-Tacoma	59	28	40	-1	9.08	+3.17	23	767	+6	6	1	
Shelton	57	24	38	-2	16.43	+5.60	26	821	+40	14	6	
Tacoma WA AP	59	23	39	+0	8.49	+2.31	22	796	+5	11	2	
Vancouver WA	63	25	42	+4	8.70	+1.88	24	714	-100	5	2	
<b>CENTRAL</b>												
Ellensburg	54	12	31	+5	1.36	-0.15	14	1056	-133	29	22	
Omak AP	56	-1	25	+2	2.24	+0.28	14	1227	-49	30	29	
Stam pede Pass	43	15	27	+3	18.40	+4.71	26	1186	-74	30	27	
Wenatchee	50	13	28	+1	0.99	-0.41	9	1139	-14	30	28	
Yakima AP	62	15	31	+2	1.25	-0.16	11	1035	-56	28	23	
<b>NORTHEAST</b>												
Colville	52	6	28	+2	3.76	+0.67	15	1138	-56	29	27	
Deer Park	54	-1	26	+0	4.59	+1.79	21	1199	+7	27	26	
Republic	52	4	28	+6	2.28	+0.26	16	1147	-163	30	28	
Spokane AP	54	7	28	+2	3.73	+1.31	19	1125	-30	26	24	
<b>EAST CENTRAL</b>												
Ephrata	60	3	28	+0	1.14	-0.08	13	1141	-8	29	27	
Moses Lake	60	6	29	+2	0.73	-0.49	12	1099	-50	28	24	
Quincy	59	11	30	+3	1.81	+0.43	13	1083	-70	29	24	
Ritzville	55	15	29	+2	1.39	-0.34	15	1100	-30	27	25	
<b>SOUTHEAST</b>												
Hanford	63	13	33	-2	0.61	-0.54	7	986	+17	27	20	
Pasco	67	12	36	+3	0.70	-0.45	9	890	-73	24	15	
Pullman	56	9	30	+1	3.24	+0.41	17	1069	-22	26	20	
Walla Walla Rgn	63	21	38	+4	1.63	-0.88	15	842	-96	15	10	
Whitman Mission	67	17	36	+3	1.98	+0.16	16	891	-68	24	16	
<b>IDAHO</b>												
<b>WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE</b>												
Lewiston ID	63	16	37	+3	0.42	-0.78	9	863	-84	14	9	

Summary based on NWS data.  
Season Cumulative Precip Starts: Friday September 1, 2007  
DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).  
NA = Data Unavailable

Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.  
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.  
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.  
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