



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

USDA/NASS
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Washington Crop Weather

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Crop Progress and Condition for the Month of March 2008 Western

Clark: Ornamental crop producers finished digging balled and burlap stock and sold plant material to area landscapers and Garden Centers.

Grays Harbor: Fields of cut flower daffodils were flocked with snow as unseasonably cold temperatures resulted in snow accumulations of up to two inches in various parts of the county. Ag producers were not able to do field cultivation due to the super-saturated soils. Many fields were sporting huge lakes of standing surface water. Christmas tree growers complained that the cold, wet weather was delaying herbicide applications. Commercial blueberry growers were planting additional acres for U-Pick harvest. Due to the very slow pasture growth, livestock producers had to continue feeding very expensive hay to cattle. Retail nurseries and garden stores reported slow sales due to home gardener's reluctance to purchase plants in winter-like weather. Commercial peony growers reported delayed emergence of plant stems due to the cold temperatures.

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: It rained or snowed every day during the week, with sunny periods between the showers. Farmers haven't been able to get into the fields yet.

Mason: Cold night temperatures and snow accumulations kept crop producers on their toes. Early sown crops were beginning to struggle with soil temperatures prohibiting germination. Greenhouse growers were feeling the pinch with increased fuel prices coupled with increased demand due to abnormally low temperatures. Market farmers were gearing up for the first day of the Olympia Farmer's Market, while sellers at Mason County Markets welcomed the extra month to prepare. Poultry producers were brooding chicks, and cattle producers began calving.

Mason (2nd Report): Snow, along with wind, rain and cold raw weather was received during the month of March. Cattle were still in sacrifice areas due to sappy pastures, but the first sign of firm ground will send them onto green grass. Grass was growing in between frosts, but producers were waiting for a hint of warm weather. Fruit trees broke dormancy but were still tight in bud.

Pacific: Wet, cold weather limited field operations, except for shellfish growers who continued spring hatchery, seed setting, and harvest activities. December storm damage was estimated to exceed 70,000 gallons in lost oyster production, with a farm gate value of over \$1.2 million. Cranberry growers continued equipment and dike maintenance and repair. Pasture conditions continued to improve.

Pierce/South King: There were no unusual situations to report and no reports of crop damage due to a weather event.

San Juan: Temperatures were below normal with above normal precipitation.

Skagit/San Juan/Island: March was cooler than normal with some heavy frost, but average rainfall. However, most days were overcast with high winds on occasion. This past week was very cool with occasional rain, ice, and snow mix. There have been no reports of crop damage. Tulips were blooming later this year due to the cooler weather.

Snohomish/North King: Unstable weather prevented much fieldwork. Standing water remained in many lowland fields. The first day of spring brought hail to parts of the counties, followed by three days of snow. There were accumulations of several inches in some areas. Early apples and blueberries were budding out, and raspberries were leafing out.

Thurston: Unseasonably cold weather continued to delay almost all agricultural activities throughout the county. Parts of the county received up to two inches of accumulation in the last week of the month. Christmas tree growers took advantage of the cold, wet weather to finish up planting for the year. On the other hand, some Christmas tree growers complained that the persistent rainfall was delaying herbicide and fertilizer applications. Livestock producers had to continue feeding expensive hay due to the cold weather. Plant development was between a week and two weeks behind normal. Retail nurseries and garden stores reported very slow sales due to the winter-like weather.

Thurston (2nd Report): The weather continued to be cold and wet as spring began.

Whatcom: The last week of March brought wintery conditions. Temperatures dropped below freezing with snow flurries. Blueberry growers were running their fans to prevent frost damage to the plants. Both blueberry and raspberry plants were beginning to leaf out. Applications of solid and liquid manure continued. Most of the pasture ground was too wet for grazing.

Whatcom (2nd Report): Average temperatures and precipitation were below normal. Raspberries were being pruned and tied. Manure was applied to farmland in approved areas. No crop damage was reported in the county.

Central

Benton: Temperatures were cold, and orchardists were battling the freezing temperatures with everything they have. Producers need spring rains for fall and winter CRP grass seedings. In general, crops were looking good.

Chelan: Abnormally cold weather slowed development of fruit tree flower buds. Some light, scattered blossom bud damage was reported, but nothing significant enough to affect the crops.

Douglas/Chelan: Several inches of snow was received over the past week. Approximately half of the winter wheat crop was still covered. Colder temperatures had tree fruit growers concerned as trees begin to come out of their winter dormant condition. Early stone fruit trees began to bloom. Growers were applying surround to pear trees. Calving season continued.

Franklin: Temperatures were slightly below normal and ended up well below normal with snow falling throughout the county last week. There were several reports of frost damage for orchard stone fruit crops (apricots, peaches and nectarines). Apple growers had problems with king bloom loss, which is freeze thinning that takes out the larger better apple buds as well as the smaller ones. Continued successive freeze days will cause damage to stone and apple tree fruit. Wind machines, smudge pots, and irrigation were in full swing to manage the colder weather.

Grant: Cold weather had orchardists nervous. Smudge pots, wind machines, and water spraying were all utilized to combat frost. There were no reports of crop damage. Snows over the weekend brought needed precipitation.

Kittitas: Temperatures were colder with snow and nights well below freezing. The precipitation was helpful for rangeland forage. Hopefully, the cold temperatures won't burn the fall seeded hay and wheat.

Kittitas (2nd Report): Farmers were able to begin fieldwork. Snow was received for a couple of days during the week.

Klickitat: Winter weather returned with snow flurries and continued cold. Overnight lows remained below freezing, and daytime temperatures were in the mid-40s. There was snow accumulation from the Columbia Hills to the Simcoes. Spring seeding was shutdown for the week due to the weather. There was less than a 10 day supply of hay on hand for feeders. Most range and pastures were not ready for turnout yet. The winter wheat near Goldendale was up to six inches and appeared in good condition. Pruning and tying of grape vines in vineyards continued along the Columbia river from Maryhill and west to Dallesport. New and replacement grape plantings continued in the Columbia area. Pre-emergent herbicide was applied in some acreage for weed control. Fruit trees were blooming or showing signs of bloom.

Yakima: Average temperatures were rather cool this past week. Fruit growers resorted to frost control measures for several nights as temperatures dropped below freezing and into the mid-20s in some areas. There were scattered reports of fruit bud thinning in soft fruit orchards without frost protection capabilities. Scattered rain showers contributed about

0.1 of an inch of precipitation in areas of the county. Most hop growers tilled, weeded, or planted cover crops in hop yards.

Yakima (2nd Report): Average temperatures varied from four degrees to 13 degrees below normal, with 0.16 of an inch of precipitation. Low temperatures caused growers to continue use of frost control measures.

Eastern

Adams: Another blustery week with snow on numerous occasions made fieldwork difficult. Many spring seeders were left poised on the edge of fields waiting for an opportunity to complete seeding activity.

Adams/Lincoln: Cold, wet conditions limited field activity. Winter wheat remained in mostly fair condition with above average precipitation required this spring to improve conditions.

Asotin/Garfield: Snow storms kept farmers out of the fields. Planting of spring crops were delayed as a result. Temperatures were below freezing each night which was well below normal for this time of year. Ranchers began turning cattle out for spring grazing. However, conditions were not favorable as it has been too cold for rangeland pastures to grow much this spring.

Ferry: Cold weather and snow was received over much of the county, and more snow was predicted. Grass was growing slowly with the cool temperatures, and the north slopes were still snowed in. Producers were hoping for a warmer April. Fields were too wet for farmers to begin fieldwork.

Ferry (2nd Report): Cold temperatures were reported as low as 16 degrees. There were reports of freeze damage on stone fruits. Some cattlemen reported a shortage of hay.

Lincoln (2nd Report): Considerable snow was received during the past week, which postponed fieldwork that had begun earlier in the drier areas of the county. This precipitation should benefit crops and pastures later in the year, but many producers were getting anxious to begin farming as April approaches.

Pend Oreille: Livestock were being fed hay with grain. Winter coats were beginning to shed. Producers were unable to work the fields or plant due to the snow pack. The area has received over eight inches of snow this winter.

Stevens: There was lots of snow in the area. Warm, sunny days were needed.

Stevens (2nd Report): Snow on and off the past week prevented fieldwork. Hay producers applied gopher bait in some areas of the county. Grain producers in the Colville Valley were concerned that saturated soils would delay seeding this spring. Calving continued for livestock producers. A few south facing slopes showed minimal amounts of new green grass, but cold temperatures extended the feeding season for ranchers.

Walla Walla: Winter wheat looked great, but needs some spring precipitation to keep it going. Spring pastures were slow getting started because of the cold. Hay was in really short supply.

Walla Walla (2nd Report): Crops looked good throughout the county. Weather over the past few days has been very cold with snow flurries and wind. Most producers remained optimistic that crops were not being adversely affected. Most area farmers were in the fields but having difficulty completing plans for spraying due to continued heavy winds.

Whitman: Winter made a comeback! A storm left several inches of snow and drifts as high as two feet in places. The late season storm brought fieldwork to a halt. More snow is expected. Temperatures remained cold, while much of the snow melted within hours. There were still lingering drifts and snow patches on north slopes.

Weather Statistics

For the Period: Monday March 24, 2008
 To: Sunday March 30, 2008

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				GROWING DEGREE DAYS				LAST WEEK PRECIP			SEASON CUM PRECIP			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F		BASE-60F		TOTAL	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	PCT		
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	INCHES			INCHES	DFN	NORMAL	DAYS
WEST															
Bellingham_Intl	27	50	38	-7	0	-7	0	+0	1.26	+0.63	6	20.23	-6.48	76	128
Everett	33	48	39	-8	0	-7	0	+0	1.14	+0.37	6	25.10	-1.52	94	129
Hoquiam	35	50	42	-6	0	-7	0	+0	1.88	+0.46	7	46.84	-8.49	85	142
Kelso	30	52	40	-7	0	-7	0	+0	1.37	+0.44	5	27.46	-8.59	76	100
Olympia	24	49	37	-8	0	-7	0	+0	1.04	+0.05	5	37.94	-3.53	91	125
Seattle-Tacoma_	32	51	40	-7	0	-7	0	+0	1.19	+0.49	6	28.62	-1.14	96	120
Shelton	25	49	37	-10	0	-7	0	+0	1.90	+0.59	6	50.56	-3.92	93	127
Tacoma_WA_AP	26	49	38	-10	0	-7	0	+0	1.09	+0.30	6	27.19	-4.34	86	112
Vancouver_WA	31	53	42	-5	0	-7	0	+0	0.88	+0.08	5	30.17	-2.34	93	112
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	19	53	35	-9	0	+0	0	+0	0.25	+0.11	2	5.13	-1.50	77	51
Omak_AP	17	50	35	-6	0	+0	0	+0	0.27	+0.02	4	5.30	-4.04	57	45
Stamperde_Pass	21	43	32	+1	0	+0	0	+0	1.34	-0.16	7	56.69	-9.52	86	134
Wenatchee	27	51	37	-10	0	-7	0	+0	0.24	+0.10	2	3.80	-2.12	64	38
Yakima_AP	19	53	36	-10	0	-7	0	+0	0.16	+0.02	2	5.23	-0.69	88	46
NORTHEAST															
Colville	23	46	35	-7	0	-6	0	+0	0.61	+0.33	4	11.86	-2.28	84	81
Deer_Park	14	43	30	-12	0	-6	0	+0	0.41	+0.06	5	15.23	+2.60	121	98
Republic	19	50	35	-4	0	+0	0	+0	0.31	+0.03	4	8.35	-1.04	89	73
Spokane_AP	25	44	34	-8	0	-7	0	+0	0.79	+0.50	5	12.66	+1.41	113	87
EAST_CENTRAL															
Ephrata	22	51	36	-10	0	-7	0	+0	0.22	+0.08	3	3.71	-1.49	71	54
Moses_Lake	20	52	38	-9	0	-7	0	+0	0.32	+0.18	3	3.65	-1.55	70	49
Quincy	24	51	37	-9	0	-7	0	+0	0.28	+0.14	3	5.63	-0.02	100	55
Ritzville	20	48	34	-9	0	+0	0	+0	0.27	+0.06	4	7.67	-0.39	95	70
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	23	56	40	-11	0	-15	0	+0	0.01	-0.11	1	3.04	-1.84	62	37
Pasco	22	56	42	-8	0	-14	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	5.17	-0.35	94	51
Pullman	27	46	35	-7	0	+0	0	+0	0.65	+0.23	4	13.14	-1.76	88	85
Walla_Walla_Rgn	29	52	41	-9	0	-11	0	+0	0.22	-0.20	5	10.15	-3.70	73	77
Whitman_Mission	21	57	41	-7	0	-7	0	+0	0.19	-0.09	4	8.79	-0.73	92	78
WESTERN_IDAHO_PANHANDLE															
Lewiston_ID	27	56	41	-6	0	-8	0	+0	0.03	-0.25	2	5.13	-2.16	70	66

Summary based on NWS data.
 Season CUMulative Precip Starts: Saturday September 1, 2007
 DFN = Departure From Normal.
 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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