



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

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Washington Crop Weather

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Week Ending: May 11, 2008
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Spring Seeding Moves Ahead Quickly While Very Dry Conditions Prevail in Grain Growing Counties as Frost Damage from April Becomes More Apparent

Field Crops

Days suitable for field work were 6.4. Another dry week stressed winter wheat in the eastern grain growing counties. Precipitation amounts were substantially below normal. Whitman, Walla Walla, Grant, and Asotin Counties all reported plant stress from lack of moisture. Temperatures were warming but the cool spring appeared to have set hay and pasture growth behind by several weeks. Field corn, potatoes, and processing green pea planting continued. Christmas tree growers continued basal pruning and monitoring of midge traps in Douglas fir plantations.

Fruits and Vegetables

Damage from the April 21 freeze continued to be manifested. Stone fruit damage was particularly widespread. Cherries appeared to have been hit the hardest, although most orchards suffered frost damage in varying degrees. Some apple and pear damage occurred, but to a much lesser degree. In the upper Yakima Valley, blooms lingered on apples and pears. Temperatures were suitable for bee pollination. No frost control measures were needed the past week. Asparagus harvest had peaked. Whatcom County reported raspberries were behind normal due to cold temperatures. In Snohomish County, blueberries were coming into bloom.

Livestock

Range and pasture conditions were 4% very poor, 15% poor, 23% fair and 58% good. On the east side, Pend Oreille County reported calving had reached the mid-way point. Okanogan County reported cattle were on pasture. Feed supplies were reported to be very tight due to the cold spring and delayed pasture growth.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	6.4
Last Week	5.9

Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	1	18	75	6
Topsoil 5 Yr Avg	2	17	75	6
Subsoil	0	27	72	1
Subsoil 5 Yr Avg	5	23	70	2
Irrigation Water	0	0	93	7
Irrigation Water 5 Yr Avg	2	5	92	1
Hay & Roughage	11	33	56	0

VS=Very Short SH=Short AD=Adequate S=Surplus

Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	Percent Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2007	5 Yr. Avg.
Spring Wheat Planted	91	74	98	98
Spring Wheat Emerged	62	45	81	80
Winter Wheat Headed	4	NA	5	10
Barley Planted	86	57	98	96
Barley Emerged	58	28	73	74
Field Corn Planted	41	40	66	71
Field Corn Emerged	16	15	49	34
Potatoes Planted	85	70	80	93
Potatoes Emerged	29	21	50	53
Dry Edible Beans Planted	62	31	89	72
Proc. Green Peas Planted	68	60	78	93
Dry Peas Planted	63	46	94	92
Alfalfa Hay 1st Cutting	2	NA	11	11

Crop Condition*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	2	7	32	55	4
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	0	6	82	12
Spring Wheat Dryland	0	5	48	45	2
Spring Wheat Irrigated	0	4	18	56	22
Barley Dryland	0	4	48	47	1
Barley Irrigated	0	8	13	57	22
Potatoes	0	4	27	69	0
Corn	0	11	89	0	0
Dry Edible Beans	0	11	56	33	0

VP=Very Poor P=Poor F=Fair G=Good EX=Excellent

* Crop conditions are a measurement of the growing conditions and are not indicative of the quality of the crop produced.

COUNTY COMMENTS

Western

Clallam/Jefferson: Pasture grass growth was behind schedule. The weather continued to be cool, with temperatures between 40 to 55 degrees.

Grays Harbor: Ag producers took advantage of nearly a full week with no rain to prepare fields for spring planting. Although the weather remained unseasonably cool, forage producers took advantage of dry weather to make haylage. Christmas tree growers continued basal pruning and monitoring midge traps in Douglas fir plantations. U-Pick vegetable farmers were cultivating fields for weed control. Raspberry growers reported plant development to be delayed by at least two weeks due to the unseasonably cold spring. Retail nurseries reported an increase in the sale of bedding plants for the Mother's Day weekend. Home gardeners continued planting warm seasonal vegetable crops. Greenhouse tomato growers reported plants were in full bloom.

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: Spring has finally sprung! Most fields had dried out enough for fieldwork to begin in earnest.

Jefferson: Planting was about six weeks behind normal due to the cold soil. If it weren't for greenhouses, there would not have been anything for the Farmer's Markets to sell. Minor frosts were reported in the northern shaded areas. Temperatures were between 45-50 degrees.

Mason: There was a trace of precipitation during the week. Temperatures were warmer, and pastures grew well. Producers were about two weeks behind schedule.

Pierce/South King: Where has spring gone? Crop conditions in the South Puget Sound area were good but not great. The cold weather has set some crops back a week or two. Rainfall has been less than normal. There were no unusual situations to report and no reports of crop damage.

Skagit: The high temperature for the week averaged 56 degrees with 0.2 inch of precipitation received. The weather has been wet and cold, which has kept many producers out of fields for nearly a month. The tulip fields have been topped. The wheat crop looked good, but there is still a long ways to go until harvest in August. The 2008 cabbage seed crop was in the

process of getting tied with stakes so it will not fall over in heavy winds.

Skagit/San Juan/Island: The weather was mostly cloudy with some sunny afternoons. Temperatures were still cooler than normal, but crop planting continued even though it was a couple of weeks late. Some occasional rain showers were received during the week. Heavy rains were received in some areas on Saturday. There has been little to no crop damage reported.

Snohomish/North King: The week was good, with some rain received on Sunday. Fieldwork continued with plowing and discing of fields. Warmer temperatures enhanced pasture growth. More apple and blueberry varieties were coming into bloom.

Snohomish/North King (2nd Report): The weather continued to be on the cool side, with an average high of 57 degrees and an average low of 41 degrees. Plants were beginning to grow, but pasture grass growth was still behind.

Thurston: Unseasonably cool temperatures continued to prevail throughout the week. Decreasing rain showers allowed the first full week of field cultivation this spring. Livestock producers took advantage of nearly ideal conditions for making haylage. Christmas tree growers reported bud break on Norway spruce and Vancouver Island Douglas fir. Growers continued to monitor midge traps in Douglas fir plantations. Turfgrass growers were busy mowing fields in order to keep up with rapid vegetation growth. Organic vegetable growers were cultivating newly planted fields for weed control. Retail nurseries reported good sales of hanging baskets, geraniums, and other bedding plants for the Mother's Day weekend. Home gardeners were planting potatoes, onions, and cucumbers.

Whatcom: Temperatures continued to be quite cool for this time of year. Raspberries were about a month behind schedule. Many fields have yet to be cultivated due to excessive moisture. Some field corn and potatoes were planted in the lighter, drier soils.

Central

Grant: Moisture conditions in the dryland areas of the county were low. Precipitation levels were about 45 percent of normal. In the irrigated areas of the county, dry corn plantings continued. Potato planting was also underway. Sweet corn plantings will begin in the very near future.

Klickitat: Colder than normal temperatures continued to hamper crop activities. There was no measurable precipitation from systems moving through the area. Frost was reported one morning during the week in the Goldendale vicinity, and only one day could be described as sunny and warm. Most daytime temperatures were in the 50s and lower 60s. Alfalfa was about 6-8 inches tall with tops burned from frost. The first cutting of alfalfa was at least two weeks away. Grapes budded and were leafing out, although everything was slow. Vineyard growers were already irrigating rocky slopes, although locations with deeper soils expected to hold off irrigation for another 2-3 weeks. Columbia River Districts were irrigating their orchards, and fruit finished the bloom stage. Peach and apricot sets looked good, though cherries lost 20-25 percent of their crop due to April frosts. Peach thinning continued. Seeding of spring wheat was nearly finished and was emerging well. Subsoil moisture was adequate, but grasses were browning already. Typically

all cattle are turned out May 1, but forage shortages have made ranchers scramble for cattle feed this year.

Klickitat (2nd Report): The ground was drying out. Windy conditions have been nearly constant with almost no rain. Looks like it may be a dry summer this year.

Okanogan: Fruit growers anticipated some frost damage. Depending on the elevation, some farmers experienced damage and some did not. Many cattle were out on ranges. Hay fields have been slow in growing due to the weather. Farmer's Markets opened up.

Yakima: There were still some lingering flower bloom in the apples and pears, primarily in the Upper Yakima Valley. Daytime temperatures were suitable for bee pollination. Frost control was not necessary this past week. Cherry development was highly variable, with some areas just past shuck fall. Asparagus was at the peak of harvest, though delayed at least two weeks.

Yakima (2nd Report): Average temperatures varied from seven degrees below normal to six degrees above normal, with a trace of precipitation. There was no new crop damage due to weather conditions.



Eastern

Adams: Soil moisture conditions continued to decline with 70 percent of the topsoil moisture in very short to short supply. These dry conditions have caused winter wheat drought stress to become prevalent. The dry conditions also negatively impacted spring cereal conditions.

Adams (2nd Report): Winter wheat began to show symptoms of drought stress. Farmers reported soil moisture conditions were deteriorating due to the lack of significant rainfall and almost constant winds.

Asotin: Cooler weather prevailed for much of the week. Spring work was close to completion in most parts of the county.

Asotin/Garfield: Another dry week caused stress on crops in most areas of both counties. Rangeland was also suffering from the dry conditions. Rain was needed in all areas for proper crop development and rangeland growth. The lower elevations of Asotin County and bordering northern and eastern edges of Garfield County suffered from moderate to severe drought conditions.

Chelan: Spring has been very cold, and the freeze on April 21 did widespread damage to stone fruits, especially cherries. Individual growers have suffered serious or complete crop loss, but the industry still has a good supply of cherries. Some apple and pear damage occurred, but those crops were affected to a much lesser degree.

Douglas/Chelan: Cool, windy conditions continued, and crop growth was behind schedule. Most fruit growers continued to care for their orchards even though many have suffered significant losses due to the freezing temperatures. Frost protection measures continued. Most cattle were released into spring pastures.

Ferry: Cold spring weather continued to delay the growing of spring range grass. The shortage of hay caused ranchers to turn cattle out despite the lack of grass. Subsoil moisture continued to be dry. Some sites showed no moisture below two feet in the ground.

Ferry (2nd Report): Growing conditions have been very slow due to the cold weather. Fruit growers were still applying frost measures. Most cattle were turned out to spring pastures.

Lincoln: Dry weather persisted, with another two nights with freezing weather. The winter wheat crop was in dire need of a soaking rain. Due to the late start of the growing season and day after day of freezing temperatures, winter wheat was in the worst condition in nearly 30 years. Soil moisture levels were very low, and temperatures were predicted to be in the high 80s this week with no rain in sight. The shallow pastures have already dried up, and the bottom grass was not growing due to all the freezing nights. Frost was also affecting the orchards.

Pend Oreille: The high temperature during the week was 60 degrees and the low was 22 degrees with 0.1 inch of precipitation. A spring storm brought hail and some rain. Fields were being worked (disked or harrowed). Weed abatement was beginning with some fertilizing. Livestock were in full shed anticipating warmer weather. Calving was in mid-season. Chickens began laying again.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: The week was cool and dry until the weekend. A large amount of fieldwork and planting was done during the week. Producers needed one more week of good weather to complete seeding the fields. Some winter wheat in the southern part of both counties was being reseeded. Very little spraying was done due to the wind. A few producers turned cows out on pastures because they were out of hay. The numerous frosts received this spring were having an effect on the growth of hay crops and pastures.

Walla Walla: Winter wheat began to show moisture stress. The crop generally looked pretty good but without rainfall soon, the crop will go downhill rapidly. No hay was to be found, so livestock were turned out on pastures early.

Walla Walla (2nd Report): Rain and warmer weather were greatly needed. Crops were beginning to show stress due to lack of rain. Spring crops were not growing because of the extended cool weather.

Whitman: Temperatures began to warm up, but the cooler conditions that have prevailed most of the spring were taking their toll on pasture and hay growth development. The past three months have remained dry, with April coming in at only two thirds of the normal precipitation. Warmer, wetter conditions were needed to improve emergence, growth, and development of crops.

Weather Statistics
May 5 - May 11 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		DAYS
	---	---	---	---	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	INCHES			INCHES	DFN	NORMAL	
WEST															
Bellingham Intl	35	60	49	-4	4	-16	0	+0	0.51	-0.03	2	22.41	-7.92	74	146
Everett	40	57	49	-5	5	-18	0	+0	0.49	-0.07	3	28.44	-1.89	94	157
Hoquiam	36	59	51	-3	11	-10	0	+0	0.15	-0.62	3	50.97	-10.25	83	169
Kelso	34	70	52	-2	16	-11	0	+0	0.19	-0.38	2	28.85	-11.63	71	119
Olympia	30	70	50	-3	11	-6	0	+0	0.04	-0.47	2	40.42	-5.25	89	148
Seattle-Tacoma	42	66	52	-3	16	-12	0	+0	0.02	-0.40	2	30.58	-2.23	93	144
Shelton	31	68	50	-5	8	-24	0	+0	0.02	-0.56	2	52.74	-6.87	88	147
Tacoma WA AP	36	66	51	-4	10	-20	0	+0	0.04	-0.44	3	28.75	-6.42	82	133
Vancouver WA	44	75	54	+2	32	+4	2	+2	0.03	-0.53	1	32.73	-3.50	90	136
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	39	75	54	+2	33	+6	0	+0	0.00	-0.08	0	5.49	-1.89	74	57
Omak AP	29	74	53	+2	34	+10	0	+0	0.11	-0.24	1	5.60	-5.42	51	50
Stampede Pass	28	54	39	-1	0	+0	0	+0	0.68	-0.15	4	62.84	-9.82	86	162
Wenatchee	42	77	58	+2	56	+5	6	-1	0.00	-0.12	0	5.95	-2.81	58	40
Yakima AP	29	79	56	+1	44	+5	0	+0	0.00	-0.07	0	5.38	-1.16	82	50
NORTHEAST															
Colville	30	74	53	+1	28	+5	0	+0	0.65	+0.23	2	13.39	-3.10	81	95
Deer Park	25	69	49	-4	13	-10	0	+0	0.21	-0.15	3	17.21	+2.52	117	115
Republic	30	72	53	+5	30	+18	0	+0	0.11	-0.24	2	8.97	-2.14	81	82
Spokane AP	33	69	52	+0	22	+0	0	+0	0.09	-0.19	2	14.13	+1.22	109	102
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	40	77	57	-2	51	-7	5	-2	0.00	-0.08	0	3.86	-1.93	67	59
Moses Lake	35	78	57	-2	48	-10	3	-4	0.00	-0.08	0	3.92	-1.87	68	56
Quincy	41	75	57	+1	51	+2	3	-2	0.00	-0.12	0	5.77	-0.57	91	58
Ritzville	30	71	51	-3	18	-6	0	+0	0.00	-0.21	0	8.10	-1.18	87	76
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	41	80	58	-4	54	-26	7	-11	0.00	-0.09	0	3.06	-2.37	56	38
Pasco	32	79	57	-3	53	-14	4	-8	0.01	-0.13	1	5.41	-0.78	87	57
Pullman	31	68	50	+0	13	-3	0	+0	0.03	-0.32	1	13.88	-3.18	81	95
Walla Walla Rgn	39	74	56	-2	41	-12	2	-5	0.10	-0.25	1	10.90	-5.26	67	88
Whitman Mission	32	76	56	+0	43	-1	1	+1	0.13	-0.15	2	9.67	-1.50	87	93
WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE															
Lewiston ID	39	76	58	+2	57	+10	7	+3	0.08	-0.20	1	5.75	-3.15	65	75

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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National weather summary: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/waobr/weather/2008/summary/weth1606.pdf>

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