



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

USDA/NASS
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Washington Crop Weather

Released: March 23, 2009
Week Ending: March 22, 2009
CWP WA-CW1109

Field Crops

Days suitable for fieldwork were 3.3. Whitman County reported some field activity had begun but snow banks remain on many north facing slopes. Wheat fields were still waking up and definitive reports will be several weeks away, but early reports indicate the winter wheat crop appears to be generally healthy. Some reseeded to spring wheat will likely occur in areas where fall wheat did not sprout. Moisture levels appeared to be sufficient at the moment with Whitman, Walla Walla and Columbia Counties reporting heavy rain showers for the week ending. Benton County reports freezing temperatures have slowed spring wheat planting.

Fruits and Vegetables

In the Yakima Valley, fruit trees were breaking dormancy. Temperatures were reported cold enough to trigger some frost protection, particularly among the soft fruit producers. Some fruit bud damage was detected, but the impact appears to be minimal to overall crop production. Fruit growers were pruning orchards.

Livestock

Range and pasture conditions were 2 percent poor, 71 percent fair, 24 percent good and 3 percent excellent. Ferry County reported cattle were still on feed and calving season was well underway. Chelan County reported cold temperatures had resulted in higher mortality rates for calves.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	3.3
Last Week	NA

Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	0	16	71	13
Subsoil	6	38	51	5
Irrigation Water	0	6	92	2
Hay & Roughage	0	7	92	1

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

Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	Percent Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2008	5 Yr. Avg.
Barley Planted	1	NA	9	11
Proc. Green Peas Planted	2	NA	3	2

Crop Condition*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	9	14	32	36	9
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	0	11	66	23

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

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: Producers were about two weeks behind getting into the fields for spring work.

Pierce/South King: The wet, cold weather conditions remained normal for this time of year. There were no unusual situations to report and no reports of any crop damage.

Whatcom: Temperatures dropped below freezing during the week, and daytime highs were in the lower 50s. Snow showers were received during the week. The cooler temperatures slowed the growth of forage, silage and turf grass. Raspberries were beginning to bud.

Central

Benton: There was new snow in the mountains, which will provide irrigation water. Early spring rains continued to fall; however, freezing temperatures slowed the spring wheat plantings.

Douglas/Chelan: Fruit growers continued to prune their orchards. Temperatures were about average, though the weather has been windy. Winter moisture was low as was the snowpack in the mountains. Most of the snow cover was gone on the Waterville Plateau. Livestock were calving, but cold conditions caused calf mortality rates to increase.

Grant: Dryland winter wheat looked poor due to the lack of moisture. Producers were planning to re-seed to spring wheat. Early reports of ground preparation activities such as disking corn fields occurred in the irrigated portions of the county.

Klickitat: Daytime highs were in the 40s and 50s and the overnight lows were at freezing or just above, with heavy frost burning off by mid-morning. Hills and pastures were greening up with the warmer daytime temperatures. Alfalfa was in the early vegetative growth stage. Fields were still too wet to work, but the effects of a steady, drying wind could be seen by the end of the week. Conservation District annual tree and shrub sale pick up day was Saturday, with ranchers, farmers and home owners adding new plantings to their windrows, shelter belts and landscapes.

Klickitat (2nd Report): Spring is finally here. Some quick spring showers were received during the week, and temperatures have been warm. The grass and crops were beginning to grow, and everything was turning green. Winds have been drying things out.

Yakima: Scattered showers brought a trace of precipitation throughout the county. Daytime highs reached the upper 50s and lower 60s and the nighttime lows were in the mid-20s to lower 30s. Fruit trees were breaking dormancy. Some frost protection for soft fruit was needed. Bud damage was detected, but there was minimal impact on the overall crop.

Yakima (2nd Report): Temperatures were generally warmer than normal, varying from five degrees below normal to five degrees above normal. A trace of precipitation was received during the week. No crop losses due to weather conditions were reported.

Eastern

Asotin/Garfield: Wet conditions prevailed during the week, as farmers waited for the weather to dry out so they could do fieldwork.

Ferry: A considerable amount of the winter wheat crop was still covered by snow. Cattle were still on feed, and calving was well underway.

Lincoln: The winter wheat was no longer dormant. The crop was damaged by the long winter and several periods of cold weather without snow cover. The bare patches that emerged last fall were still bare. The moisture profile in both the winter wheat and stubble ground was below normal.

Pend Oreille: Warm temperatures, along with the rain during the week, melted a large amount of snow. Rivers were running a little high with the snow melt and rain. Winter wheat was emerging from under the snow cover. The winter was good for cattle operations.

Walla Walla: A little rain was received during the week. Fall wheat looked good, but could be in trouble if spring rains are not received. Early spring grass was growing, and there was some carry-over hay.

Walla Walla (2nd Report): Crops looked good so far. Most producers were pleased with the look of the winter wheat crop. Soil tests were showing excellent soil moisture down as far as six feet in many areas of the county. Heavy rain showers over the weekend brought close to an inch of precipitation. Most producers were anxious to get in to the fields but were happy with the rain.

Whitman: Field operations began in the far western end of the county. Snow remained on many northern hillsides. Welcomed rainfall made many fields too wet to begin fieldwork. Temperatures soared to the lower 60s late in the week, giving an early taste of spring. Temperatures returned to normal during the weekend, with as much as 0.80 inches of rain in many areas of the county.

Weekly Weather Statistics
March 15 - 22, 2009

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				GROWING DEGREE DAYS				LAST WEEK PRECIP			SEASON CUM PRECIP			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F		BASE-60F		TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	PCT NORMAL	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN							
WEST															
Bellingham Intl	28	56	44	-1	2	+2	0	+0	0.69	+0.02	4	21.32	-4.68	82	97
Hoquiam	29	52	44	-3	0	-7	0	+0	1.53	-0.07	6	42.10	-11.63	78	110
Kelso	34	59	47	+2	3	-4	0	+0	0.44	-0.55	5	26.68	-8.32	76	90
Olympia	26	55	43	-2	0	+0	0	+0	1.77	+0.68	6	32.31	-8.07	80	103
Seattle-Tacoma	29	56	44	-3	1	-6	0	+0	0.97	+0.20	6	23.70	-5.27	82	101
Shelton	25	52	41	-5	0	-7	0	+0	1.42	-0.06	6	43.65	-9.40	82	100
Tacoma WA AP	26	56	43	-3	1	-6	0	+0	1.29	+0.44	6	24.07	-6.57	79	95
Vancouver WA	32	61	49	+4	10	+3	0	+0	0.81	-0.08	7	19.40	-12.22	61	98
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	26	65	43	+2	0	+0	0	+0	0.04	-0.10	3	5.61	-0.87	87	48
Omak AP	24	62	42	+5	0	+0	0	+0	0.10	-0.18	2	5.65	-3.39	63	59
Stampede Pass	26	52	38	+9	0	+0	0	+0	1.33	-0.32	4	54.34	-10.28	84	101
Wenatchee AP	28	62	43	-1	0	+0	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	2.87	-2.89	50	36
Yakima AP	24	64	44	+0	0	+0	0	+0	0.01	-0.13	1	4.87	-0.90	84	46
NORTHEAST															
Colville	27	59	42	+3	0	+0	0	+0	0.02	-0.40	2	10.69	-3.11	77	62
Deer Park	25	54	37	-3	0	+0	0	+0	0.23	-0.12	4	12.13	-0.09	99	69
Republic	27	55	41	+5	0	+0	0	+0	0.17	-0.11	3	6.70	-2.35	74	59
Spokane AP	31	57	41	+2	0	+0	0	+0	0.38	+0.03	5	10.43	-0.47	96	77
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	25	64	44	-1	0	+0	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	2.95	-2.10	58	42
Moses Lake	28	64	44	+1	0	+0	0	+0	0.09	-0.05	1	3.71	-1.34	73	45
Quincy	29	63	44	+1	0	+0	0	+0	0.02	-0.12	1	6.65	+1.14	121	43
Ritzville	30	62	44	+3	1	+1	0	+0	0.12	-0.12	2	7.07	-0.76	90	54
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	33	68	48	+0	3	-4	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	4.29	-0.44	91	41
Pasco	32	72	50	+3	8	+1	0	+0	0.44	+0.30	2	4.89	-0.46	91	49
Pullman	31	60	43	+4	0	+0	0	+0	0.78	+0.29	5	13.44	-0.96	93	79
Walla Walla Rgn	36	68	49	+2	7	+0	0	+0	0.69	+0.21	3	11.59	-1.76	87	66
Whitman Mission	31	69	47	+2	0	-5	0	+0	0.68	+0.35	4	10.71	+1.53	117	74
WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE															
Lewiston ID	35	62	47	+3	9	+3	0	+0	0.39	+0.11	3	6.68	-0.26	96	55

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