



United States Department  
of Agriculture

National Agricultural  
Statistics Service

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# Washington Crop Weather

Released: May 4, 2009  
Week Ending: May 3, 2009  
CWP WA-CW1609

## Wet Weather Continued but Farmers Push Seeding Along as Cattle Get Turned Out

### Field Crops

Days suitable for fieldwork were 5.7. Whitman County reported the month ended with above average precipitation. While the rainfall was beneficial for improving soil moisture, warmer weather was needed to improve crop conditions. Several grain growing counties reported delays in overall planting due to rain. Walla Walla County reported grain seeding and dry pea seeding was about done. Onion growers needed warmer weather to help the onions' progress. Wheat in Walla Walla County looked very good in contrast to Whitman and other counties. Growers in Walla Walla were optimistic. Franklin County reported potatoes and corn were going into the ground between rain storms. Skagit County reported their potato planting was ahead of schedule and green pea planting was half done, while the cabbage seed crop was beginning to bolt. Adams County, which had been dry, reported soil conditions were improving and weed spraying was nearing completion. Christmas tree growers continued herbicide applications and reported bud break on Douglas fir.

### Fruits and Vegetables

In the Yakima Valley, temperatures dipped low enough to require growers to use frost control measures but there were no reports of damage. Whatcom County reported blueberries were in full bloom. In the southern part of the State, Clark County reported some strawberry acreage was plowed under due to root rot. In central Clark County, strawberry planting continued but was delayed by rain. In Pierce and King Counties, early lettuce, cabbage, broccoli and kale had been transplanted.

### Livestock

Range and pasture conditions were 4 percent very poor, 12 percent poor, 43 percent fair, 37 percent good and 4 percent excellent. On the east side, Stevens County reported cattle were being turned out on one or two inches of grass on south slopes and hills. Kittitas County reported rangeland grass production was still trying to catch up, but late rains may help push dormancy a little later into the summer, improving forage quality and possibly compensating for the late spring in terms of yield.

### Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	5.7
Last Week	6.1

### Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	3	12	69	16
Topsoil 5 Yr Avg	2	15	74	9
Subsoil	8	25	64	3
Subsoil 5 Yr Avg	7	23	68	2
Irrigation Water	0	2	93	5
Irrigation Water 5 Yr Avg	3	4	91	2
Hay & Roughage	1	10	79	10

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

### Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	Percent Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2008	5 Yr. Avg.
Spring Wheat Planted	78	64	72	88
Spring Wheat Emerged	46	20	43	61
Field Corn Planted	37	28	37	45
Field Corn Emerged	5	4	13	16
Barley Planted	57	42	55	80
Barley Emerged	20	7	26	51
Potatoes Planted	70	55	67	70
Potatoes Emerged	15	9	19	35
Dry Edible Beans Planted	45	25	29	57
Proc. Green Peas Planted	68	48	57	78
Dry Peas Planted	48	29	42	68

### Crop Condition\*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	7	11	26	47	9
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	12	26	45	17
Spring Wheat Dryland	0	0	65	33	2
Spring Wheat Irrigated	0	0	26	63	11
Barley Dryland	0	0	50	50	0
Barley Irrigated	0	0	43	8	49
Potatoes	0	0	62	38	0
Dry Edible Beans	0	0	55	45	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

**Clark:** Good weather during the week allowed for pasture spraying, disking, and planting vegetables and berries. Garden Centers were in full swing.

**Clark/Skamania/Cowlitz/Wakiakum:** Producers were getting ready to plow, in preparation for planting of field corn and edible peas. Carrots were planted and strawberries were just blooming. Raspberries were doing very well and leafing out. Some strawberry fields were being plowed under due to root rot from too much moisture. Hay and oat crops failed and were being plowed under also. Fields were very muddy and equipment was getting stuck. Due to the wet, cold conditions, pastures were not growing. Cattle were being moved around to graze. Grass seed was emerging in planted pastures. Vegetable growers were not planting yet. Cottonwood plantations were being chipped now due to high prices. Strawberry planting was two weeks behind in central Clark County.

**Grays Harbor:** Christmas tree growers continued applying herbicides and reported bud break on Douglas fir. Heavy rain showers over the weekend took their toll on cut-flower tulips. Dairy producers were busy harvesting their first crop of green chop. U-Pick vegetable growers expressed frustration with persistent rain showers, which prevented field cultivation. Home gardeners took advantage of several days with no rain to plant potatoes and other warm season vegetable crops.

**Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific:** Farmers began cutting grass silage as their winter feed stocks were largely exhausted. Farmers were about three weeks behind with fieldwork.

**Mason:** Apple trees were in full bloom. Orchards were experiencing a lot of flying insects.

**Pierce/South King:** Most apple varieties were in full bloom. Early lettuce, cabbage, broccoli, and kale have been transplanted.

**Pierce/South King (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Crops were doing well with the warmer weather. There were no unusual situations to report and no reports of crop damage due to a weather event.

**San Juan:** The weather conditions were mostly sunny and dry, and temperatures were cooler than normal with frost in many low lying areas.

**Skagit:** A light rain was received over the weekend, just in time to water the seeds that were planted over the past month. Area farmers were about halfway done planting crops. Tulip fields were being topped, bringing an end to the 2009 Tulip Festival. Potato planting was ahead of schedule. Potato farmers were hoping to have everything in the ground by June 1. Green pea planting was about 50 percent complete. Beet seed bulbs were in the ground and actively growing. Spinach seed was being planted, and the cabbage seed crop was beginning to bolt. The crop was being staked and strung so it doesn't fall over during the spring winds. Corn was being planted earlier than normal.

**Snohomish/North King:** It was another good week for fieldwork. Weather conditions were dry with some rain late in the week. Friday temperatures rose to 78 degrees in some areas. Tree fruit blossoming continued, and strawberries and blueberries were beginning. Pastures were growing well, and some Christmas trees were at bud-break stage.

**Thurston:** Ag producers took advantage of several days of sunny weather to continue field cultivation. Organic vegetable growers were busy planting warm season vegetable crops including potatoes. Christmas tree growers continued to monitor Midge traps in Douglas fir plantations. Several nights of below freezing temperatures took its toll on early blooming fruit trees. Home gardeners reported numerous European Paper wasps. Heavy rainfall over the weekend brought all field activity to a screeching halt as soils were too wet to work.

**Thurston (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** The county was having a cool late spring with wind and rain.

**Whatcom:** The weather conditions were perfect for farming. It was the first week for the planting of corn and green peas. Most of the new seedings of grass have been planted. Other grass was being chopped for silage. Manure applications continued. Blueberries were in full bloom.

## Central

**Chelan:** The spring has been optimal for fruit set. There has been no frost, and the weather has been good for bee activity and flowers on trees.

**Douglas/Chelan:** Some rain was received during the week, and snow was received in the higher elevations. The moisture will help green up the winter wheat crop and spring pastures. Fruit tree bloom at varying stages continued. Dryland farmers worked summer fallow fields, attempting to preserve what little moisture there was.

**Franklin:** Temperatures were right around normal. Spotty light rain was received during the week and countywide rain was received on Saturday. Farming activities mirrored last week's report with more potato and corn acreage planted.

**Kittitas:** Temperatures were near freezing at night, but daytime highs in the 50s and 60s allowed slow crop growth. Rangeland grass production was still trying to catch up, but late rains may help push dormancy a little later into summer. The rains should also improve forage quality and possibly compensate for the late spring in terms of yield.

**Klickitat:** Despite a couple of nights that dipped near freezing, nighttime temperatures were mainly in the 30s and 40s. Farmers were still planting, taking advantage of a light rain that fell early in the week. Wind decreased and calmer weather mid-week made it possible for aerial spray applications. A significant weather event was a fast moving front that roared through the county Saturday evening, and dumped more than 0.5 inch of rain in less than fifteen minutes. The orchard districts showed no damage and only benefitted from the soaking rain. Apricot set was light, but the crop looked fine. Peaches were still being thinned, and cherries were at shuck split stage. It

was too early to assess the quality of the crop set. Grapes were in third to fourth leaf with blossoms coming on. Low lying grape shoots were being manually cleared from the plants in preparation for weed spray applications. The first mildew spray was in progress on grapes. Home gardeners were planting potatoes, and onion sets were up.

**Klickitat (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** The weather has been warm, and farmers were almost done planting. The wheat crop was doing well. Rain showers were received throughout the week, which will help the crops.

**Okanogan:** Some rain was received on Saturday. The warmer weather brought on nice growth in hay fields and on range pastures. Apple blossoms were beginning to show. Farmer's Markets were starting to open and sell plant starts and some leafy greens.

**Yakima:** Apple blossom thinning continued throughout the week in the warmer areas of the county. Some apple varieties were in full bloom, with many entering petal fall. All other fruit trees were beyond petal fall stage. Vegetable transplant activity began. Scattered showers were received during the week. Nighttime low temperatures dropped to the lower 30s, with some growers engaging frost protection measures. Daytime highs ranged from the 50s to the lower 70s.

**Yakima (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Average temperatures were generally cooler than normal, varying from 5 degrees below normal to 1 degree above normal. There was a trace of precipitation during the week. Temperatures as low as 27 degrees made it necessary for fruit growers to use frost control measures.

## Eastern

**Adams:** Precipitation has been improving soil moisture conditions. Winter wheat conditions remained unchanged, and weed spraying was nearing completion.

**Asotin/Garfield:** Wet weather conditions returned early in the week, halting the progress made on planting spring crops. There were several producers in the higher elevations that may not be done planting by the ending planting date. There was also concern whether or not to plant when they can get back into the fields.

**Lincoln:** Precipitation during the week maintained current soil moisture conditions.

**Pend Orielle/Spokane:** A cold week of temperatures gave little opportunity for plant growth. Lots of wind and a small amount of rain were received on Saturday evening. Fieldwork continued whenever possible, and seeding progressed slowly. A large number of fields were ready for seeding, and stone fruit trees were in full bloom on Green Bluff.

**Stevens:** The weather was cold with hard frosts at night. Some horses and cows were being turned out on 1-2 inch grass on south slopes and hills, and a few tractors were running on the south slopes during the week.

**Stevens (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Crop producers continued fertilizing, seeding, and tilling fields. Cattle ranchers were

branding calves and repairing fences. Spring pasture growth was very slow due to cold temperatures and lack of moisture.

**Walla Walla:** About 0.5 inch of rain was received during the week. Grain seeding was done. Dry pea seeding was almost done. Green pea seeding progressed on schedule. Grass was growing, but some early pastures were drying up. It has been a busy spring and producers were trying to catch up.

**Walla Walla (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** A couple of heavy rain showers were welcomed by producers. Cool temperatures resulted in slower growth. Onion producers needed warmer weather to help their crop along. Wheat crops throughout the county looked very good. Producers were busy with spraying, and rangeland was in good condition.

**Whitman:** The month of April ended with above average precipitation in most locations of the county. While the rainfall was beneficial to improving soil moisture conditions, it was slowing the progress of spring seeding and herbicide applications. Warmer weather is now needed to improve crop conditions. Many winter wheat stands were in need of some good warm growing conditions, as many stands were uneven.

**Weekly Weather Statistics**  
**April 27 - May 3, 2009**

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	
<b>WEST</b>																
Bellingham Intl	36	72	52	+3	20	+6	0	+0	0.16	-0.42	1	24.44	-5.29	82	113	
Hoquiam	37	73	52	+1	19	+4	0	+0	1.49	+0.64	4	48.87	-11.59	81	131	
Kelso	37	75	53	+2	23	+2	0	+0	1.22	+0.56	4	30.88	-9.01	77	109	
Olympia	33	73	51	+2	10	-3	0	+0	1.07	+0.48	4	37.38	-7.82	83	124	
Seattle-Tacoma	41	73	54	+3	29	+9	0	+0	0.44	+0.01	3	28.10	-4.30	87	122	
Shelton	31	73	51	-2	10	-14	0	+0	1.44	+0.74	5	50.86	-8.27	86	123	
Tacoma WA AP	32	73	51	-2	11	-10	0	+0	1.35	+0.81	4	29.15	-5.54	84	116	
Vancouver WA	39	72	54	+3	30	+9	0	+0	1.72	+1.16	4	23.58	-12.08	66	118	
<b>CENTRAL</b>																
Ellensburg	32	69	50	-1	7	-12	0	+0	0.30	+0.19	4	6.22	-1.07	85	59	
Omak AP	30	69	51	+2	15	+0	0	+0	0.29	-0.02	1	6.15	-4.45	58	68	
Stampede Pass	32	53	42	+6	0	+0	0	+0	0.22	-0.72	4	66.80	-5.14	93	127	
Wenatchee AP	36	68	51	-4	14	-24	0	-4	0.16	+0.02	5	3.16	-3.46	48	45	
Yakima AP	30	69	51	-3	10	-19	0	+0	0.03	-0.04	1	5.20	-1.28	80	52	
<b>NORTHEAST</b>																
Colville	29	72	48	-2	7	-8	0	+0	0.17	-0.22	2	12.56	-3.45	78	77	
Deer Park	24	70	47	-4	5	-10	0	+0	0.17	-0.18	1	14.00	-0.27	98	88	
Republic	30	70	50	+4	8	+1	0	+0	0.21	-0.08	1	7.63	-3.05	71	69	
Spokane AP	35	66	47	-4	4	-10	0	+0	0.15	-0.13	2	12.40	-0.19	98	95	
<b>EAST CENTRAL</b>																
Ephrata	35	69	52	-4	18	-24	0	-6	0.11	+0.01	4	3.27	-2.45	57	53	
Moses Lake	32	70	51	-5	12	-30	0	-6	0.14	+0.04	4	4.11	-1.61	72	55	
Quincy	34	68	52	-3	18	-19	0	-4	0.21	+0.10	3	7.80	+1.56	125	54	
Ritzville	29	65	46	-5	2	-14	0	+0	0.55	+0.34	3	9.17	+0.12	101	68	
<b>SOUTHEAST</b>																
Hanford	34	71	52	-7	20	-42	0	-13	0.31	+0.24	3	4.70	-0.63	88	47	
Pasco	32	73	51	-7	16	-37	0	-7	0.37	+0.26	4	6.05	+0.03	100	62	
Pullman	33	62	46	-4	3	-10	0	+0	0.99	+0.64	4	17.34	+0.67	104	96	
Walla Walla Rgn	39	70	51	-5	19	-22	0	-5	1.13	+0.77	4	15.12	-0.61	96	80	
Whitman Mission	31	70	49	-6	8	-26	0	+0	1.17	+0.89	3	13.82	+2.99	128	85	
<b>WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE</b>																
Lewiston ID	35	68	50	-4	13	-24	0	+0	0.60	+0.32	2	8.78	+0.23	103	65	

Summary based on NWS data.  
 Season Cumulative Precip Starts: Friday September 1, 2008  
 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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