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of Agriculture

National Agricultural  
Statistics Service

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# Washington Crop Weather

Released: May 11, 2009  
Week Ending: May 10, 2009  
CWP WA-CW1609

## Rain Continued to Slow Spring Seeding While Asparagus and Green Onion Harvest Continued

### Field Crops

Days suitable for fieldwork were 5.1. Persistent rains continued to hamper spring planting activities in eastern grain growing counties. Whitman County reported soil moisture conditions continued to improve, but producers were increasingly frustrated in their attempts to get spring crops planted in a timely manner. Concerns mounted that cool, wet weather will give way to extreme heat without any transition for the newly emerged crops. Walla Walla County reported their winter wheat continued to look very promising. Grant County reported sweet corn, fresh pea and grain corn planting were winding down. Christmas tree growers were monitoring spruce plantings for White Pine Bark Weevil.

### Fruits and Vegetables

In the Yakima Valley, nighttime lows approached freezing, initiating frost protection measures. Daytime highs peaked in upper 60s and lower 70s. Growing degree days (heat units) had fallen behind last year's mark and were roughly two weeks behind normal. Apple bloom lingered on a few varieties in the lower Yakima Valley and had peaked for most apple varieties in the upper Valley. There was no significant frost damage to date. Asparagus harvest continued for both the Yakima Valley and Franklin County. Green onion harvest continued in the Yakima Valley and grape vines were beginning to leaf out. Cranberry growers were concerned with the late blossom and fruit development problems due to below normal temperatures.

### Livestock and Shellfish

Range and pasture conditions were 4 percent very poor, 8 percent poor, 48 percent fair, 36 percent good and 4 percent excellent. On the western side, producers were green chopping grass. On the eastern side, Walla Walla County reported range and pasture were in good condition. Garfield County reported cattle were mostly on spring pasture. Stevens County reported livestock continued to be turned out on very short pastures. Animals were eating grass faster than it could grow back. Shellfish growers continued late season harvest, and continued seeding operations for both oysters and clams.

### Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	5.1
Last Week	5.7

### Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	6	14	70	10
Topsoil 5 Yr Avg	2	19	73	6
Subsoil	9	37	51	3
Subsoil 5 Yr Avg	6	26	66	2
Irrigation Water	0	2	95	3
Irrigation Water 5 Yr Avg	2	4	91	2
Hay & Roughage	2	11	82	5

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	85	78	89	96
Spring Wheat Emerged	62	46	60	74
Winter Wheat Headed	1	NA	3	9
Barley Planted	78	57	82	92
Barley Emerged	42	20	54	67
Potatoes Planted	90	70	83	89
Potatoes Emerged	20	15	28	48
Dry Edible Beans Planted	68	45	58	73
Proc. Green Peas Planted	90	68	67	87
Dry Peas Planted	69	48	61	83
Alfalfa Hay 1st Cutting	NA	NA	2	8
Field Corn Planted	47	37	41	62
Field Corn Emerged	11	5	16	30

### Crop Condition\*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	8	11	33	41	7
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	0	32	56	12
Spring Wheat Dryland	0	0	45	52	3
Spring Wheat Irrigated	0	0	39	43	18
Barley Dryland	0	0	38	60	2
Barley Irrigated	0	0	46	12	42
Potatoes	0	0	33	58	9
Corn	0	0	85	13	2
Dry Edible Beans	0	0	41	59	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:** The temperatures were warmer with daytime highs in the upper 50s and lows in the upper 40s. There were no reports of unusual conditions.

**Grays Harbor:** Agricultural producers expressed frustration over lingering rain showers which limited field cultivation. Dairy producers continued harvesting the first cutting of forage for the year. Christmas tree growers monitored fields for Douglas Fir Needle Midge hatch. Greenhouse tomato growers reported rapid plant growth. Home gardeners reported apples, cherries and plums were in full bloom with limited bee activity.

**Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific:** Rainfall and cool temperatures continued to delay field work in SW Washington. Producers were about three weeks behind

**Mason:** The area received an unseasonable rain storm at the beginning of the week. Weather was conducive for pasture growth.

**Pacific:** Wet weather early in the week limited field work for agricultural producers. Shellfish growers continued late season harvest and continued seeding operations for both oysters and clams. Cranberry growers were concerned with late blossom time and fruit development problems due to below normal spring temperatures. Pasture conditions continued to improve, with early green chop operations completed.

**Pierce/South King:** The crop conditions were good to normal for this time of year. Pasture ground looked good and row crops should be fine. No unusual situations were reported. There were no reports of any crop damage due to an adverse weather event.

**Snohomish/North King:** The temperatures were warmer with daytime highs in the upper 50s and lows in the upper 40s. The area received more wind and rain. Some producers started first cutting on grass hay. Cows were calving.

**Snohomish/North King (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Heavy rains received during the first half of the week slowed fieldwork. Most apples were in full bloom. Stone fruits were finishing up. Blueberries were starting to blossom. Strawberries in home gardens were in blossom. Pasture growth was good due to mild conditions. Frosty mornings occurred in upland fields.

**Thurston:** Persistent rain showers during the week limited soil cultivation. Livestock producers continued harvesting the first cutting of forage for the year. Christmas tree growers monitored spruce plantings for White Pine Bark Weevil which attacks the tree leaders. Home gardeners kept busy eliminating rapidly germinating weeds.

**Thurston (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** The area received some sun, but temperatures were cool.

**Whatcom:** Producers were green chopping grass, preparing fields for corn planting. Potatoes, corn and grass were being planted. Temperature lows were in the 40s and highs were in the 60s. The weekend was nice with highs in high 60s. The area received rain Sunday night.

## Central

**Douglas/Chelan:** Rain received ranged from 1" to 0.5" throughout the counties. The much needed precipitation greatly improved the winter wheat crop and spring pastures. Livestock water was short in the northern part of Douglas County. Many lakes did not fill this spring due to low snow levels. Calving was completed. Livestock were in spring pastures. Spring wheat planting continued. Cool night time temperatures were of concern to fruit growers, however it was not known if damage occurred. Frost protection operations were utilized.

**Franklin:** Temperatures were at or a little below average for the period. The area received several good showers at the beginning and in the middle of the week. Dryland producers were pleased with the precipitation. Crops were a little behind because of the relatively cooler spring. Asparagus harvest continued.

**Grant:** Sweet corn planting was winding down. Fresh pea planting finished up. First cutting alfalfa began. Grain corn planting finished up. Dry bean planting was expected to begin in the near future.

**Kittitas:** Grass growth had finally taken off in irrigated pasture and hay fields. Corn planting had begun. Cheatgrass turned purple in many areas with decent daytime temperatures.

**Klickitat:** Weather was warmer and crops started to take off. There were showers during the week which helped the moisture level. Pasture on the Columbia hills dried up and had headed out without growing very tall. Planting was completed.

**Klickitat (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Wind and rain was received with clearing and warming by Friday. Showers returned late Sunday. Highs were in the 50s-60s and lows were in the 30s-40s with light frost at elevation one morning. There was increased spray activity during any window of opportunity when wind and rain let up. The challenge for agricultural producers

was getting fertilizer on before rain hit again. Fields were described as "mushy" but the almost 1"- 0.5" of rain received in the Centerville-Goldendale Valley was really needed. New seedlings emerged and nothing had to be seeded into dry ground. The winter wheat crop looked good having survived with little winter damage. Pastures improved with warmer temperatures. Hay supplies were very short and cattle were moved frequently between lowland fields. Mountain rangeland was not ready yet. In home gardens daffodils finished bloom and tulips were in full color.

**Okanogan:** Some regions received up to an inch or more of rain. Cooler weather slowed alfalfa growth. More apple blossoms showed up. Most varieties were at the first bloom. Few cattle were being fed hay as most lower elevation range pastures were opened up for grazing.

**Yakima:** Average temperatures were generally cooler than normal, varying from seven degrees below normal to two degrees above normal. There was 0.61 of an inch of precipitation received. No crop losses due to weather conditions were reported.

**Yakima (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Growers received between 0.25 to 0.75 inches of precipitation with most of the rain coming on May 4. Nighttime lows approached freezing. Frost protection measures were initiated on some mornings. Daytime highs peaked in the upper 60s and lower 70s. Growing degree days (heat units) had fallen behind last year's mark. The area was roughly two weeks behind normal. Apple bloom lingered on a few varieties in the lower Yakima Valley and peaked for most apple varieties in the upper Valley. Asparagus and green onion harvest continued. Grape vines began to leaf out.

## Eastern

**Adams:** The periodic showery weather of the past month had rangeland looking better than it had in a few years. Spring planted grain crops were doing well. A period of warm weather would be welcomed by most crop producers.

**Asotin:** The week began with rain and was followed by a few days of dry weather. More rain was predicted for the coming week. The moisture was appreciated in the lower elevations. Producers were trying to finish seeding spring crops in the higher parts of the county. Warm weather was needed for both pastures and crop development.

**Asotin/Garfield:** Rains received early in the week kept farmers from the fields. Planting of spring crops was behind normal. Farmers in the higher elevations were prevented from planting spring wheat by the final planting date. Warm sunny weather was welcomed at the end of the week.

**Garfield:** Weather ranged from 85 to 53 degrees each day. Hot, dry days in-between showers created frustrating conditions for farmers. Cattle were on spring pastures. Summer allotments will not open until late June again.

**Lincoln:** The winter wheat looked better but needed some good warm nights to really grow. The spring crops looked good.

**Pend Orielle/Spokane:** Rain received during the week delayed planting and field work. Tractors were back in the fields on Saturday and Sunday working to get fields worked and seeded. Planting was delayed the closer you got to the Idaho border. Very little work was done in that area. Winter wheat looked good and grass growth started to take off. The area could use more warm weather.

**Stevens:** Livestock continued to be turned out on very short pastures. Animals ate grass faster than it could grow in cold wet weather. Approximately 75 percent were turned out. Two hundred cows returned from southern winter pastures and were turned out this week. Spring work was slow with minimal progress made toward seeding spring grains.

**Stevens (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** The area received much needed rain and there was enough to soak in. Warmer weather would be helpful.

**Walla Walla:** It was a cold, windy and wet week. Some areas of county received over an inch of rainfall. The area continued to show promise of a good yield. Spring crops would welcome some warm weather. Pasture and rangeland were in good condition.

**Walla Walla (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Temperatures were cool with rain off and on. Temperatures were warmer over the weekend. Most seeding was finished except for green peas. Wet soil slowed seeding and growth. Both winter and spring wheat looked very good. Hay cutting was delayed from slow growth and wet weather. Grass was finally growing.

**Whitman:** Persistent rains continued to hamper spring planting progress. Soil moisture conditions continued to improve. Producers in the east and central portions of the county were increasingly frustrated in their attempts to get spring crops seeded in a timely manner. Concerns mounted that the cool wet weather will give way to extreme heat without any transition for the newly emerged crops.

# Weekly Weather Statistics

May 4-10, 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	64	50	-3	7	-11	0	+0	1.13	+0.57	3	25.57	-4.72	84	116
Hoquiam	37	58	50	-4	3	-18	0	+0	2.77	+1.98	4	51.64	-9.61	84	135
Kelso	37	68	53	-1	20	-5	0	+0	1.64	+1.05	4	32.52	-7.96	80	113
Olympia	33	66	50	-2	6	-9	0	+0	2.37	+1.84	4	39.75	-5.98	87	128
Seattle-Tacoma	43	64	52	-2	17	-9	0	+0	1.85	+1.43	4	29.95	-2.87	91	126
Shelton	31	67	49	-5	0	-30	0	+0	3.62	+3.02	4	54.48	-5.25	91	127
Tacoma WA AP	33	64	50	-5	4	-24	0	+0	1.75	+1.26	4	30.90	-4.28	88	120
Vancouver WA	39	71	55	+3	38	+12	0	+0	1.44	+0.88	4	25.02	-11.20	69	122
<b>CENTRAL</b>															
Ellensburg	33	73	51	-2	13	-12	0	+0	0.34	+0.24	3	6.56	-0.83	89	62
Omak AP	32	71	51	-1	17	-5	0	+0	0.79	+0.44	4	6.94	-4.01	63	72
Stampede Pass	32	59	41	+2	0	+0	0	+0	2.47	+1.62	6	69.27	-3.52	95	133
Wenatchee AP	38	70	52	-5	21	-26	0	-5	0.36	+0.22	3	3.52	-3.24	52	48
Yakima AP	31	73	51	-5	13	-24	0	+0	0.63	+0.56	3	5.83	-0.72	89	55
<b>NORTHEAST</b>															
Colville	32	71	50	-2	8	-13	0	+0	0.49	+0.07	4	13.05	-3.38	79	81
Deer Park	28	66	46	-7	3	-18	0	+0	1.03	+0.68	3	15.03	+0.41	103	91
Republic	32	69	50	+2	11	+1	0	+0	0.57	+0.22	3	8.20	-2.83	74	72
Spokane AP	35	66	49	-3	5	-15	0	+0	0.36	+0.08	3	12.76	-0.11	99	98
<b>EAST CENTRAL</b>															
Ephrata	32	71	52	-6	20	-34	0	-7	0.06	-0.01	2	3.33	-2.46	58	55
Moses Lake	34	73	53	-5	22	-32	0	-7	0.19	+0.12	2	4.30	-1.49	74	57
Quincy	35	69	53	-4	19	-27	0	-3	0.43	+0.33	3	8.23	+1.89	130	57
Ritzville	34	66	49	-4	3	-19	0	+0	0.43	+0.22	3	9.60	+0.34	104	71
<b>SOUTHEAST</b>															
Hanford	36	76	54	-7	32	-44	0	-16	0.07	+0.00	2	4.77	-0.63	88	49
Pasco	32	77	55	-4	40	-24	1	-9	0.18	+0.04	2	6.23	+0.07	101	64
Pullman	35	66	49	-2	5	-9	0	+0	1.09	+0.74	3	18.43	+1.41	108	99
Walla Walla Rgn	40	74	56	-2	45	-6	1	-6	0.49	+0.12	3	15.61	-0.49	97	83
Whitman Mission	32	70	52	-4	20	-21	0	+0	0.34	+0.06	3	14.16	+3.05	127	88
<b>WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE</b>															
Lewiston ID	37	69	54	-3	28	-17	0	-2	0.29	+0.01	4	9.07	+0.24	103	69

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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