



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

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Washington Crop Weather

Released: August 3, 2009
Week Ending: August 2, 2009
CWP WA-CW2809

Extreme Heat and Dry Conditions Stressed Field Crops

Field Crops

Days suitable for fieldwork were 6.6. Harvest progressed rapidly with reports of yields being near or above average and good quality. In Grant County, second cutting of Timothy was wrapping up and third cutting alfalfa was underway. Spokane County reported a hot week and evening thunderstorms made it difficult to finish bluegrass seed harvest. Sweet corn harvest began. Potato harvest was underway and green pea harvest was nearing completion. Christmas tree growers reported heat scorch on both Noble and Grand fir.

Fruits and Vegetables

In the Yakima Valley, growers were using cooling operations to protect crops from the heat. Earlier maturing peach and nectarine harvest started. Some orchard blocks required tree propping with heavy crops while other crops looked a bit thin. In Thurston County, raspberry and blueberry growers focused on irrigation to preserve fruit quality. In Jefferson County, blueberries were ripening and were large but market conditions were not favorable. In Pacific County, cranberry growers irrigated bogs and controlled weeds and insects while raspberry producers completed post-harvest activities.

Livestock and Shellfish

Range and pasture conditions were 6 percent very poor, 22 percent poor, 40 percent fair and 32 percent good. On the east side, pasture conditions were drying up quickly due to high temperatures and constant winds. On the west side, extremely high temperatures and the lack of rain forced early feeding of hay to livestock. In Thurston County, cattle looked good and were on haylage until next May. In Pacific County, shellfish harvest operations slowed, but seeding and bed management activities continued.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	6.6
Last Week	6.7

Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	24	52	24	0
Topsoil 5 Yr Avg	19	38	43	0
Subsoil	21	47	32	0
Subsoil 5 Yr Avg	15	40	45	0
Irrigation Water	1	7	92	0
Irrigation Water 5 Yr Avg	3	6	91	0
Hay & Roughage	2	13	73	12

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 Harvested	21	2	9	22
Winter Wheat Harvested	38	15	39	42
Barley Harvested	14	1	13	21
Potatoes Harvested	19	18	19	23
Field Corn Silked	75	50	52	70
Field Corn Doughed	12	7	6	16
Field Corn Dented	3	2	3	9
Proc. Green Peas Harvested	97	96	94	97
Dry Peas Harvested	32	30	31	46
Alfalfa Hay 2nd Cutting	81	75	73	86
Alfalfa Hay 3rd Cutting	25	5	6	20

Crop Condition*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	8	15	33	42	2
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	2	51	41	6
Spring Wheat Dryland	3	14	42	40	1
Spring Wheat Irrigated	0	0	35	60	5
Barley Dryland	3	12	38	46	1
Barley Irrigated	0	5	53	36	6
Potatoes	0	1	49	40	10
Corn	0	2	29	67	2
Dry Edible Beans	0	5	37	58	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.

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COUNTY COMMENTS

Western

Clark/Cowlitz/Skamania/Wahkiakum: There were record temperatures of 95-106 degrees throughout the past week. Highs in Vancouver and Portland area were 106. Woodland Bottoms area (Cowlitz, Clark Counties west of I-5) weather was good until the heat. Raspberries final harvest was lost due to heat. Some producers will run machines through and beat bushes to get lower grade barrel fruit. Blueberry and black raspberry prices were down substantially from last year. Skamania County received heavy rain after July 4 and pastures still looked decent. Cowlitz County was very hot with 114 degrees in air intake of chicken houses. Hay was mostly in. Wahkiakum County was dry for a long time. Corn was planted late and still not tasseled. The ground dried quickly and stand was not as thick as usual. The hay crop was completed. Puget Island temperature hit 100 degrees on July 28, which was very unusual. Pasture ground was dried out. Hot weather helped corn maturation. Ridgefield area of Clark County irrigation system was down (Pioneer irrigation system). Oats were planted too late and fields were dry. There was some irrigated silage corn which was four feet high. Strawberries matured slow and then came on all at once. One field was lost due to excessive moisture early in the season. One producer in Brush Prairie reported a 50 percent loss on strawberries. Raspberries were finished. Producers held off picking blueberries due to low price. They will pick all at once to minimize labor costs. It was a bumper crop of blueberries. Grass seed in Woodland Bottoms area was not being sold and farmers were still holding last year's crop.

Grays Harbor: A thermal blast with record breaking temperatures in the triple digits kept agricultural producers busy trying to keep cannery pea and sweet corn fields irrigated. The extreme heat made it virtually impossible to do much in the afternoons as temperatures soared well above 100 degrees. Growers continued to assess heat damage to crops. Christmas tree growers reported heat scorch on both Noble and Grand fir. The rural landscape remained very, very dry. Home gardeners were feasting on ripe tomatoes and cucumbers.

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: Extremely high temperatures affected the area. Lack of rain forced early feeding of hay to livestock. The impact on cannery crops remained to be seen.

Island/San Juan/Skagit: Weather over the last two weeks was unusually hot and dry. Extreme conditions caused losses in hay crops and heat/drought stress on all other field crops.

Jefferson: The weather was unusually warm with temperatures in the high 90s. No rain for six weeks made this the driest year in 160 years of records. Ten blueberry varieties were ripening all at the same time. The berries were large with good quality, but market conditions were difficult. Soils were very dry and some lightning caused forest fires in the national park. There was high water usage by producers.

Mason: The area received devastatingly hot weather. Deciduous trees started to turn yellow. More damage to plants was expected in the coming weeks.

Pacific: Dry weather continued to challenge producers. Cranberry growers irrigated bogs and controlled weeds and insects. Raspberry producers completed post-harvest activities. Pasture forage quality declined with dry soil conditions. Shellfish harvest operations slowed, but seeding and bed management activities continued.

Pierce/South King: The hot weather did not help crop conditions. Producers lost livestock to the hot weather. There were no reports of any crop losses so far. No other unusual situations were reported.

Pierce/South King (2nd Report): Extreme heat and dry conditions placed heavy pressure on producers to keep fields wet. Evapotranspiration rates were excessive during the early part of the week which coincided with berry harvest.

San Juan: Conditions continued to be dry and very warm. Most dryland pasture was becoming dormant.

Snohomish/North King: The weather was extremely hot and dry. Temperatures exceeded 100 degrees across the region. There were some afternoon thundershowers, but isolated in the foothills. Crops without irrigation suffered the effects from the dry weather. The third cutting of hay started, but was projected to fall short.

Snohomish/North King (2nd Report): Conditions were very hot and dry all week. Temperatures were in the triple digits for a couple of days. Heat-loving crops did well if sufficient water was available. Pasture was mostly dormant unless irrigated. It was good haying weather and some local hay was cut and baled. Blueberry harvest continued and some early apples began to ripen.

Western Continued

Thurston: Agricultural producers sweltered throughout the week as temperatures rose to the triple digits in many parts of the county. Growers continued to assess the extent of damage from the thermal blast. Christmas tree growers reported heat scorch on both Noble and Grand fir. Both raspberry and blueberry growers focused on irrigation to preserve fruit quality. Home gardeners were harvesting tomatoes, cucumbers, new potatoes and summer squash.

Thurston (2nd Report): The area experienced dry, hot conditions and needed rain. Cattle looked good and were on haylage.

Whatcom: It was a hot and dry week. The raspberry harvest slowed down. Blueberry harvest was in full swing. Producers were irrigating.

Central

Chelan/Douglas: Record breaking high temperatures in the triple digits were experienced. Winter wheat harvest began. Yields were below average, due to lack of winter/spring moisture. A severe thunderstorm hit and lightning strikes started several fires. The Union Valley fire near Chelan burned over 700 acres. No cropland was affected, however some range and pasture lands were burned. Hail associated with the storm affected some apple growers in the Manson area. The amount of damage was not yet known.

Douglas: Harvest was in full swing which was about two weeks early for the area due to lack of rain. Over 50 percent of the fields were harvested. Some fields reported good yields (30 to 50 bushel in fields that received moisture) while others reported poorly (20 to 15 bushel). A thunderstorm that produced hail went through the area on July 28. Some producers reported a five to twenty percent loss.

Franklin: Temperatures were hot. Several days were slightly above normal for the week, though triple digit temperatures at the end of July was not out of the norm. Unlike the cool spring, the summer months turned growing conditions around quickly. Unlike the slightly later first cutting hay crop, third cutting was a bit ahead of schedule. Much of the county was cutting, raking, baling and stacking. In the south end of the county, many acres were being finished up while the north end was in the middle of the process. Irrigation was going non-stop on nearly all crops to keep crops from heat stress. Sweet corn harvest continued though it was nearly complete. Some bean acreage was being cut.

Grant: Second cutting of Timothy wrapped up. Third cutting of alfalfa was underway. Sweet corn harvest

began. Dryland wheat harvest continued with below average yields. Irrigated wheat harvest was also underway.

Klickitat: July was ushered out and August came in with the hottest days of summer. Mean temperature remained in the 80s with highs in the 90s-100s and lows in the 60s. There was very little wind all week. The average wind speed remained in single digits under the influence of a smothering high pressure system. Farm workers limited field hours to mornings before the heat peaked for the day. Barley harvest finished up and wheat harvest continued. Farm animals and poultry were stressed by the heat. Extra labor was needed to keep their water tanks filled. Home gardeners also watered continuously to keep plants producing. Beans and cucumbers came on rapidly.

Yakima: Average temperatures were warmer than usual and varied from three to fourteen degrees above normal. The area received a trace of precipitation. Growers were using cooling operations to protect crops from the heat. No crop losses due to weather conditions were reported.

Yakima (2nd Report): Temperatures were burning hot. There was no precipitation and sizeable brush fires continued to burn. Daytime highs exceeded 100 degrees on a couple days. Temperatures cooled to the lower 60s during the early morning hours. Earlier maturing peach and nectarine harvest started. Some orchard blocks required tree propping with heavy crops while other crops looked a bit thin. Local vegetable stands were flush with sweet corn, cucumber, summer squash, tomato, pepper, and melon.

Eastern

Adams: Harvest progressed with reports of yields being near average and good quality.

Asotin: Very hot, dry weather continued as wheat harvest progressed throughout the area.

Asotin/Garfield: Hot weather allowed many farmers to begin harvest which progressed rapidly. Crop yields varied widely from well below normal to well above normal depending on the area.

Ferry: The hot, dry weather was interrupted by thunderstorms. The precipitation washed some people's hay for the third and fourth time before baling.

Garfield: Wheat harvest was dangerously hot and slow. A lot of grain needs to be cut in August. Algae showed up in farm diesel, which ruins filters quickly.

Lincoln: Producers were about half finished with harvest.

Lincoln (2nd Report): Hot weather was received with more producers beginning to harvest. Yields were reported as being poor in most cases.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: A hot week with some evening thunderstorms made it difficult to finish up bluegrass seed harvest. A couple of combines cut some wheat with more to cut this week. Rain was in the forecast which was not needed at this point. Pasture conditions dried up quickly

with the temperatures in the upper 90s and low 100s. Winds blew almost constantly. Stone fruit ripened up on Green Bluff, and cherries finished up after a disappointing harvest. Rain split the cherries and then extremely warm weather and winds took their toll.

Stevens: Grain harvest began. Hay producers continued baling grain hay and second cutting alfalfa.

Stevens (2nd Report): Widespread but scattered thunder showers dropped from one half to two inches of rain across the northern end of the county. The Colville area received the most rain. It was difficult to determine how much positive effect will come from the showers because the rain was so scattered. The showers damaged a fair amount of grain hay and some of the early second cutting.

Walla Walla: Temperatures were hot. Grain harvest progressed well with some reports of above average yields.

Whitman: Additional rainfall aided spring crops but brought harvest to a stop in the western part of the county. Harvest will be in full swing in the western two-thirds of the county by the end of next week. Yield reports were average to a bit above in the western end of the county.

Weekly Weather Statistics

July 27- August 2, 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
WEST															
Bellingham Intl	56	96	73	+11	160	+69	90	+64	0.00	-0.28	0	29.01	-5.94	83	132
Hoquiam	54	93	65	+5	109	+32	40	+26	0.00	-0.22	0	53.63	-13.09	80	146
Kelso	59	106	78	+14	197	+92	127	+92	0.00	-0.21	0	34.64	-10.65	76	122
Olympia	53	104	77	+14	191	+93	121	+93	0.00	-0.20	0	41.80	-7.76	84	145
Seattle-Tacoma	57	103	78	+13	201	+89	131	+89	0.00	-0.16	0	31.63	-4.60	87	137
Shelton	54	104	76	+11	184	+72	114	+72	0.00	-0.19	0	56.52	-7.46	88	142
Tacoma WA AP	57	104	78	+14	198	+93	128	+93	0.00	-0.21	0	32.64	-6.52	83	130
Vancouver WA	62	107	83	+18	230	+123	160	+119	0.00	-0.20	0	27.40	-12.89	68	134
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	60	105	82	+14	229	+96	159	+96	0.10	+0.03	1	6.75	-1.84	79	70
Omak AP	58	106	80	+12	214	+82	144	+81	0.02	-0.16	1	8.15	-5.92	58	87
Stampede Pass	62	89	75	+19	174	+125	104	+97	0.05	-0.24	2	74.02	-5.46	93	160
Wenatchee AP	68	107	86	+12	253	+80	183	+83	0.01	-0.06	1	4.08	-3.84	52	58
Yakima AP	59	104	82	+12	225	+78	155	+78	0.00	-0.07	0	6.48	-1.13	85	62
NORTHEAST															
Colville	57	103	78	+11	197	+75	127	+72	0.24	+0.03	2	17.14	-3.09	85	103
Deer Park	52	101	75	+6	179	+39	109	+39	0.09	-0.05	1	17.69	-0.13	99	109
Republic	60	103	80	+15	210	+106	140	+105	0.14	-0.10	3	10.76	-3.97	73	94
Spokane AP	64	101	79	+9	206	+66	136	+66	0.04	-0.10	1	14.86	-0.99	94	113
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	69	105	85	+10	247	+65	177	+65	0.00	-0.07	0	3.37	-3.63	48	57
Moses Lake	64	106	83	+8	233	+51	163	+51	0.00	-0.07	0	4.87	-2.13	70	62
Quincy	64	101	81	+10	218	+64	148	+64	0.00	-0.07	0	8.59	+1.09	115	64
Ritzville	63	103	79	+10	207	+67	137	+67	0.00	-0.07	0	10.89	-0.05	100	82
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	64	109	86	+8	252	+49	182	+49	0.00	-0.07	0	4.95	-1.24	80	54
Pasco	60	108	82	+7	228	+46	158	+46	0.00	-0.07	0	6.69	-0.45	94	70
Pullman	50	99	76	+10	180	+61	110	+61	0.00	-0.14	0	21.46	+1.18	106	114
Walla Walla Rgn	65	108	86	+10	253	+70	183	+71	0.00	-0.14	0	17.53	-1.23	93	97
Whitman Mission	54	108	79	+8	207	+53	137	+53	0.00	-0.14	0	15.84	+2.66	120	101
WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE															
Lewiston ID	55	106	82	+7	224	+44	154	+48	0.00	-0.14	0	10.71	-0.99	92	84

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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