



United States Department  
of Agriculture

National Agricultural  
Statistics Service

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# Washington Crop Weather

Released: October 13, 2009  
Week Ending: October 11, 2009  
CWP WA-CW3809

## Hard Freezes Bring End to Growing Season While Concern Mounts Over Dry Conditions on Eastern Side Field Crops

Days suitable for fieldwork were 6.7. Fall seeding slowed, but continued in the major grain growing counties. The lack of adequate soil moisture was a growing concern in Whitman and other counties. Walla Walla County appeared to be the exception. Lack of major rainfall in many areas had taken a toll on newly emerged plants. In addition, heavy winds in the central counties further hindered emerging wheat. In Grant and other counties, grain corn and potato harvest were well underway. On the western side, Christmas tree growers were busy preparing fields for harvest.

### Fruits and Vegetables

In the Yakima Valley, some apple-producing areas in the lower Yakima County experienced severe gusts of wind approaching 20-30 mph last weekend. The wind created some localized crop loss as it dislodged a significant portion of the late-maturing apple varieties in some orchards. Over the weekend, nighttime lows dropped between 18 to 25 degrees terminating the vegetable production season throughout the county. Throughout the week, apple harvest continued with Jonagold, Red Delicious, Fuji and Granny Smith apples coming in. In Pacific County, cranberry growers continued harvest operations.

### Livestock

Range and pasture conditions were 13 percent very poor, 20 percent poor, 44 percent fair, 22 percent good and 1 percent excellent. On both sides of the State, cattle were coming down from mountain pasture and weaning had begun. On the eastern side, rangeland conditions were deteriorating with the advancing fall.

### Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	6.7
Last Week	6.3

### Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	Percent Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2008	5 Yr. Avg.
Winter Wheat Planted	93	83	81	85
Winter Wheat Emerged	71	58	58	59
Potatoes Harvested	86	71	76	79
Field Corn Doughed	100	99	98	100
Field Corn Dented	96	90	92	98
Field Corn Mature	77	43	34	81
Field Corn Harvested for Grain	30	8	13	40
Field Corn Harvested for Silage	70	55	50	68
Alfalfa Hay 3rd Cutting	100	99	100	100
Alfalfa Hay 4 <sup>th</sup> Cutting	75	70	69	32

### Crop Condition\*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	4	16	35	43	2
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	9	56	35	0
Corn	0	0	62	34	4

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.

### Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	17	49	33	1
Topsoil 5 Yr Avg	9	24	64	3
Subsoil	23	43	34	0
Subsoil 5 Yr Avg	15	37	48	0
Irrigation Water	2	8	90	0
Irrigation Water 5 Yr Avg	1	4	95	0
Hay & Roughage	4	10	75	11

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

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# COUNTY COMMENTS

## Western

**Clark:** Pumpkin, apple and wine grape harvests were in full swing.

**Grays Harbor:** The cut-flower dahlia business came to a screeching halt early in the week as temperatures plummeted below freezing. Some areas of the county reported temperatures as low as 28 degrees. Christmas tree growers were busy preparing fields for harvest. Greenhouse tomato growers picked the last of the crop for this year. Livestock producers continued applying liquid manure to forage fields. Yellow Finn potato growers as well as daffodil and tulip bulb growers reported excellent direct market sales. Sweet corn growers finished planting winter cover crops in harvested fields. The tapestry of fall color continued to unfold across the rural landscape, as native trees and shrubs displayed their fall foliage.

**Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific:** The weather was dry and cool. Some areas experienced freezing overnight temperatures.

**Jefferson:** Dry conditions continued and the area needed rain. The area experienced a great growing season.

**Mason:** A hard frost cleaned out the tender crops. Producers cleaned up and planted cover crops. The area was in need of rain.

**Pacific:** Dry fall weather helped producers complete late season fieldwork. Cranberry growers continued harvest operations. Dry harvest for fresh market continued in the north county. Dry conditions continued to affect pasture conditions. Shellfish growers and Christmas tree growers continued preparations for the major fall harvest season.

**Pierce/South King:** Crop conditions remained normal for this time of year. No unusual situations were reported. There were no reports of any crop damage due to abnormal weather events.

**Snohomish/North King:** Producers felt fall hitting the Puget Sound Region. The temperatures had fallen and topped out in the low 60s. Fog started to appear in the mornings along the bodies of water. There was sun during the days, with a few high clouds in the mornings. No real precipitation was received. Corn harvest was nearly complete, and most of the fall planted crops were in the ground. Some crops were a little late, waiting for some moisture.

**Snohomish/North King (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Weather conditions were mostly sunny with cooling temperatures. Many parts of the county received the first killing frost of the season during the weekend. Vine maples put on a fall show of bright colors. Pumpkin farms were busy during the weekend. Pasture growth slowed with the cooling weather.

**Thurston:** Almost all areas of the county had received a killing frost by the end of the week. Some areas reported temperatures as low as 29 degrees. Bright, sunny days with cool breezes provided nearly ideal conditions for U-Pick pumpkin harvest. Most farms reported a brisk business over the weekend as families chose the perfect Jack O'Lantern for Halloween. Sweet corn growers finished sowing winter cover crops in harvested fields. Livestock producers took advantage of the sunny week to make a final cutting of forage for haylage. Christmas tree growers were busy tagging trees for wholesale orders. Organic vegetable growers reported brisk sales of fall produce at the Olympia Farmer's market. Commercial blueberry fields were ablaze with vibrant fall foliage. The rural landscape continued to be a tapestry of fall color as native big leaf maple, vine maples and Oregon ash displayed their brilliant fall foliage.

**Whatcom:** Temperatures in the north part of the county dipped into the 20s. Harvesting of seed potatoes and corn for silage was winding down. Raspberry canes continued to be pruned and tied.

## Central

**Douglas/Chelan:** Record low freezing temperatures were experienced. Some apples were still on the trees and were affected by the cold. The extent of damage was being determined. Fruit tree buds for next year's crop may have also suffered damage. Windy conditions affected the winter wheat crop. Some producers reported plants in end rows being blown out of the ground. The winter wheat crop was in poor condition due to drought. Fall pasture growth was also below normal.

**Douglas:** Over the weekend, parts of Douglas County experienced unusually cold temperatures for this time of year. Some low lying areas were as cold as 14 degrees in the morning.

**Grant:** Grain corn harvest was underway. Potato harvest was in full swing. Dry bean harvest wound down. Dryland winter wheat acreage looked very poor due to continued dry conditions. Apple harvest was underway.

**Kittitas:** Cattle came home from range pastures. Producers moved cattle from summer leased pastures to home pastures grown out to accommodate fall grazing. Timothy seeding looked pretty good. Extreme cold temperatures may have ended growth for the year. Soil temperatures fell nearly ten degrees in the last seven days. Daytime high soil temperatures fell from the low 60s to low 50s.

**Klickitat:** Temperatures turned to freezing but the farmers still worked on trying to get the fall planting done. There were no reports of wheat dying from the cold temperatures. Cows were brought home from the mountain pastures and turned out on hay and wheat stubble.

**Klickitat (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Temperatures continued to drop as cold air moved in out of the east. Highs only reached the 60s through Thursday, falling to the 50s Friday and Saturday, then down to the 40s on Sunday. Lows were in the 20s-30s with several hard frosts putting the brakes on the growing season. Although cloudy, no moisture was seen. Calves were weaned for fall sales. Small growers marketed hogs and lambs. Peach harvest finally finished up and orchardists started early pruning on young cherry trees. Grape harvest continued with the last of the white grapes being picked and moving on to reds. Vineyards in the eastern growing areas did get frost and were being picked now. Home gardeners were getting their hands dirty digging potatoes and planting the 2010 crop of garlic.

**Yakima:** Average temperatures were generally cooler than normal and varied from 17 degrees below normal to 1 degree above normal. There was no precipitation received. Apple growers were concerned with 18 degree low temperatures.

**Yakima (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Reports filtered in that apple-producing areas in the lower Yakima County experienced severe gusts of wind approaching 20-30 mph last weekend. This wind created some localized crop loss. The wind dislodged a significant portion of the late-maturing apples in some orchards. Nighttime lows over the weekend dropped between 18 to 25 degrees, terminating the vegetable production season. Low temperatures may impact the quality and storability of the late-maturing apple crop. Apple harvest continued with Jonagold, Red Delicious, Fuji and Granny Smith apples coming in.

## Eastern

**Adams:** A very cold week with night temperatures in the sub-freezing range put early stress on emerged wheat. The damage from heavy winds of the previous week was being assessed. There was much soil loss, especially in the western portion of the county. Many wheat stands were blown out and will require reseeding after precipitation arrives to settle the soil again.

**Adams (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Precipitation was needed to improve soil moisture and winter wheat conditions.

**Asotin:** Cold temperatures at night were common in most areas. Conditions remained very dry. Moisture was needed for fall seeded crops.

**Asotin/Garfield:** Temperatures turned from above normal to 15-20 degrees below normal. Record cold temperatures were recorded in many areas. Rain was needed in most areas for germination of winter wheat. Rangeland conditions were becoming poor in some areas.

**Ferry:** The area received record low temperatures. Some apples were still on the trees. Fruit trees had bud damage which will affect next year's crop.

**Ferry (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Temperatures were at five degrees for several nights. Some ranchers reported lows of two degrees.

**Garfield:** Very bitter cold down to 12 degrees and staying around 21 degrees at night. Farmers were worried about wheat that had just emerged in limited moisture. Lack of rain plus cold dry conditions may eliminate the crop. Many talked about planting spring wheat rather than reseeding the fall crop. Cows were back on winter pasture and in feedlots.

**Lincoln:** Wind and below freezing temperatures could set back winter wheat growth.

**Lincoln (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Precipitation was needed to improve soil moisture and winter wheat conditions.

**Okanogan:** Very cold temperatures were received over the weekend with lows in the teens. Frost fans were turned on with apples still on the trees. Farmers saw freeze damage to their fruit.

**Pend Oreille:** The area received two heavy frosts. The growing season was over.

**Pend Oreille/Spokane:** The area had another dry week without rain. Record cold temperatures arrived over the weekend. The cold may have caused damage to apples yet to be harvested and any other fall crops left for harvest. Record lows in the teens were recorded in Spokane County and colder yet in Pend Oreille County. Fall wheat was seeded and growers hoped for rain. The majority of the grain seeded earlier was still waiting for moisture.

**Stevens:** Weekend morning temperatures reached a low of approximately ten degrees. Cattle producers continued moving calves to market. Grain producers worked on fall tillage.

**Stevens (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Record setting cold temperatures with continued dry weather made it a tough fall for agriculture. Irrigated pastures had frozen off so the remaining residue will be quickly eaten up.

**Walla Walla:** Producers were grateful for the rain received. Seeding was finished. Cattle came off mountain ranges and weaning began.

**Walla Walla (2<sup>nd</sup> Report):** Temperatures dropped significantly over the past few days, dipping below freezing over the weekend. Crops continued to look good. Potato harvest and corn harvest was underway and close to completion. Several area producers were planting winter wheat.

**Whitman:** Winter wheat seeding continued in the east end of the county. The remainder of the county was pretty well finished with seeding. Rainfall was needed as soil moisture conditions continued to deteriorate.

## Weekly Weather Statistics

### October 5 - October 11, 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	34	66	51	-3	14	-15	0	+0	0.72	+0.14	4	2.42	+0.14	106	14
Hoquiam	34	61	51	-7	13	-39	0	-7	0.71	-0.30	4	2.14	-1.70	56	11
Kelso	39	66	54	-4	29	-18	0	-7	0.84	+0.21	3	1.92	-0.81	70	10
Olympia	34	66	51	-4	10	-19	0	+0	0.23	-0.43	4	2.60	-0.05	98	13
Seattle-Tacoma	42	65	54	-4	28	-18	0	-6	0.15	-0.37	2	1.83	-0.36	84	9
Shelton	31	68	50	-7	7	-35	0	-7	0.42	-0.40	5	2.07	-1.09	66	12
Tacoma WA AP	37	65	52	-5	15	-24	0	-3	0.34	-0.18	3	3.11	+0.87	139	12
Vancouver WA	40	68	56	+0	46	+3	0	-7	0.28	-0.27	5	1.56	-0.77	67	12
<b>CENTRAL</b>															
Ellensburg	33	75	53	+0	21	-7	0	-6	0.00	-0.08	0	0.52	-0.02	96	3
Omak AP	29	76	52	-1	23	-3	0	-6	0.01	-0.13	1	0.40	-0.47	46	6
Stam pede Pass	33	65	47	+2	9	+2	0	+0	0.66	-0.34	5	3.30	-0.71	82	13
Wenatchee AP	39	74	55	-4	36	-14	0	-12	0.00	-0.07	0	0.48	+0.04	109	4
Yakima AP	29	75	51	-5	16	-24	0	-8	0.26	+0.19	2	0.69	+0.25	157	6
<b>NORTHEAST</b>															
Colville	32	78	51	-1	19	-3	0	-3	0.20	-0.01	2	0.67	-0.58	54	5
Deer Park	24	76	47	-7	10	-19	0	-7	0.56	+0.40	3	0.96	-0.01	99	6
Republic	32	74	51	+3	21	+5	0	+0	0.18	+0.03	2	0.79	-0.21	79	8
Spokane AP	34	73	50	-4	14	-16	0	-7	0.09	-0.05	1	0.58	-0.23	72	5
<b>EAST CENTRAL</b>															
Ephrata	35	73	55	-4	42	-12	1	-14	0.00	-0.07	0	0.14	-0.26	35	2
Moses Lake	32	73	54	-5	34	-20	0	-15	0.01	-0.06	1	0.14	-0.26	35	2
Quincy	41	73	55	-2	36	-7	0	-9	0.00	-0.07	0	0.61	+0.14	130	5
Ritzville	32	74	50	-6	18	-17	0	-7	0.01	-0.13	1	0.17	-0.47	27	4
<b>SOUTHEAST</b>															
Hanford	40	79	55	-7	42	-34	2	-23	0.13	+0.06	1	0.14	-0.25	36	2
Pasco	36	79	55	-4	42	-16	0	-14	0.32	+0.25	2	0.47	+0.07	117	4
Pullman	30	76	49	-5	12	-19	2	-4	0.09	-0.15	2	0.20	-0.92	18	3
Walla Walla Rgn	42	76	55	-6	38	-26	2	-15	1.07	+0.79	3	1.07	-0.04	96	3
Whitman Mission	33	77	51	-5	20	-22	0	-8	0.96	+0.78	2	0.96	+0.19	125	2
<b>WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE</b>															
Lewiston ID	36	79	55	-4	39	-18	10	-6	0.05	-0.13	2	0.14	-0.73	16	3

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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