



Wisconsin Crop Weather

Compiled by the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

April 21, 2003

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Precipitation Slows Planting Schedules

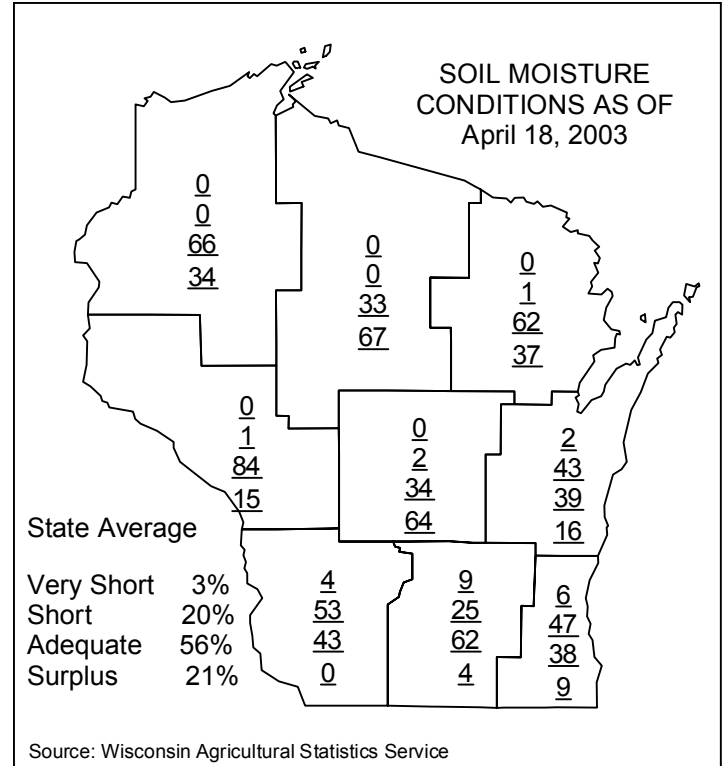
Temperatures across Wisconsin followed the usual wide range for mid-April. The range was from 26-90 degrees for the week. Overall, temperatures were 2-6 degrees warmer than normal. Last week saw an average of 3.8 days suitable for fieldwork across the state. The northern two-thirds of the state saw fewer days for fieldwork due to heavy midweek rains and freezing temperatures. The southern third was able to complete more activities, but missed out on needed precipitation. Rainfall amounts averaged from 1.5-3.0 inches in the northern half of the state, while forecasters missed on the southern tier of counties, which received .25-.50 inches late in the week. Farmers in the south would welcome more rain. Soil moisture conditions were reported to be 3% very short, 20% short, 56% adequate, and 21% surplus.

The lack of rainfall until late in the week, allowed southern producers more days to advance on **spring tillage** activities. Activities in the central areas and north were limited to a few days of fieldwork and more preparation for the spring push. Spring tillage caught up with last year's level of 14% completed, but is 6% behind the five-year average.

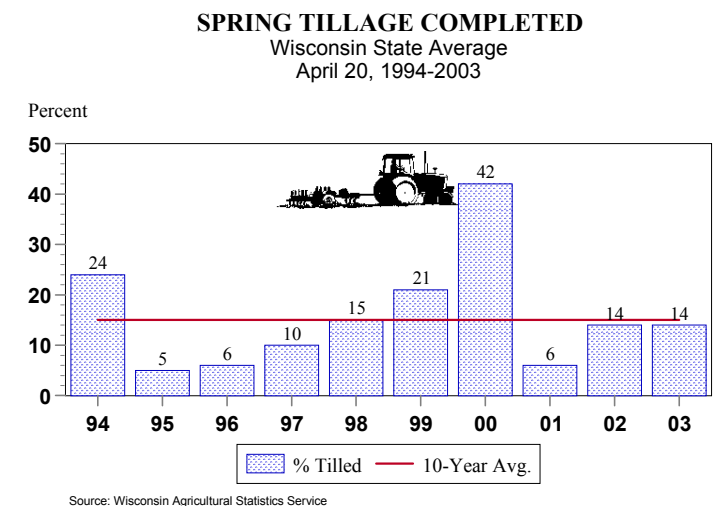
Sowing of **oats** were reported in most parts of the state, if only in limited amounts. Southern farmers had completed up to 40% of oats planted. Jefferson County had reports of early-planted oats already emerged. Statewide, oats reached 21% planted, compared to 26% last year and the 5-year average of 27%. **Winter wheat** is greening up across the state, and most reporters comments are optimistic about lack of winterkill damage. There had been much talk of possible winterkill damage from the lack of snowcover and deep frost levels this past winter. **Alfalfa** has also greened up across the state, with many farmers checking for damage, but finding little at this early stage. As warmer temperatures arrive, the plants may show more signs of stress. Seeding of alfalfa is continuing where field conditions permit.

The first reports of **corn** being planted in very limited areas were received this week, with the expectation to begin in earnest as soon as fields dry down. **Barley** and **peas** were also mentioned in some areas as being put in the ground.

The **maple syrup** harvest is almost complete in the state. Reports are mostly average to below average yields, but good quality sap. **Potato** planting started in Dunn and Waushara counties in lighter soils. Most activity was stopped by rain later in the week.



Wisconsin Crop Conditions as of April 18, 2003					
Item	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	Percent				
Pasture	14	23	30	29	4
Winter wheat	1	4	33	53	9



Wisconsin Crop Progress, April 20, 2003												
Crop and percent of acreage	District average									State average		
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE	This year	Last year	5-year average
Spring tillage completed	4	1	2	10	9	5	25	18	11	14	14	20
Oats planted	3	1	1	12	6	11	40	39	33	21	26	27

Quotes from Farm Reporters and County Ag Agents

BARRON-R.C.: Still too early to tell about winterkill.
BURNETT-J.D.: Alfalfa and wheat look alright with recent rains. Some oats have been planted.
CHIPPEWA-T.P.: Much-needed rain occurred to help replenish soil moisture levels.
LINCOLN-T.C.: Average maple syrup yields.
TAYLOR-A.H.: Maple syrup is winding down. It was an average crop.
FOREST-A.K.: Maple season fair. Snow and ice on the fields yet.
LANGLADE-A.K.: Still too early to tell about winterkill. On Monday, roots and most crowns were alright. After 2.0 inches of rain, fields are covered with 0.5 inch of ice. Very little light tillage on sand slopes. Still a lot of frost to come out.
MONROE-W.D.: Alfalfa greened up nicely on high ground, looks great. Alfalfa on lower ground is alright. Need more heat to be sure of how much damage from winterkill. A few farmers planted oats and alfalfa on lighter ground. Some chisel plowing in corn stalks, and quite a few fields of stalks have been disked. With the recent rain, freezing rain, and cold, everything stopped.
ST. CROIX-L.M.: A couple hundred acres of corn was planted Sunday and Monday. Rain since has stopped field-work.
PORTAGE-D.Z.: There is very little alfalfa and winter wheat winterkill showing up. Everything at a standstill until weather improves. Potato planting just getting under way. Most alfalfa seems to have stood the weather better than anticipated.
WAUSHARA-A.S.: Still too early to tell about winterkill. Nothing is really growing yet.
WOOD-F.M.: Temperatures on Monday and Tuesday made things start to green up, but from there on, it was all down hill. Very wet and cold. Nothing in heavy soils is done. Alfalfa looks alright.
SHEBOYGAN-E.P.: Alfalfa and wheat are starting to green up. We are headed into this growing season with low sub-soil moisture. Farm work is mostly plowing corn fields all week. Very little oats has been planted.

WINNEBAGO-D.U.: Rain was very welcomed. Cooler than normal temperatures slowed things down this week.
LAFAYETTE-L.W.: Have not heard any reports of winterkill. Anhydrous is being applied and manure hauled. Several farmers are planting corn.
RICHLAND-S.K.: Alfalfa really looks good. No heaving of plants. This has been a dry winter. Maple syrup is done, and it was a medium crop.
SAUK-C.N.: Anhydrous being applied. Some oats being planted. Some scattered periods of rain, but not much accumulation through Friday.
COLUMBIA-J.J.: Barley sowing this week. Pastures and hayfields just starting to green up. Need a good, warm rain to really get the soil settled and get things going.
DODGE-G.R.: Have not seen any wide spread evidence of winterkill on alfalfa. Winter wheat is greening up, but still behind last year at this time. Two glorious days of 80-degree weather with 30 mph winds made for a dramatic dry off. Fieldwork has begun in earnest. Oats are being planted along with peas and barley. Some tillage for corn has started.
GREEN-F.Z.: Very little winterkill on alfalfa and winter wheat. Some oats have emerged and lots left to be planted yet. A little warm weather would benefit the plants. Some farmers are probably thinking about planting corn.
KENOSHA-J.H.: Some damage in fields to alfalfa. Oats are being planted. Spring plowing is taking place. Anhydrous and fertilizer are being applied.
WAUKESHA-D.W.: Almost no winterkill in alfalfa and winter wheat. This is the week that all the forecasts were wrong and no rain. We need a lot of dirt torn.



Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service
 P.O. Box 8934
 Madison, WI 53708-8934
 (608) 224-4848
<http://www.nass.usda.gov/wi/rlsetoc.htm>

Robert J. Battaglia
 State Statistician

Bob Hunter
 Statistician

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Wisconsin Weekly Weather, Selected Cities, Ending as of 7:00 a.m. on April 20, 2003

City	Temperature						Growing degree days (modified base 50) 1/		Precipitation			
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg dep. from normal*	Mar. 1 to Apr. 19	Mar. 1 to Apr. 19 normal *	Last week	Since Mar. 1	Mar. 1 dep. from normal*	Year to date
Eau Claire	61	40	90	32	51	6	146	62	3.09	5.40	1.78	6.36
Green Bay	58	35	82	27	46	2	83	53	1.51	3.92	0.26	5.07
La Crosse	64	43	90	34	54	5	158	86	1.77	4.45	0.37	5.54
Madison	64	38	84	26	51	5	134	89	0.29	2.72	-1.66	3.58
Milwaukee	60	38	86	34	49	4	113	n.a.	0.54	2.97	-2.06	3.76

1/Formula used: GDD = (daily maximum (86°) + daily minimum (50°))/2-50°; where 86° is used if the maximum exceeds 86° and 50° is used if the minimum falls below 50°. *Normal based on 1961-90 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>>. N.a. = not available. T = trace.