

Iowa Crops & Weather



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For the month of March 2004

Variable Weather Conditions in March

Agricultural Summary: March started very windy, followed by rainy days and even a snow storm by mid-March. Warming temperatures contributed to the greening of grass and hay fields as the snow melted. **Soil moisture availability** rated 3 percent very short, 19 percent short, 67 percent adequate, and 11 percent surplus across Iowa. At the end of March, the average depth of **snow cover** was 0 inches across Iowa, compared to 3 inches last month and 0 inches at the same time last year. The average depth of **frost penetration** was 1 inch, compared to 12 inches last month, and 4 inches a year ago. Muddy areas remain a concern for livestock.

Field Crops Report: **Grain movement** from farm to elevator was rated 13 percent none, 29 percent light, 44 percent moderate, and 14 percent heavy. **Hay and roughage availability** rated 16 percent short, 78 percent adequate, and 6 percent surplus. **Quality of hay and roughage** supplies rated 13 percent poor, 43 percent fair, and 44 percent good. **Utilization of stubble fields for grazing** rated 50 percent none, 27 percent light, 15 percent moderate, and 8 percent heavy.

Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report: **Hog and pig losses** in March were less than last year at 16 percent below average, 79 percent average, and 5 percent above average. **Cattle and calf losses** were lower than last year at 27 percent below average, 69 percent average, and 4 percent above average.

Preliminary Iowa Monthly Weather Summary -March 2004-

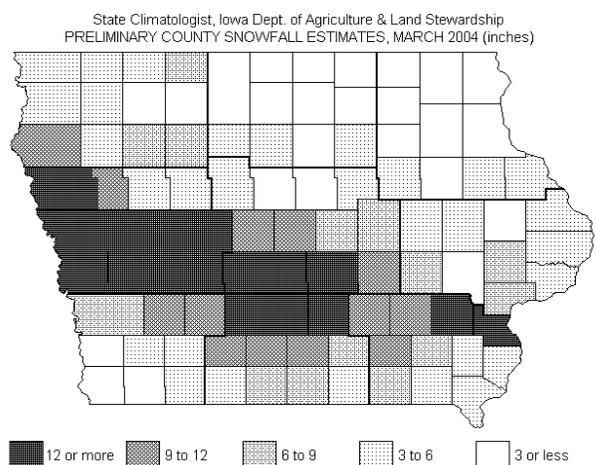
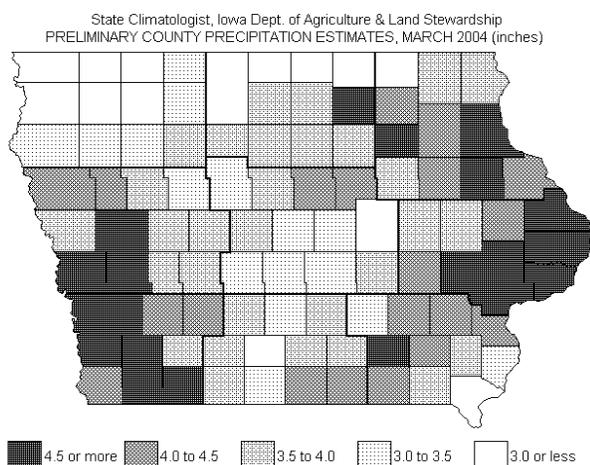
General Summary: March temperatures averaged 40.6 degrees or 4.6 degrees above normal while precipitation totaled 3.84 inches or 1.62 inches above normal. This ranks as the 16th warmest and 8th wettest March among 132 years of Iowa records.

Temperatures: March began with above normal temperatures for the first 10 days of the month with readings peaking at 67 degrees at Shenandoah on the 8th. Subnormal temperatures were confined to only nine days of the month (11th-12th, 15th-17th, 21st-22nd and 30th-31st). The month's coldest day was the 11th when Northwood recorded a morning low of 6 degrees and daytime

highs were only in the upper teens in parts of northern Iowa. The year's first 70 degree readings were recorded across far southwest Iowa on the 19th where Sidney reached 75 degrees. The month's warmest weather, however, prevailed from the 24th through the 27th when temperatures averaged 20 degrees above normal. Sioux City reported the highest temperature of the month with an 81 degree reading on the 24th.

Heating Degree Day Totals: Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 17 percent less than normal and 20 percent less than last March. Heating degree day totals so far this heating season are running 5 percent less than normal as well as 5 percent less than last season through March 31.

Precipitation: There were four substantial precipitation events during the month which combined to make this the wettest March since 1991. The first storm system brought rain statewide on the 4th-5th with more than an inch recorded over most of the southeast two-thirds of Iowa. The next storm deposited snow over all but the extreme northeast portions of the state on the 15th-16th. The heaviest snow was centered over west central Iowa with 10 inches or more accumulating in an area bounded by Woodbury, Harrison and Washington Counties with 18.2 inches at Sioux City and 16.8 inches at Carroll. Finally, a pair of rainstorms dampened all of Iowa on the 25th-26th and the 27th-28th. The first of these late month systems dropped an inch or more of rain across the northeast one-third of the state with Charles City picking up 2.42 inches. The last storm brought an inch or more of rain to the western one-half of Iowa with greatest amounts reported from Glenwood with 3.19 inches and Harlan with 3.12 inches. Monthly precipitation totals varied from 2.12 inches at Lake Park to 6.15 inches at Harlan and 5.39 inches at Charles City. At Harlan and Charles City, these were both record high totals for March (old record, 4.78 inches in 1952, among 113 years of data at Harlan; old record, 4.93 inches in 1961, among 129 years of data at Charles City). All available reporting points in Iowa recorded above normal precipitation for the month for the first time since April 1999. Snowfall amounts varied considerably across Iowa with monthly totals varying from only 0.8 inches at West Union up to 19.2 inches at Sioux City. Statewide snowfall averaged 6.7 inches or 1.9 inches above normal.



Snow Cover and Frost Penetration for the month of March

Item	Districts									State	Last Month	Last Year
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE			
Snow cover	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Frost penetration	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	12	4

**March Weather Summary For Iowa Agricultural Statistics Service
Prepared by AWIS, Inc.**

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			HDD TOT	HDD DFN	DAYS OF 32 COLD	DAYS OF 28 COLD
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS				
North West District											
Estherville	75	11	38	9	2.50	0.61	13	815	-255	20	11
Sioux Center	78	10	41	7	3.39	1.44	7	735	-213	21	11
Spencer	78	11	40	8	2.58	0.64	10	757	-245	17	9
Spirit Lake	77	7	38	9	1.83	0.04	8	828	-32	22	12
North Central District											
Britt	72	7	36	4	4.79	2.91	13	877	-100	24	14
Humboldt	74	12	38	5	3.72	1.64	12	817	-167	22	11
Mason City	71	10	38	7	4.13	2.09	15	818	-209	19	12
Northwood	71	6	36	5	2.34	0.29	11	895	-158	23	17
North East District											
Decorah	67	9	39	6	4.16	2.22	19	791	-177	19	11
Dubuque	66	11	40	7	4.80	1.87	18	760	-195	15	10
Elkader	68	11	38	5	4.47	2.29	13	819	19	23	16
Independence	70	10	39	6	4.55	2.49	17	815	-25	23	14
Waterloo	76	11	41	7	3.32	0.98	14	740	-200	16	11
West Central District											
Audubon	76	12	39	3	4.52	2.17	10	783	-83	24	15
Carroll	78	13	40	6	4.15	1.88	14	769	-169	23	15
Castana	78	15	40	4	3.72	1.55	11	779	-193	24	15
Guthrie Center	77	10	41	5	3.96	1.47	8	753	-141	20	14
Harlan	78	14	40	4	6.15	4.00	12	758	-186	23	13
Jefferson	79	15	41	7	3.94	1.67	10	745	-193	21	14
Logan	78	15	41	6	4.20	2.13	11	725	-157	23	12
Rockwell City	78	12	39	5	3.22	1.29	9	789	-123	24	14
Sioux City	81	13	42	7	4.61	2.62	12	712	-180	17	9
Central District											
Ames	77	16	42	8	3.38	1.18	15	710	-252	16	10
Boone	78	14	41	6	4.19	1.83	16	752	-157	20	14
Des Moines	74	17	43	7	3.17	0.79	12	663	-182	12	8
Eldora	78	13	40	6	4.68	2.65	12	773	-182	20	13
Marshalltown	76	10	41	7	2.55	0.12	18	735	-192	19	11
Newton	74	14	40	4	4.03	1.76	14	755	-118	18	13
Perry	77	15	41	7	3.31	1.25	14	740	-194	18	14
Toledo	72	11	40	6	2.15	-0.15	11	782	-159	22	13
East Central District											
Cedar Rapids	69	12	42	7	3.66	1.29	15	714	-187	17	11
Davenport	69	13	43	6	4.50	2.20	17	668	-192	14	10
Iowa City	70	15	43	5	4.61	2.19	17	674	-142	15	11
Lowden	69	11	40	6	5.41	2.82	16	761	-133	22	15
Maquoketa	67	11	39	5	4.54	2.21	16	793	-139	22	15
Muscatine	68	14	42	4	5.00	2.24	16	700	-287	16	10
South West District											
Clarinda	73	14	43	6	5.07	2.57	14	689	-170	16	11
Glenwood	74	17	43	6	4.02	1.94	12	669	-156	18	12
Oakland	77	15	41	6	4.83	2.65	15	724	-181	23	12
Red Oak	75	16	43	5	4.55	2.24	13	662	-128	16	11
Sidney	75	21	44	6	4.13	1.78	15	655	-159	15	8
South Central District											
Allerton	67	16	41	4	4.22	1.86	15	731	-334	21	12
Beaconsfield	69	14	41	4	3.05	0.77	9	736	-118	22	12
Chariton	70	16	41	4	2.68	0.31	16	724	-121	19	15
Indianola	71	17	42	5	3.58	1.34	12	715	-130	19	12
Leon	69	16	42	5	3.27	0.92	13	701	-143	17	10
South East District											
Bloomfield	69	18	42	3	4.22	1.61	9	692	-80	17	10
Burlington	70	17	45	6	3.56	0.66	14	622	-178	13	9
Ottumwa	70	16	44	6	3.89	1.56	15	648	-169	14	7

Precipitation (rain, melted snow or ice) in inches. Precipitation Days = Days with precipitation of 0.01 inch or more. Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit. Copyright 2004: AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.