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MINNESOTA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE IN COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
TWIN CITIES INT'L AIRPORT, UNIV. OF MINN. EXTENSION SERVICE, AND STATE CLIMATOLOGY, DNR

The following comments are from Minnesota's County Extension Educators, FSA (USDA - Farm Service Agency), and NRCS (USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service) Offices

AITKIN: Very little snow cover. Cold weather caused frost to go deeper. Hay reserves are low, but winter has been easy on livestock.

BROWN: All crops were harvested. Livestock conditions remain steady, although dairy herds have dwindled. Feed availability is not a problem now, but alfalfa winterkill could be a problem. Land values seemingly have risen in the past few years. Overall, things seem stable. Livestock are in generally good to excellent condition. Farmers are able to haul manure and do other farm chores without any problems. Feed supplies are good to excellent.

CARVER: The absence of sub-zero temperatures and heavy snowfalls, so far this winter, has meant fewer livestock problems.

CHIPPEWA: Feed supplies doing ok. Producers working on preparing for 2004 crop.

CLEARWATER: Livestock in good condition. Feed supplies are tight. Mild temperatures are welcomed.

DODGE: Dodge county continues to suffer from lack of precipitation. Strong winds and freezing rain have caused some additional erosion and possible damage to exposed alfalfa crops.

FILLMORE: The change in temperature has had stress to the livestock on outside lots. Feed availability is adequate. No shortages exist. Very little unharvested corn in Fillmore county. Concerns exist of amounts of topsoil moisture and subsurface moisture with lack of precipitation this winter. Hearing concerns of increases in fertilizers and shortages of available products are anticipated for spring planting.

HUBBARD: Feed supplies continue to be adequate and the livestock are generally in good condition. Some concern about the lack of snow cover and its affect on alfalfa stands.

KANABEC: For December a couple of farmers were still harvesting corn. I think corn is all harvested at this time. Livestock are doing fine but with the BSE scare farmers don't know what to do with their cattle. Hay is short in some areas. People are putting cattle out on harvested corn fields to supplement the hay shortage. As of 1/28/04 we finally have a good cover of snow. We only have about 6 inches in our area but that is better then nothing.

KITTSO: Livestock feed supplies are adequate at this time. Snow cover in fields is minimal. Producers are slowly able to deliver the 2003 crop to market. Rail car delays have limited grain movement off the farm.

LINCOLN: Farmers are finalizing leases, doing farm records and arranging for financing for spring operating loans and lines of credit. Snow cover melted. Ground is too frozen since Christmas to put in drain tiles.

MAHNOMEN: Good snow cover as of this weekend January 24-25. Hay stocks for beef and dairy producers seem to be plentiful. Most fall fieldwork was done. Producers are working on 2004 planting intentions and marketing the 2003-2004 crop.

MORRISON: Livestock conditions are very good with the continued dry, frozen conditions. Feed supplies are fairly good with a large amount of grass hay baled in 2003. Good supply of corn. However, good quality alfalfa is in very short supply due to last winters freezeout and possible freezeout again this winter. Snow cover in the fields is totally bare. There has been several days of cold and high winds. Hay and corn supplies are somewhat shorter than past years.

PENNINGTON: Currently have adequate snow cover to reduce concerns of winter wheat and alfalfa frost damage. Temperatures have been seasonal. Approximately 6" of snow fell with strong winds blowing it into drifts over the weekend of Jan 24-25. Have not heard of any concerns with livestock feed shortages.

PIESTONE: Mild winter conditions have allowed livestock to be continually grazing corn stalks residue throughout the county. Hay supplies are adequate. Some concern of alfalfa losses due to minimal snowfall cover. Snowfall beginning of week may lessen concern. Cattle numbers remain strong in the county despite earlier market price drop due to BSE concerns.

POPE: The open and mild winter, so far, has made conditions nearly ideal for beef cattle. It has also allowed for some extended grazing of corn stalks, saving on short hay supplies. Some farmers have reported that the rise in soybean prices have almost offset the loss of yield due to the dry weather in August and the aphid damage. Farmers are having some difficulty in moving sold grain to the local elevator due to a shortage of rail cars.

REDWOOD: County needs more snow cover. Sign-up for the DCP program has been steady. January advance seems to be quite popular.

RENVILLE: Excellent weather for fall harvest this year. All crops have been harvested. Livestock conditions so far have been good with a somewhat mild winter. Feed supplies seem to be adequate.

RICE: Very little crops unharvested. Some left for wildlife but 0% unharvested due to weather. So far, mild winter has made for easier livestock conditions. Rate of gain for cattle and hogs has been good. Feed quantity and quality both good. Land rents are starting to creep up a bit.

ROSEAU: Good farming conditions with average snowfall and temperatures.

STEARNS: Livestock feed supplies remain adequate. Recent cold weather and lack of snow cover have raised alfalfa survival concerns. The lack of snow cover is also promoting deep frost issues. Additionally, the probable outlook of depleted subsoil moisture for the beginning of 2004 is also a concern. Landowners continue to show much interest in the 2004 EQIP program and providing input into the Conservation Security Program proposed rule.

WATONWAN: No snow but plenty of wind. The weather has been favorable for people taking care of livestock. With no snow, feed availability is good. Plenty of grain is moving to the elevators. Lack of moisture could be a concern come next spring.

Thank you for your comments. Due to space constrictions, all comments could not be included in this release.

PRECIPITATION AND TEMPERATURE SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER, 2003:

Temperatures during December averaged from 8.4 degrees above normal in the Northwest and North Central Districts to 6.1 degrees above normal in the Northeast District. Temperature extremes included a low of -23 degrees at Intl. Falls and a high of 54 degrees at Preston. Precipitation averaged from 0.44 inch below normal in the East Central and Northeast Districts to 0.27 inch above normal in the Northwest District. Greatest monthly precipitation of 1.35 inches was recorded in Rochester.

Precipitation and Temperature Summary for December, 2003

	Temperature				Precipitation	
	High	Low	Month Ave	Dept. for Month	Month Total	Dept. for Month
<u>NW DIST 1</u>						
Crookston	39	-14	19.4	8.8	.63	.13
Moorhead	40	-14	19.8	7.3	1.06	.49
Warroad	41	-21	17.2	9.2	.83	.20
<u>NC DIST 2</u>						
Grand Rapids	42	-9	20.6	8.5	.82	-.04
Intl. Falls	39	-23	16.6	8.1	.38	-.32
Itasca	40	-16	18.0	8.6	.69	-.06
<u>NE DIST 3</u>						
Duluth	40	-6	20.5	6.5	.54	-.40
Grand Marais	43	-1	24.9	5.5	.33	-.46
Hibbing	39	-15	17.2	6.4	.08	-.65
<u>WC DIST 4</u>						
Alexandria	41	-21	19.8	6.1	.21	-.37
Browns Valley	48	-10	24.2	8.7	.39	-.14
Canby	48	-6	25.3	6.4	.58	-.12
Fergus Falls	41	-11	20.4	7.6	.90	.40
Montevideo	47	-8	23.8	8.3	.37	-.34
Morris	46	-8	21.2	6.6	.45	-.13
<u>CENT DIST 5</u>						
Becker	43	-2	22.8	8.4	.39	-.44
Hutchinson	45	-8	23.3	7.6	.49	-.26
Olivia	45	-7	22.3	7.0	.60	.08
St. Cloud	43	-5	22.4	8.0	.28	-.41
Staples	41	-11	19.2	6.7	.39	-.21
Willmar	44	-5	21.6	6.9	.31	-.35
<u>EC DIST 6</u>						
Aitkin	43	-8	22.6	9.6	.45	-.37
MSP Airport	43	-4	25.2	6.5	.62	-.38
St. Paul - UofM	43	-5	25.9	6.6	.46	-.58
<u>SW DIST 7</u>						
Lamberton	48	-7	23.8	6.6	.58	-.00
Pipestone	43	-5	22.4	5.9	.50	-.10
Redwood Falls	46	-8	22.8	4.8	.49	-.11
Worthington	48	-4	23.4	6.9	.54	-.16
<u>SC DIST 8</u>						
Faribault	46	-11	23.9	6.1	1.17	.15
Mankato	50	-10	24.4	6.5	.79	-.20
Waseca	48	-12	23.0	6.2	1.28	-.12
Winnebago	50	-6	24.0	6.5	1.16	.15
<u>SE DIST 9</u>						
Preston	54	-9	26.3	7.8	.92	-.37
Red Wing	46	-10	24.5	6.0	.56	-.30
Rochester	45	-8	24.4	7.1	1.35	.33
Rosemount	45	-11	25.5	9.6	.94	-.19
Winona	51	-2	26.8	5.4	1.04	.01

m=some data missing

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