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Bureau of Agricultural Economics
and
U. S. Department of Commerce
Weather Bureau

Nebr. Dept. of Agr. & Inspection
Division of Agr'l. Statistics
and
Agricultural Extension Service
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NEBRASKA WEEKLY WEATHER AND CROP REPORT

Released 6-17-52 - 11:00 A.M.

Week Ending 6-16-52

WEATHER The week was excessively hot, one of the hottest weeks ever recorded in June. There was practically no rain, full sunshine over most of the state and several days were windy. Humidity was fairly high over the eastern portion of the state to moderately low in the west.

CROPS Cooler weather Monday and today has checked at least temporarily the deterioration of the wheat crop. Some damage has been done and a continuation of the high temperatures and high winds would have been most serious. The heat wave caught the wheat in a critical stage of development. At the beginning of last week half of the leaves were brown and most of the wheat was partly filled. By the close of the week most of the wheat was completely filled except in a few extreme western and northwestern counties. In its stage of development Saturday from 45% to 50% of its mature dry weight was in the kernel. Normally it would take about two weeks to mature but this would be lengthened or shortened, depending upon whether the weather was cool with sufficient moisture or dry with high temperatures.

By the close of last week a little burning was in evidence. Some of the wheat was turning white in spots and in some cases a few fields had a whitish cast. The earlier wheat and especially Pawnee had started to take on the normal golden yellow but it may show some shrinkage because of the heat spell. The upper leaves of some of the wheat had wilted and dried but for the most part stalks were still green enough to function. Cool weather and especially if accompanied by rain would still bring a marked recovery. Wheat in general withstood the severe punishment better than expected, but if the heat wave returns without moisture, a marked reduction in yields can be expected. Some of the wheat on the edges of the fields that had fired showed shrunken grain. Summer fallowed wheat was holding out much better than other wheat. Continuous wheat cropping and volunteer wheat showed the greatest damage. The damage was greatest in Harlan and Franklin counties but the rainfall reports indicate that Frontier county may have suffered the same amount of damage.

Corn is making excellent progress and much of it is as far advanced now as it usually is on the fourth of July. With few exceptions the stands are very good. Corn has seldom been in a better state of cultivation for this date.

Oats and barley while still green have suffered from the heat wave. The dry, hot weather has forced the earlier heading and short straw. This is especially noticeable on the soils of low fertility. Cool, wet weather at this time would enable the spring small grains to recover to a marked extent.

The second crop of alfalfa shows more ill effects from the drouth and heat than the other crops. Pasture, especially cool-seasoned pasture, is showing effects of the drouth. Heat and dry weather has started to check the growth of pasture and wild hay in the Sandhills. Grass in the Sandhills was green and looked very good last Thursday, but there is considerable fear that if heat and drouth continue that both will be short. Pastures are stocked heavily and a shrink-in the grass and hay crops would be serious.

With few exceptions there has been no rain since May 27. Ninety-one percent of the counties report short surface moisture and only 9% an ample amount. About a third of the counties report subsoil moisture short while the balance generally report ample subsoil moisture. Fortunately, the humidity during the five days of abnormally high temperatures has been high and has offset to some extent the ill effects of high winds and temperatures.

Sugar beet thinning is nearing completion. Dry edible beans are coming up. Some late potatoes are still being planted. The North Platte Valley has not had sufficient moisture so far this year and all available ditch and pump irrigation is being utilized.

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6-17-52

