

**INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE**

Crop Weather      Onions      ERS

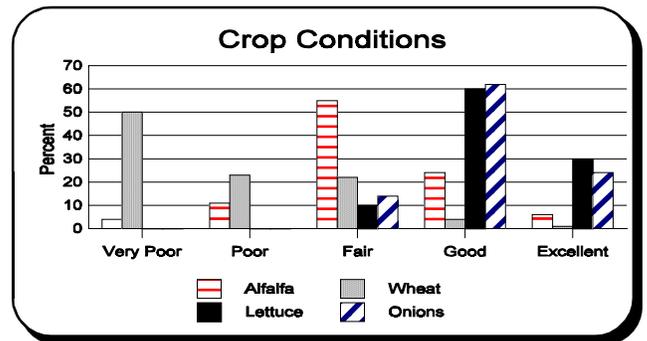
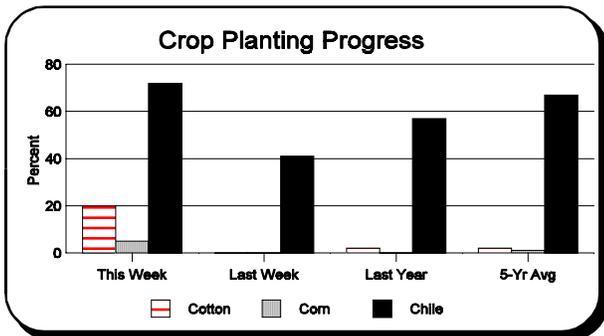
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**CROP SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 7, 2002**

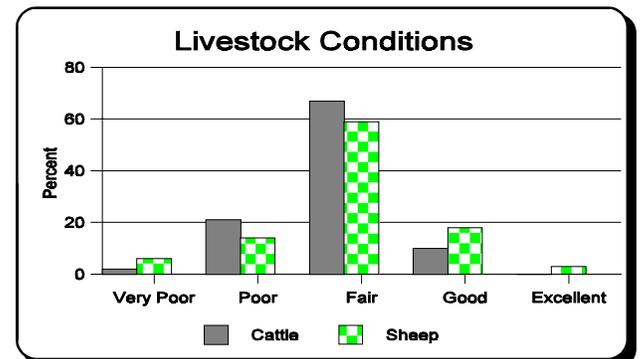
**NEW MEXICO:** There were 6.7 days suitable for field work. Farmers in the southern part of the state spent the week planting and irrigating crops, while in the northern areas farmers cleaned ditches, pre-watered and started breaking ground. Crop planting included chile at 72%, corn at 5%, and cotton, which was ahead of normal, at 20%. Alfalfa was looking good with most of the crop in fair to excellent condition. Total wheat was in mostly very poor to fair condition. Lettuce and onions were in fair to excellent condition. Ranchers are severely hurting for rain; drought conditions are causing ranchers to have to feed much heavier than normal and if not already hauling water, they are getting ready to. Normal ranch activities include calving, culling and some branding. Pasture and range feed conditions were listed as 27% very poor, 48% poor, 23% fair, and 2% good.

**CROP PROGRESS PERCENTAGES WITH COMPARISONS**

CROP PROGRESS		This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
<b>PLANTED</b>	<b>Cotton</b>	20	0	2	2
	<b>Corn</b>	5	0	0	1
	<b>Chile</b>	72	41	57	67

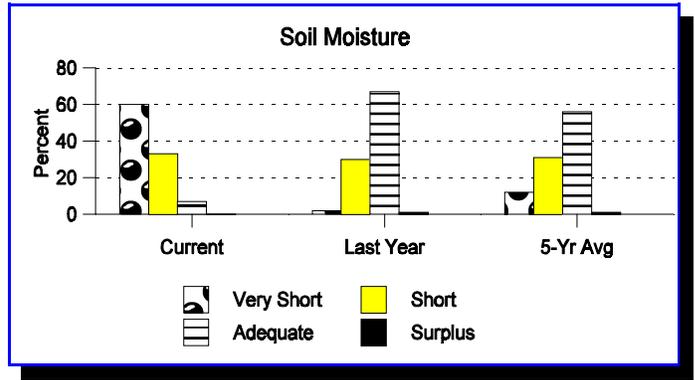


CROP AND LIVESTOCK CONDITION PERCENTAGES					
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Alfalfa	4	11	55	24	6
Lettuce	--	--	10	60	30
Onions	--	--	14	62	24
Wheat (All)	50	23	22	4	1
Cattle	2	21	67	10	--
Sheep	6	14	59	18	3



**SOIL MOISTURE PERCENTAGES**

	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
Northwest	59	35	5	1
Northeast	60	40	--	--
Southwest	88	7	5	--
Southeast	30	46	24	--
State	60	33	7	--
State-Last Year	2	30	67	1
State-5-Yr Avg.	12	31	56	1



**WEATHER SUMMARY**

A slow-moving storm brought some rainfall and high elevation snowfall to some areas late in the week, but other areas remained dry. Much of the heavier precipitation fell in a 75-mile wide band from north of Gallup to near Albuquerque to Tucumcari. Greatest totals reported included .63 inches at Tucumcari and .62 inches at Santa Fe. Temperatures for the week were near normal in the Plains but well above normal elsewhere, with a statewide average 5 degrees above normal.

**NEW MEXICO WEATHER CONDITIONS APRIL 01-07, 2002**

Station	Temperature			Precipitation				
	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	04/01 04/07	04/01 04/07	Normal Apr	01/01 04/07	Normal Jan-Apr
Carlsbad	60.4	88	41	T	0.00	0.49	2.24	1.49
Tatum	51.2	81	31	0.09	0.09	0.64	4.41	2.05
Roswell	57.4	86	37	0.01	0.01	0.65	2.93	1.99
Clayton	48.5	84	17	0.40	0.40	0.94	0.56	2.04
Clovis	51.1	84	25	0.09	0.09	0.81	0.86	2.30
Roy	44.8	58	33	0.10	0.10	0.82	0.32	2.14
Tucumcari	53.9	88	24	0.63	0.63	0.87	1.89	2.00
Chama	45.4	68	22	0.07	0.07	1.27	0.82	6.61
Johnson Ranch	48.6	73	25	0.25	0.25	0.49	0.48	2.47
Capulin	44.6	78	13	0.55	0.55	1.01	1.03	2.86
Las Vegas	47.9	75	15	0.10	0.10	0.89	0.34	2.16
Los Alamos	49.4	70	24	0.09	0.09	1.00	0.87	3.88
Raton	46.2	80	17	0.14	0.14	1.06	0.64	2.90
Santa Fe	50.5	77	30	0.62	0.62	0.81	1.19	2.87
Red River	41.6	65	19	0.18	0.18	1.68	2.42	5.75
Farmington	54.2	77	30	0.16	0.16	0.51	0.31	2.48
Gallup	49.1	75	19	0.44	0.44	0.64	0.83	3.23
Grants	50.4	75	25	0.08	0.08	0.45	0.60	1.95
Silver City	56.3	77	35	T	0.00	0.53	0.00	3.90
Quemado	47.0	73	23	0.10	0.10	0.60	0.27	2.95
Albuquerque	58.9	80	37	0.37	0.37	0.52	0.78	1.96
Carrizozo	56.4	79	31	0.17	0.17	0.36	1.19	2.10
Gran Quivera	53.5	77	22	0.00	0.00	0.64	0.45	2.88
Moriarty	52.6	80	24	0.27	0.27	0.66	0.71	2.10
Ruidoso	50.8	70	29	0.00	0.00	0.63	0.86	4.24
Socorro	59.4	85	35	0.05	0.05	0.36	0.36	1.41
Alamogordo	59.9	82	37	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.06	1.93
Animas	64.4	85	40	0.00	0.00	0.20	1.28	1.86
Deming	62.8	86	41	T	0.00	0.18	0.85	1.54
T or C	63.5	85	43	0.02	0.02	0.22	0.15	1.40
Las Cruces	63.3	88	41	0.00	0.00	0.21	1.20	1.26

(T) Trace (-) No Report (\*) Correction

All reports based on preliminary data. Precipitation data corrected monthly from official observation forms.

## ONIONS

**NEW MEXICO** planted onion acreage for 2002 is 8,000 acres, 100 acres below the 2001 level. This remains consistent with the 2000 planted acreage of 8,000 acres. At the national level, Summer Non-Storage Onions total 21,900 acres, 300 acres above the 2001 level of 21,600 acres.

**Onions: Area Planted by Season, State, and United States, 2000-2002**

Season and State	2000	2001	2002
	-----Acres-----		
Spring Onions <sup>1/</sup>	41,400	38,500	39,500
Summer Onions Non-Storage <sup>1/</sup>			
CA <sup>2/</sup>	6,500	7,000	6,900
NV	3,300	2,900	3,000
<b>NM</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>8,100</b>	<b>8,000</b>
TX	4,100	2,800	3,000
WA	800	800	1,000
Total Non-Storage	22,700	21,600	21,900
Summer Storage	113,280	106,700	109,450
Total Summer	135,980	128,300	131,350
<b>U.S. Total Onions</b>	<b>177,380</b>	<b>166,800</b>	<b>170,850</b>

<sup>1/</sup>Primarily fresh market. <sup>2/</sup>Primarily dehydrated and other processing.

## CATTLE

*Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Outlook*  
USDA, ERS, March 2002

### **Slaughter Weights, Beef Cow Slaughter Remains Large**

Commercial steer and heifer dressed slaughter weights continue to average sharply above the weather-depressed levels of a year earlier, but are declining seasonally. Weather conditions remain relatively mild and unfortunately dry this winter, contributing to good feedlot weight gains. Although, mild weather is only marginally holding down beef cow slaughter from the large weather-induced levels of last winter, slaughter remains above 2000 levels. Concerns over poor winter grazing conditions and tight hay stocks result in relatively large beef cow slaughter through February. Continued mild weather in March and some improvement in moisture conditions are likely resulting in beef cow slaughter levels moving further below the high levels of a year earlier. Dairy cow slaughter remains relatively low. Beef cow slaughter will likely remain somewhat large until additional rains replenish subsoil moisture levels ensuring at least a good spring grazing season.

Boxed beef and fed cattle prices have strengthened during the first quarter, but remain well below the weather-induced tight supply situation that existed a year ago. Similarly, retail prices for Choice beef are moving below the record-setting pace of 2001. On average, cattle feeders have lost money since last spring but are likely to begin to show a profit this

spring. Grazing conditions again will be the most important factor for heifer retention and continued declining feedlot placements this spring and summer. Unfortunately for cattle feeders, this tightening feeder cattle supply situation will result in feeder cattle prices rising from the low \$80's this winter and will likely result in declining feeding margins.

### **Imports Market Weak for Beef Exports; Continued Strength in Cattle Imports**

Compared with the previous year's record, U.S. exports ended 2001 down 8 percent due to the strong dollar, worldwide economic weakness, and BSE-concerns. Economic factors began constraining exports to Asia early last year, only to be compounded by the discovery of BSE in Japan in mid-September. The effect was an immediate sharp drop in Japan's consumption of both domestic and imported beef. U.S. exports suffered disproportionately, however, in comparison with Australia because of the strong U.S. dollar and the perception that Australian grass-fed beef had a lower risk of BSE. In turn, the BSE concerns were further compounded by a rapid deterioration in the economic outlook for Japan. While product was in the pipeline, trade held up reasonably well through October, then U.S. exports of beef to Japan dropped by one-third compared with a year earlier in November and December.

Exports to other countries were constrained by a number of factors. Weather-related herd liquidation in Canada increased production and reduced U.S. exports to that country. The increased production also allowed Canada to increase exports to Mexico. Although U.S. exports to Mexico were above 2000 levels, they were below earlier expectations due to unexpected competition from Canada. What had begun as an abysmally poor year for exports to Korea ended very strongly as Korean stocks were reduced and demand increased in the face of a smaller Korean cattle herd. Exports to the Caribbean finished the year about 3 percent above 2000, despite fourth-quarter weakness. Exports to other countries dropped 19 percent for the year, as the strong dollar and high U.S. prices rationed supply.

Exports are expected to decline another 3-4 percent in 2002 as many of the same factors continue to exert influence on world beef markets. BSE-concerns and weak economic conditions will most negatively effect exports early in the year, but are expected to become less of a drag as the year progresses. However, reduced supplies of beef and higher prices in the United States will limit exports later in the year.

Beef imports were up 4 percent in 2001 to a record 3.16 billion pounds as the demand for processing beef outstripped domestic supplies largely due to cyclically declining cow slaughter. Imports from Australia increased by over 12 percent, and were limited from further increases by the tariff-rate quota which imposes a much higher tariff on imports over the quota. Imports from New Zealand remained stable as that country hit its TRQ for the second straight year. Meanwhile, imports from Canada increased as a result of weather-induced slaughter and the freeing up of Canadian supplies by an increase in Canada's supplementary quota for New Zealand above the TRQ. Imports from both Argentina and Uruguay declined about one-third because of the detection of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) in both countries.

Further decreases in U.S. cow slaughter in 2002 will push domestic processing beef production lower. Prices for lean 90s processing beef may climb as TRQs for Australia and New Zealand are expected to be reached earlier this year, FMD-related restrictions continue for South American beef, and supplies will tighten in Canada. Higher prices this year can be expected to pull in slightly more fresh/chilled and frozen product from Canada and Central America, and heat-treated product from South America. Overall, imports are expected to increase by 2-3 percent this year.

**Cattle Imports Increase Substantially** Strong feeder cattle demand and reduced supplies in the United States, along with drought conditions in both Mexico and Canada, were responsible for an 11-percent increase in cattle imports last year and a 6-percent decline in cattle exports. While dry conditions prevailed throughout much of the area extending from Mexico through the center-western United States and extending into Western Canada, relatively low grain prices allowed U.S. feeders to attract cattle. Imports of feeder cattle from Mexico substantially exceeded the previous year's level during the first 5 months of 2001, but sharply weakened the final 5 months to finish 2001 slightly below the previous year. Imports of both feeder and slaughter animals increased from Canada in response to drought conditions, the weak Canadian dollar, and generally strong U.S. feeder cattle prices. Overall, imports from Canada were up about 35 percent from the previous year. The same conditions reduced U.S. exports of (mainly) feeder cattle to Canada by 15 percent last year.

The strong dollar and relatively high feeder and slaughter cattle prices are expected to marginally increase imports of live cattle this year. Imports from Mexico are expected to increase this year, while imports from Canada will likely be about unchanged assuming moisture conditions improve. Live cattle exports may decline 15-20 percent, as Canadian cattle feeders are less able to compete with their U.S. counterparts.