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## Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup

Week Ending April 4, 2004

Issued weekly, April-November

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*This report can be found on the Internet at [www.nass.usda.gov/pa](http://www.nass.usda.gov/pa)*

**Poor week for Field Work:** There were 2 days suitable for field work. Soil moisture was rated as 4 percent very short, 36 percent adequate and 60 percent surplus. However, 16 percent of the spring tillage has been completed, only 1 percent below the five year average. Principal farm activities included preparing for planting, spring tillage, spreading fertilizer, spreading manure, pruning fruit trees, repairing fences and machinery, caring for livestock and preparing and filing taxes.

**Crops:** Much of the State saw heavy rains last week which slowed or halted field work. The winter wheat crop was rated as 2 percent very poor, 7 percent poor, 27 percent fair, 59 percent good and 5 percent excellent. Alfalfa stand last week was rated as 6 percent poor, 29 percent fair, 57 percent good and 8 percent was excellent. The timothy clover stand was rated 1 percent poor, 37 percent fair, 50 percent good and 12 percent was excellent.

**Livestock:** The cool temperatures and persistent rainfall has 7 percent of pasture land in Pennsylvania was rated very poor, 8 percent was rated poor, 57 percent was rated fair, 24 percent was rated good and 4 percent was rated excellent.

**U.S. As of March 28, 2004:** Above-normal temperatures prevailed across most of the Nation. Average temperatures for the week were 6 degrees Fahrenheit or more above normal across the Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, and Southwest, with some areas exceeding normal temperatures by 12 degrees Fahrenheit. Only in parts of the Southeast and New England were temperatures below normal. Precipitation was moderate to heavy across the western and central Corn Belt, benefiting development and condition of small grains. The eastern and northern parts of the Corn Belt had light but widespread rainfall, though not enough to hamper

fieldwork. Light to moderate precipitation in the eastern Great Plains provided some needed moisture for winter wheat, but the High Plains remained mostly dry. In the Mississippi Delta and Southeast, the lack of rainfall provided good fieldwork conditions but caused moisture stress for crops and pastures. Light precipitation fell across most of the northern and central Rocky Mountains, while dry conditions prevailed across the Southwest. Moderate precipitation in coastal areas of the Pacific Northwest and lighter rainfall further inland ended a 2-week period of unusually dry weather for the region. In Georgia, where muddy fields were a problem just 3 weeks ago, producers are now worried about the lack of rainfall. Many growers are waiting for rain to plant summer crops. Frost early in the week damaged some vegetable crops and fruit orchards. Florida row crop producers were irrigating dry soils to facilitate land preparation. Citrus growers were reporting abundant new growth, and vegetable planting and harvesting continued at a normal pace. Small grain conditions improved in Texas from the previous week's rainfall. Seedings of corn, cotton, sorghum, and soybeans advanced ahead of normal while rice planting and winter wheat heading were behind the normal pace. Cotton was 40 percent planted in Arizona, and vegetable and citrus growers harvested a variety of crops. California sugarbeets showed rapid growth, while planting of corn and cotton continued. Soil moisture was well below normal in Colorado, and winter wheat was in poor condition. Sugarbeet planting was ahead of normal, while small grain seedings were near the normal pace. Planting of small grains was ahead of the normal pace in Wyoming. In South Dakota, planting of spring wheat, barley, and oats was underway, while 74 percent of the winter wheat crop had broken dormancy. Louisiana corn growers took advantage of the dry weather by planting 45 percent of their crop during the week, to bring the total progress to 80 percent complete.

**Weather Data For Week Ending April 4, 2004**

Station	Last Week Weather Summary						April 1 - April 4, 2004					GDD Base 40F Total
	Temperature				Precipitation		Precipitation			GDD Base 50F		
	High	Low	Average	DFN	Total	Days	Total	DFN	Days	Total	DFN	
<b>Northwest</b>												
Erie	69	30	43	2	1.50	6	1.01	0.60	4	0	0	1
Franklin	69	31	47	6	1.46	4	1.26	0.82	3	0	0	13
Meadville	67	28	44	4	1.08	6	0.74	0.30	4	0	0	3
Mercer	69	22	42	2	1.34	5	0.98	0.50	4	0	0	1
Springboro	71	29	44	4	1.85	6	1.29	0.90	4	0	0	3
Warren	72	32	46	7	1.74	5	1.50	1.06	4	0	0	9
<b>North Central</b>												
Bradford Region	64	30	43	6	1.10	5	0.86	0.42	4	0	0	5
Emporium	68	34	46	7	0.99	5	0.69	0.25	4	0	0	14
Kane	64	24	40	3	0.80	5	0.59	0.11	4	0	0	2
Laporte	62	28	41	-1	0.44	5	0.41	0.01	4	0	0	5
Lock Haven	71	36	48	6	1.27	5	1.15	0.75	4	0	0	24
Port Allegany	68	29	44	6	0.59	5	0.41	0.01	4	0	0	7
Renovo	69	34	45	3	1.08	5	0.85	0.45	4	0	0	12
Ridgway	68	32	45	7	1.02	5	0.82	0.38	4	0	0	9
Stevenson Dam	69	36	47	8	0.91	4	0.71	0.27	3	0	0	20
Towanda	66	31	46	5	0.80	4	0.80	0.44	4	0	0	19
Wellsboro	62	29	41	4	0.91	5	0.75	0.47	4	0	0	3
Williamsport	66	35	48	4	0.62	4	0.61	0.21	3	0	-4	27
<b>Northeast</b>												
Hawley	63	28	42	3	0.93	4	0.72	0.30	3	0	0	7
Wilkes-Barre/Sc	67	29	45	3	0.07	3	0.06	-0.30	2	0	0	17
Susquehanna	67	31	45	8	0.52	3	0.52	0.06	3	0	0	17
<b>West Central</b>												
Butler	69	33	46	4	1.17	6	0.93	0.49	4	0	0	11
New Castle	71	31	46	6	2.06	5	1.36	0.96	4	0	0	10
Slippery Rock	70	33	47	6	1.76	4	1.51	1.07	3	0	0	16
<b>Central</b>												
Altoona/Blair	62	33	43	-2	2.32	5	2.10	1.66	4	0	-4	7
DuBois	65	31	44	3	0.98	5	0.69	0.25	4	0	0	6
Lewistown	65	35	46	1	2.02	5	1.90	1.54	4	0	-4	23
Middletown	66	34	47	0	1.57	5	1.54	1.14	4	1	-3	30
Prince Gallitzi	73	32	45	4	2.62	5	2.39	1.83	4	0	0	11
Selingsgrove	63	33	46	3	0.87	5	0.82	0.42	4	0	-3	23
State College	63	35	45	3	1.58	5	1.37	0.97	4	0	0	16
<b>East Central</b>												
Allentown-Bethel	64	33	45	0	0.27	5	0.13	-0.31	4	0	-4	23
Lehighton	69	32	45	1	0.71	4	0.64	0.24	3	0	-1	23
Matamoras	60	30	43	0	0.75	3	0.75	0.27	3	0	0	9
Tobyhanna	62	24	38	1	0.32	4	0.23	-0.28	3	0	0	0
<b>Southwest</b>												
Pittsburgh/Alle	70	32	47	3	1.22	5	1.04	0.64	4	0	-4	12
Derry	71	30	45	3	2.11	5	1.95	1.53	4	0	0	10
Myersdale	63	30	40	-4	1.91	5	1.71	1.19	4	0	0	0
Mount Pleasant	70	33	46	5	1.53	5	1.32	0.80	4	0	0	11
Pittsburgh Intl	71	33	48	3	1.16	5	0.85	0.41	4	0	-4	13
Rector	70	32	46	5	2.12	5	1.97	1.45	4	0	0	14
Waynesburg	73	33	47	3	1.57	5	1.19	0.72	4	0	-2	7
<b>South Central</b>												
Biglerville	65	33	45	-3	1.75	5	1.67	1.23	4	0	-4	16
Everett	59	32	40	-4	2.04	5	1.74	1.32	4	0	0	0
Hanover	63	34	45	-3	1.45	5	1.44	1.00	4	0	-4	19
Shippensburg	64	32	45	-2	1.61	4	1.42	1.02	3	0	-5	20
South Mountain	62	29	41	-4	2.21	5	2.02	1.58	4	0	-2	4
York	64	34	45	-3	1.27	5	1.26	0.78	4	0	-4	22
<b>Southeast</b>												
Green Lane	66	35	47	3	0.82	5	0.50	0.05	4	2	0	31
Hamburg	65	31	45	2	0.53	5	0.51	0.03	4	0	0	22
Hopewell	63	34	45	-3	1.22	5	0.97	0.49	4	0	-5	21
Lancaster	64	33	46	0	1.26	4	1.26	0.82	4	1	-3	25
Neshaminy Falls	62	39	46	0	1.33	4	0.81	0.29	3	0	-4	23
New Holland	66	33	45	-2	1.10	5	1.07	0.63	4	1	-3	22
Philadelphia	62	36	47	-2	1.65	5	1.19	0.71	4	2	-4	29
Philadelphia NE	62	36	46	-2	1.33	5	0.95	0.47	4	2	-4	27
Reading	64	35	46	2	0.65	5	0.60	0.12	4	0	-1	24
Valley Forge Na	71	34	46	-2	1.35	3	0.94	0.46	2	2	-3	25
Willow Grove	62	34	46	-1	1.25	5	0.71	0.19	4	0	-4	27

DFN = Departure from normal (using 1961-90 normals period).  
 Precipitation (rainfall or melted snow or ice) and pan evaporation in inches.  
 Precipitation days = days with precipitation of .01 inch or more.  
 Air temperatures in degrees fahrenheit.  
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## *Internet Reporters' Comments, By County:*

**Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Conservation District (CD), farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.**

**Lew Steckler, Erie County** - - Very wet everywhere some snow yesterday and some more forecast for this weekend. Only observed farm activities has been fixing fence, manure spreading, and grading driveways.

**Pamela Barnes, Tioga County** - - The sun came out early in the week. The ground is still quite wet from melting snow and rain. Ground is still partially frozen in some areas. A week of good sunny weather will be needed to get spring plowing under way. Fall planted rye crop is starting to green up and grass hay fields are showing signs of springtime. Happy Planting!

**Willie Keeney, Susquehanna County** - - The spring like temperatures had farmers preparing to mend fences. The main activities last week were fence post cutting/splitting, machinery repair, tending to livestock and general farm chores.

**Joe Shevchik, NRCS, Cambria County** - - Very wet! Rained earlier in the week then 5" of snow over the weekend.

**Marina Kemper, Huntingdon County** - - It has been a long winter in central Pa. 2003-2004. We had snow on the ground for at least 3 months this winter. Hay fields look good this spring, very little winter kill, so maybe a good hay crop for 2004. Our Santa Gertrudis cattle did quite well with all the snow and below zero temps. We have started spring calving, first one was a heifer, (a good way to start). Some of our neighbors have tried to do a little field work but it is too wet. We had 3& 1/2 inches of rain this week and with all the snow melt we had it is plenty wet. It is early for our area to even plant oats yet, and with a little wind and sunshine it will not be long for field work. (No use trying to MUD it in, but everybody is raring to go!!)

**Dave Stetler, Juniata County** - - Just about the time you think we're having some what a normal Spring, guess what it's WET AGAIN.

**William C. Sheaffer, Snyder and Juniata Counties** - - The winter wheat and barley is showing a few signs of winter kill in the poorly drained areas. There is some effort being made to sow oats and alfalfa. Today (Thursday 4/0 104) we had

significant rainfall that will limit the field activities for awhile.

**John Lohr, Westmoreland County** - - Early part of week was good for field work with manure hauling being the main activity. Many fields were still too wet for tillage. A small amount of spring barley and oats was no tilled before the rains started. Second half of the week was cold and too wet for any field work.

**John Rowehl, Cumberland County** - - Some coated corn seed was planted. Tillage work was done earlier in the week. Topdressing grain fields also. Manure spreading also.

**Thomas Kerr, Franklin County** - - This has been a cool and damp spring so far. A good bit of alfalfa seeding was done this past week, about 30% of intended has been planted. Cool weather has held the fruit buds back and very little damage has occurred so far. Freezing temps on April 5 and 6 will affect the sweet cherries and apricots.

Wheat and barley has been reported as being good to excellent and alfalfa stands are emerging as a good potential for this year.

Spring filed work has begun but most of the week was spent hauling manure, chisel plowing and seeding alfalfa.

**Wayne Kurtz, York County** - - The beginning of the week found producers top dressing small grain, but rainfall mid week and on resulted in surplus topsoil moisture. This slowed what county farmers thought would be an early start of field work. Most activities included manure spreading and some plowing. Wheat acreage should be up over last year since '03 prevented planted acres of corn and soybeans were available early for '04 wheat.  
Wayne Kurtz, YORK

**Andrew Frankenfield, Montgomery County** - - Soil Conditions were drying enough to allow traffic and some tillage early in the week. Cool rains put an end to any tillage, manure spreading, and fertilization by the middle of the week.

**PA Crop Progress for Week Ending April 4, 2004**

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Spring plowing	16	6	17

**PA Crop Condition for Week Ending April 4, 2004**

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Wheat	2	7	27	59	5
Alfalfa and alfalfa mixtures stand	0	6	29	57	8
Timothy clover stand	0	1	37	50	12
Pasture	7	8	57	24	4

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