

WASHINGTON CROP WEATHER

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U.S. Department of
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Washington Agricultural Statistics Service

Crop and Weather Information for the Week Ending April 25, 2004

WEEK IN BRIEF:

**Fruit Crop Experiencing Freeze Damage
Warm Weather May Have Come Too Soon**

Field Crops

Most crops and pastures look good. Some spraying of winter wheat began. Walla Walla County reported winter wheat condition was varied throughout the county. In Douglas and Chelan counties, replantings of winter wheat were nearly complete. Most spring cereal planting was complete. Kittitas County irrigation water forecasts were not favorable with more cuts by the Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) expected. However, the first irrigation for most hay began this week in Kittitas County. Franklin County reported alfalfa may be ready for first cut a week early.

Livestock

A large number of counties have reported releasing livestock onto spring pastures. However, in Kittitas County, cattle producers have placed cattle on rangeland so that pastures can come in. Oyster growers completed harrowing operations, and continued harvest and seed operations. Range and pasture conditions were 11% very poor, 7% poor, 33% fair, 48% good, and 1% excellent.

Fruits and Vegetables

Cool temperatures in some counties in the West made frost protection necessary for fruit crops. In Yakima County, there were reports of possible damage to fruit crops in low-lying areas. Franklin County reported eighty to eighty-five percent of stone fruit were lost to an early January freeze along with a good portion of the county's wine grape crop. Overall, apples, cherries, blueberries, prunes and some strawberries are in bloom. Planting of sweet corn, peas, potatoes, dry beans and carrots continued. Some spinach seed planting began and asparagus harvest is more active.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork

This Week	Last Week
6.1	5.0

Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	% Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2003	5 Yr. Avg.
Spring Wheat Planted	98	95	83	78
Spring Wheat Emerged	79	69	49	47
Winter Wheat Headed	1	0	0	0
Barley Planted	97	91	73	69
Barley Emerged	77	63	31	31
Potatoes Planted	75	45	59	62
Potatoes Emerged	38	20	14	25
Corn Planted	41	30	45	28
Corn Emerged	6	1	3	1
Dry Edible Beans Planted	75	45	10	4
Proc. Green Peas Planted	90	84	51	NA
Dry Peas Planted	90	85	34	36

Soil Moisture and Supply

Soil Type	% Acreage			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	3	18	74	5
Subsoil	3	22	72	3
Irrigation Water	0	5	95	0
Hay and Roughage	0	1	98	1

VS=Very Short, SH=Short, AD=Adequate, S=Surplus

Crop Condition *

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	2	7	40	44	7
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	0	6	91	3
Spring Wheat Dryland	0	2	55	36	7
Spring Wheat Irrigated	0	0	9	89	2
Barley Dryland	0	1	50	40	9
Barley Irrigated	0	0	9	88	3
Potatoes	0	0	7	92	1
Dry Edible Beans	0	0	23	77	0

VP=Very Poor, P=Poor, F=Fair, G=Good, EX=Excellent

* Crop conditions are a measure of the growing conditions and are not indicative of the quality of the crop produced.

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COUNTY COMMENTS

Western

Grays Harbor: Ag producers took advantage of another week of dry, warm temperatures to continue field cultivation. Plant development was at least two weeks ahead of schedule. Christmas tree growers were winding down on fertilizer applications for this year. The cut flower tulip harvest was finished. Both the tulip and daffodil harvest was short this year due to the above average temperatures throughout the month of April. Livestock producers continued making haylage off rapidly growing forage fields.

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: Spring activity is in full swing after a brief delay due to showers.

Kitsap: Excellent field conditions!

Pacific: Warmer springtime temperatures provided ideal conditions for producers to work fields and finalize preparations for this season's crops. Raspberry and Christmas tree producers continued weed control efforts and fertilizer applications. Oyster growers completed harrowing operations and continued harvest and seed setting operations. Pasture conditions continued to improve with the warmer temperatures.

Pierce/S. King: Again this has been a very good week for field crops and pastures. There was no report of any unusual situations or crop damage due to a weather related event.

Thurston: Rain showers early in the week were followed by warm, dry conditions which allowed ag producers to resume field cultivation. Plant development was about two weeks ahead of schedule due to above average temperatures for the month. Christmas tree growers reported continued hatch of cooley spruce gall adelgids on Douglas fir trees. A light frost late in the week frustrated home gardeners who watched their prized lilac blooms turn brown.

Skagit: Yet another week of dry, warm weather. Planting conditions were excellent. The tulip flower harvest ended. A few apple growers were applying scab sprays. Potato and spinach seed were being planted. Grass for silage was being cut. With accelerated conditions, the Valley's farming operations were in full swing.

Snohomish/N. King: Good growing weather continued. Many bee hives swarmed this week, keeping local beekeepers busy. Apple blossom continued and strawberries were in bloom. Lots of native pollinators emerged to help with pollination. Pasture growth was excellent and grass harvest continued.

Snohomish/N. King (2nd Report): Above average temperatures and below normal precipitation for the week and month has fieldwork ahead of schedule in most areas. Green chopping began and cattle can't keep up with many of the pastures. Farmers were preparing to plant early spring crops with hopes that the beautiful weather continues. The flowers and blooming trees continued to be a delight to see and a misery to allergy sufferers.

Whatcom: A couple of light rain showers were received during the week. Temperatures were warmer than normal. A couple of mornings the temperatures were cool. Farmers continued to chop grass. Blueberries and some strawberries were blooming early. Fieldwork continued.

Central

Benton: Cool temperatures made frost protection necessary in fruit trees. Asparagus harvest was becoming more active. Spring seeding, irrigation, cover and thinning sprays were other activities.

Benton (2nd Report): Some rain showers were received during the week. Normal spring growth continued.

Chelan/Douglas: Apple bloom was earlier than normal by about two weeks. Low temperatures during the week may have affected the pear crop in areas of Chelan County. Frost protection measures were being implemented. Livestock have been released into spring pastures. Some producers were reporting loss of livestock water supply (springs and lakes). Replanting of poor winter wheat was nearly complete.

Franklin: Asparagus harvest continued. Potatoes, sweet corn, dry beans and carrots were being planted. Mild, sunny weather has crops off to a good start. Alfalfa may be ready for the first cutting a week early.

Franklin (2nd Report): It was another good growing week with some isolated shower and thunder shower activity throughout the county. Temperatures were near normal and early irrigated crops were progressing nicely. Dryland wheat was progressing well also. Spring planted wheat and CRP has blown out in areas in the past several weeks. Reseeding of wheat took place. Some limited irrigated forage cutting began at the south end of the county. Dryland range bunch grasses were better than normal due to the good winter moisture and slow snow melt. However, the annual grasses (primarily cheatgrass) has matured very early and was shorter than normal due to late winter and early spring warm temperatures. Eighty to 85 percent of all stone fruit (apricots, peaches and nectarines) were lost to the January freeze, as well as a good portion of the county's grape crop. Young nectarine and peach trees were also destroyed and many grape vines will be cut back to the ground. Limited damage was reported to the cherry crop from the same freeze and another early frost.

Grant: Sweet corn planting continued. Apple red bloom was complete. Later varieties were in bloom. Some bloom thinning was underway. Coddling moth responded to windy, cool weather. Cherry bloom was heavy.

Kittitas: The first irrigation for most hay and livestock producers began. The weather was cool until the weekend. Range conditions were showing the lack of spring rain. With sunshine, warm temperatures, and a steady wind, soil was drying out relatively quickly. Those with rangeland have cattle on the range, allowing pastures to come in.

Kittitas (2nd Report): Irrigation water forecasts were not favorable. KRD announced that additional cuts were coming. Normal fieldwork activities continued.

Klickitat: The continued warm weather has been detrimental to pastures. In the eastern area of the county, most range and pastures were gone.

Okanogan/Ferry: Apple bloom was approximately two weeks earlier than normal. Low temperatures throughout most of the county forced growers to use frost protection for the fruit crops.

Yakima: Average temperatures averaged from 3 degrees below normal to 6 degrees above normal, with .33 of an inch of precipitation. There was possible damage to fruit crops in lower lying areas.

Eastern

Adams: Precipitation is needed to improve crop conditions--especially spring cereals.

Asotin/Garfield: Showers received early in the week were beneficial to crops and pastures; however, the total accumulation of rain was disappointing in many areas. Additional precipitation is needed for continued development of crops and pastures.

Lincoln: Precipitation is needed to improve crop conditions. Spring cereal planting was nearly complete.

Lincoln (2nd Report): Recent rains were beneficial to crops, but rain has been spotty and more is needed. Some ponds located on pastures have already gone dry or will soon without more precipitation. Warm weather helped get the crops growing, but there has been concern that it has warmed up too soon for this time of the year.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: Scattered showers early in the week, did not add up to much moisture, but kept temperatures normal. Windy conditions later in the week, dried out most of the precipitation received. Small grains were emerging. Winter wheat, as well as bluegrass, was being sprayed. Cherries and prunes were in bloom, as well as early varieties of apples. Range conditions were pretty good considering the lack of fall and winter moisture.

Stevens: The area received plenty of moisture at the beginning of the week. The weekend brought warm, sunny weather which was beneficial to crops. Fieldwork and pasture growth were weeks ahead of normal. Cow-calf producers branded calves and shipped them to spring pastures.

Walla Walla: Showers and cooler weather was received throughout the week. The showers were heavy on Wednesday. The condition of the winter wheat crop greatly varied throughout the county. Some crops were slightly yellowed and seemed underdeveloped. Early reports on peas were promising. Pastures were greening up well but could use more rain. Cheat grass in pastures was extremely small and already heading out, which raised concern over the need for more moisture.

Whitman: Crops and pastures looked good following the recent rains.

Whitman (2nd Report): Spring fieldwork was coming to a close. Rain showers have been beneficial to winter and spring crop development.

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Weekly Weather Statistics
April 26, 2004

Station	Air Temperature				Growing Degree Days				Last Week Precipitation			Season Precipitation			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	Base 50F		Base 60F		Total			Total		% Normal	Days
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	Inches	DFN	Days	Inches	DFN		
WEST															
Bellingham	38	65	52	4	16	8	0	0	0.20	-0.43	2	24.26	-4.79	84	115
Everett	42	65	52	3	16	2	0	0	0.25	-0.35	4	23.68	-5.37	82	116
Hoquiam	41	72	50	0	9	-5	0	0	1.03	0.10	4	56.54	-2.82	95	145
Kelso	34	77	52	3	18	3	0	0	0.53	-0.20	3	28.38	-10.69	73	105
Olympia	33	71	50	2	8	1	0	0	0.67	-0.01	4	41.02	-3.39	92	132
Sea-Tac	42	70	52	3	17	3	0	0	0.31	-0.18	3	29.51	-2.33	93	113
Shelton	33	74	51	0	14	-5	0	0	0.78	-0.03	4	57.49	-0.66	99	134
Tacoma	36	70	51	0	8	-7	0	0	0.31	-0.28	4	28.05	-5.96	82	117
Vancouver	33	79	53	3	22	6	0	0	0.47	-0.12	3	27.30	-7.65	78	133
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	28	74	52	3	18	4	0	0	0.47	0.33	2	6.03	-1.12	84	79
Omak	29	72	51	4	16	5	0	0	1.06	0.78	2	7.77	-2.49	76	59
Stampede Pass	30	59	40	5	0	0	0	0	0.10	-0.93	3	61.41	-9.23	87	135
Wenatchee	34	73	54	2	28	-2	0	-2	0.08	-0.06	2	7.23	0.77	112	61
Yakima AP	27	73	50	-2	10	-12	0	0	0.24	0.16	2	5.27	-1.11	83	57
NORTHEAST															
Colville	32	75	51	73	10	-3	0	0	0.14	-0.21	1	6.33	-9.23	41	55
Deer Park	28	65	46	-3	0	-11	0	0	0.58	0.23	3	14.17	0.29	102	99
Spokane AP	30	66	47	-1	0	-10	0	0	0.27	-0.01	4	9.08	-3.19	74	87
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	32	72	52	-2	16	-15	0	-3	0.29	0.22	2	3.66	-1.93	65	51
Moses Lake	30	72	51	-3	12	-19	0	-3	0.23	0.16	2	3.90	-1.69	70	50
Quincy	30	71	52	0	23	-4	0	-2	0.31	0.24	1	3.76	-2.33	62	46
Ritzville	30	67	46	-3	0	-14	0	0	0.18	-0.01	1	7.49	-1.31	85	59
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	32	74	51	-6	13	-36	0	-7	0.15	0.08	1	4.83	-0.42	92	52
Pasco	33	77	53	-4	21	-23	0	-7	0.05	-0.05	1	5.48	-0.42	93	62
Pullman	34	66	47	1	33	-7	0	0	0.27	0.97	3	13.00	-3.26	80	87
Whitman Miss.	34	69	50	-3	10	-17	0	-6	0.54	0.29	5	13.40	2.87	127	91
ID PANHANDLE															
Coeur D'A' AP	34	63	46	-4	0	-13	0	0	0.61	0.23	3	9.15	-10.31	47	79
Lewiston ID	38	72	52	-1	18	-12	0	5	0.39	0.11	4	6.94	-1.32	84	68

Summary based on NWS data.

Season Cumulative Precip Starts: Wednesday September 1, 2003

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).

NA = Data Unavailable

Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.

Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.

Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

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