



Wisconsin Crop Weather

Compiled by the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

December 13, 2002

Annual Crop Weather Issue

REVIEW OF THE 2002 CROP YEAR

2002 - Delays in Planting and Harvesting Were the Norm

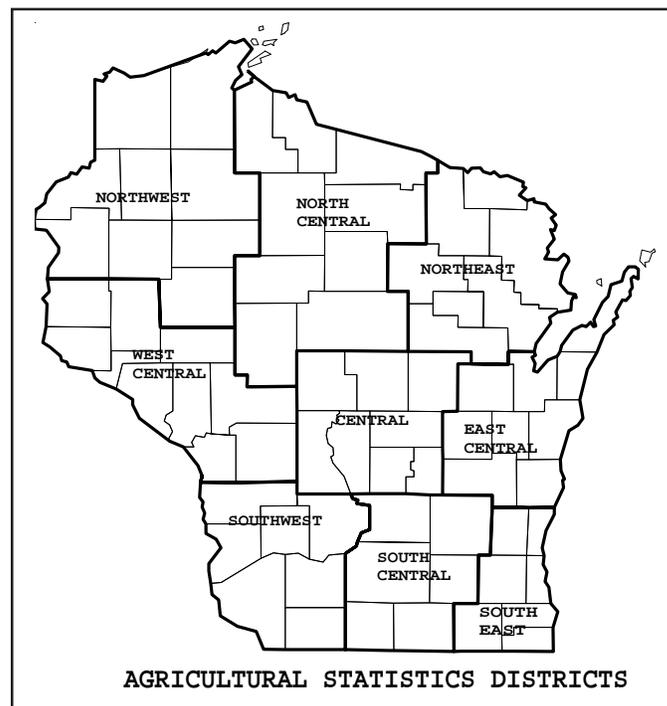
It was an unusual spring with good soil moisture, but colder than normal temperatures through May. Crops were planted late, and emergence was slow, due to the cold ground. Warm summer weather allowed crops to catch up, but precipitation became Nature's next villain. Crops in the southeast experienced drought conditions, while the north and west had late season surpluses of moisture. Overall, Wisconsin experienced a better than average growing season.

December 2001 was characterized with above normal temperatures and below normal snowfall. The warm temperatures allowed for later than usual outdoor farm activities to be completed in mild conditions. **January** continued to have warm and dry conditions. Accumulated snow from December melted with the mild temperatures. Bare fields were common in southern Wisconsin. Average temperatures for the month were over 10 degrees above normal. A snowfall late in January brought slight snow cover across the state. **February** weather patterns were again warmer than normal. Statewide, precipitation was slightly above normal for the month, but the warm temperatures kept snow cover at a minimum. **March** began with the coldest temperatures of the winter and significant snowfall. By the second week of the month, above freezing temperatures had returned, and snow cover was quickly reduced. The warm winter temperatures and lack of snow cover allowed field activities to continue throughout the winter across most of Wisconsin.

April began with snow covering the ground across the northern tier of counties. Early-month temperatures were 8-11 degrees below normal. The ground remained frozen, except for scattered areas in the south. Spring tillage was started, but most activities consisted of manure hauling and preparing equipment for the upcoming season. Maple syrup production was slow to start, due to cold daytime temperatures. Temperatures varied throughout the month, from unseasonably warm in the mid 70's, followed by freezing temperatures 7 to 9 degrees colder than normal. Precipitation in the form of rain and snow continued to delay fieldwork. Soil moisture levels were adequate to surplus in all parts of the state. The first half of the month had very few days suitable for fieldwork. The second half was slightly better with 7 days suitable during the last two weeks. As fields dried out, oat planting began in southern areas. By the end of April, oats planted were at 34 percent complete, compared to 26 percent the

previous year, and 52 percent for the five-year period. The wet spring weather was beneficial to pasture, winter wheat, and alfalfa. Central Wisconsin reported potato and green pea planting in sandy soils later in the month.

The month of **May** began with soil moisture ratings at 98 percent adequate to surplus. Below normal temperatures continued, and caused delays for corn and oat planting and spring tillage. Farmers were getting anxious to get crops in the ground, but below normal soil temperatures continued to restrict emergence of oats and corn. Lack of warm weather slowed field drying in the north. The first three weeks of the month had enough scattered precipitation to keep days suitable for



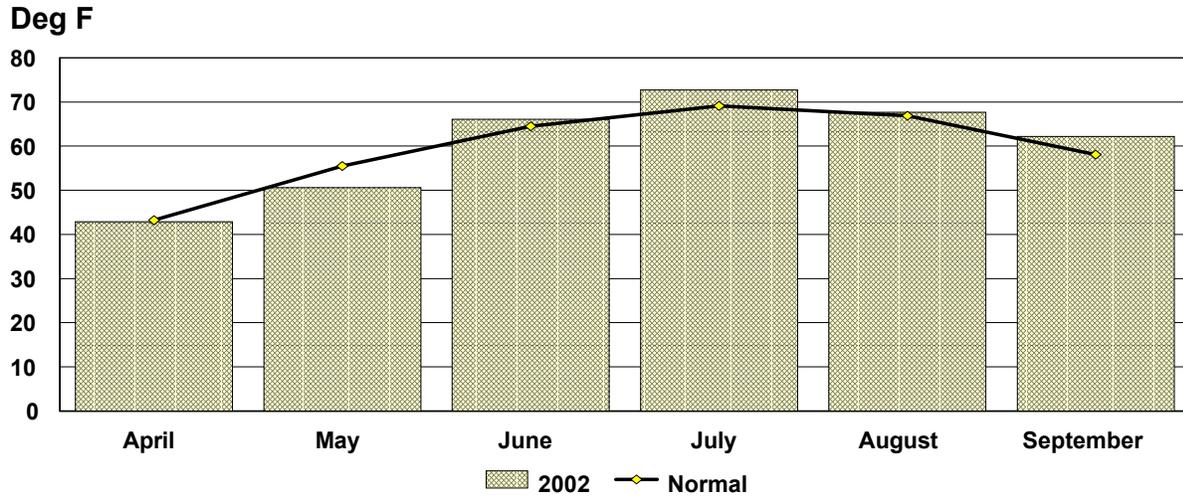
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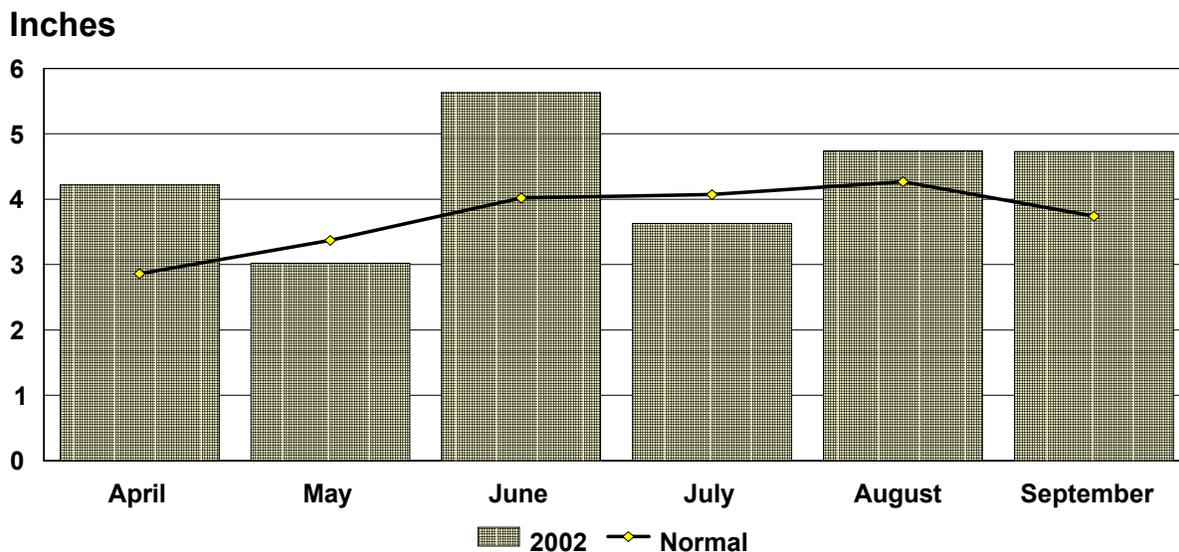
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This report has been made possible through the cooperative efforts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the National Weather Service.

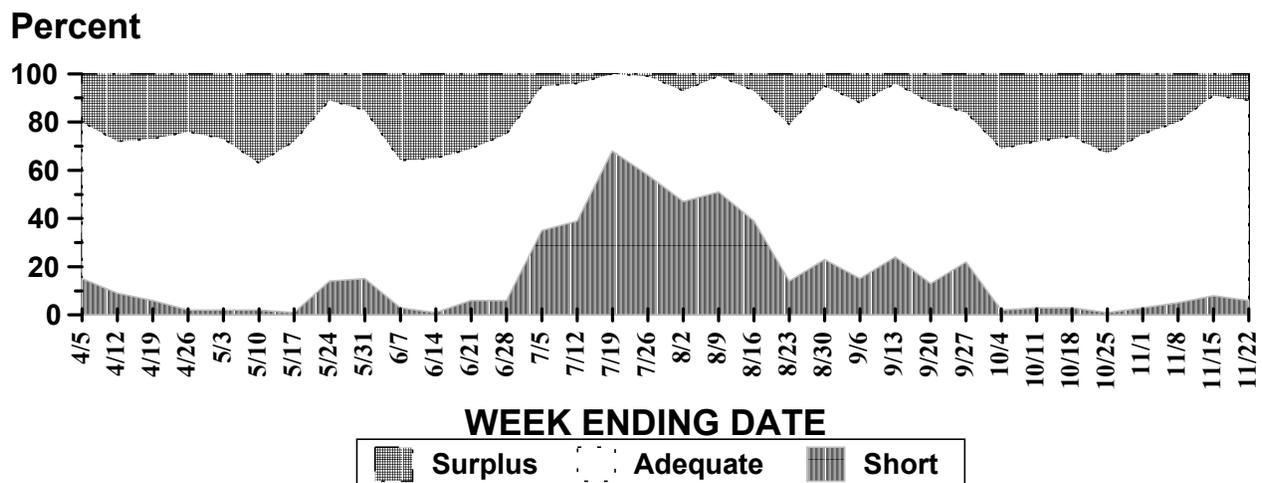
AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURE, WISCONSIN, 2002



AVERAGE MONTHLY RAINFALL, WISCONSIN, 2002



SOIL MOISTURE RATINGS, WISCONSIN, 2002



MONTHLY TEMPERATURES: 2002 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL*

District	April 1/		May 1/		June 1/		July 1/		August 1/		September 1/	
	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal
	Degrees Fahrenheit											
NW	40.5	41.7	48.8	54.4	64.3	63.1	71.5	68.1	66.4	65.9	60.7	56.6
NC	39.0	40.4	47.6	53.2	63.8	61.8	70.6	66.4	64.8	64.2	59.4	55.3
NE	40.5	41.3	47.9	53.6	63.6	62.5	71.0	67.0	65.8	64.8	59.7	56.0
WC	44.9	45.2	53.0	57.4	68.6	66.4	74.6	70.8	68.9	68.3	63.2	59.3
C	44.9	44.5	52.3	56.7	67.2	65.8	73.5	70.2	68.5	67.7	63.0	59.0
EC	43.8	42.8	50.0	54.6	65.9	64.1	73.4	69.5	69.0	67.9	63.7	59.8
SW	46.7	46.1	54.3	57.9	68.8	67.2	74.4	71.4	69.9	69.0	64.5	60.5
SC	46.9	45.8	53.9	57.8	68.8	67.2	74.7	71.3	70.3	68.9	65.3	60.6
SE	46.4	45.0	52.4	56.3	68.0	66.0	74.6	71.2	71.2	69.4	66.1	61.4
STATE	42.9	43.2	50.6	55.5	66.1	64.5	72.7	69.1	67.7	66.9	62.2	58.1

1/Preliminary estimates, 2002. * Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1971-2000. Source: State Climatologist.

MONTHLY RAINFALL: 2002 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL*

District	April 1/		May 1/		June 1/		July 1/		August 1/		September 1/	
	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal	2002	Normal
	Inches											
NW	4.10	2.39	3.28	3.29	4.77	4.19	4.81	4.29	5.80	4.44	6.28	3.89
NC	4.78	2.40	3.12	3.31	4.95	4.01	4.90	4.06	5.04	4.36	6.39	4.03
NE	4.81	2.65	3.54	3.29	5.43	3.69	3.30	3.70	4.30	3.81	4.01	3.74
WC	3.92	3.05	2.45	3.69	7.45	4.24	4.04	4.45	5.09	4.54	5.00	3.82
C	3.99	3.02	2.60	3.52	7.88	3.88	2.77	4.13	3.98	4.22	3.91	3.72
EC	3.91	2.81	3.07	2.95	5.00	3.51	2.00	3.38	3.70	3.86	3.12	3.42
SW	3.97	3.55	3.20	3.60	5.91	4.35	3.55	4.33	4.17	4.46	2.98	3.42
SC	4.05	3.47	2.81	3.40	4.75	4.19	1.97	4.07	4.44	4.24	3.61	3.51
SE	3.91	3.48	2.72	3.13	4.58	3.76	2.14	3.82	4.95	4.22	4.07	3.48
STATE	4.22	2.86	3.02	3.37	5.63	4.02	3.63	4.07	4.74	4.27	4.73	3.74

1/Preliminary estimates, 2002. * Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1971-2000. Source: State Climatologist.

COMPARATIVE TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION DATA

District	Average Temperature						Total Precipitation					
	June - September						April - September					
	Normal*	1998	1999	2000	2001	20021/	Normal*	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 1/
	Degrees Fahrenheit						Inches					
NW	63.6	65.0	64.0	61.6	64.6	65.8	22.3	17.6	29.2	21.5	25.6	28.6
NC	62.3	63.5	61.5	61.3	63.5	65.2	22.1	16.3	25.6	24.1	24.0	28.0
NE	63.0	64.3	64.1	61.6	63.6	65.3	20.9	16.1	22.8	23.0	21.3	26.9
WC	66.7	67.7	67.2	64.9	67.2	68.8	23.5	23.1	27.5	25.4	27.6	29.3
C	66.1	67.1	66.3	64.7	66.6	68.4	22.3	21.7	25.7	27.1	25.8	24.0
EC	66.0	67.3	66.6	64.7	66.7	68.3	20.0	18.7	22.4	24.5	22.4	20.1
SW	67.5	67.9	67.7	66.0	67.4	69.4	23.5	27.7	30.3	30.6	28.7	24.0
SC	67.6	68.7	68.2	66.5	67.8	70.0	22.7	25.8	28.1	30.6	27.6	20.6
SE	67.6	68.7	68.6	66.6	68.0	70.0	22.0	20.9	27.4	31.8	25.5	21.7
STATE	65.1	66.2	65.6	63.6	65.7	67.4	22.2	20.5	26.7	25.6	25.3	25.8

1/Preliminary estimates, 2002. * Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1971-2000. Source: State Climatologist

fieldwork around 4 days per week. The last week of the month finally allowed farmers 6.5 days suitable for fieldwork, and a flurry of activity commenced across the state. Temperatures remained 8-12 degrees below normal. Corn and soybeans planted rose rapidly to nearly match the 5-year averages. Southern Wisconsin farmers began to worry about soil moisture levels. Cold temperatures remained the largest concern for producers. Alfalfa first crop was short, due to cool conditions, with occasional frost reports through the end of the month.

Following five weeks of below normal temperatures, the first week of **June** was 4 to 7 degrees above normal. Warm weather, coupled with favorable soil moisture conditions, allowed producers to finish corn and soybean planting and catch up to 5-year averages. Some farmers in southern counties were replanting early-planted fields that failed to emerge in the cool spring. Sunshine and warm temperatures helped improve crop conditions. The good weather saw producers working around the clock to catch up with fieldwork. Cooler weather returned for the second week of the month, but the largest concern was heavy rainfall across the state. Rains of 2 to 3 inches were reported, with some areas receiving up to 5.5 inches. Wet weather continued for the next three weeks across the northern two-thirds of Wisconsin. Days suitable for fieldwork were under 4 days per week for this period and caused many delays in hay harvest. Soybean and corn crops on low-lying fields and heavy soils were stressed, due to excessive moisture. The month ended with above normal temperatures that provided needed heat units to delayed crops. Soil moisture levels at the end of the month were at 69 percent adequate and 25 percent surplus. However, southern, and especially southeastern counties, began to experience short soil moisture conditions, and crops were beginning to show stress.

The first week of **July** was mostly dry, with temperatures 6-8 degrees above normal. Growing degree days for corn surpassed normal levels. The dry, hot weather bolstered corn and soybeans across the state. Southeastern areas of Wisconsin had drought-stressed cornfields, with leaves beginning to roll during the heat of the day. Near normal temperatures returned for the next three weeks, but precipitation was light and scattered. Soil moisture conditions on July 19 were at 25 percent very short, 43 percent short, and 32 percent adequate. Days suitable for fieldwork were above 5.5 days per week for the month. Conditions for harvest of second crop alfalfa were very good, but yields suffered, due to lack of moisture. Winter wheat and small grain harvest advanced with the dry weather. Crop condition for corn and soybeans began to drop. Farmers were asking for rain as the corn crop neared pollination stage. The last week of July brought relief, with timely rainfall amounts of 0.5-1.5 inches of rain. Producers were thankful, but hoped for more precipitation to catch up to normal rainfall patterns.

The first week of **August** brought more much-needed moisture to most of the state. The timely rains improved crop conditions for corn and soybeans at a critical development stage. Unfortunately, rainfall in the southeast was sporadic in an area that needed moisture badly. Soil moisture conditions for August 9, in the southeastern district, were rated as 63 percent very short and 37 percent short. Statewide, conditions were 17 percent very short, 34 percent short, 48 percent adequate, and 1 percent surplus. Mid-August brought the return of rain, statewide. The moisture helped corn and soybean conditions to improve, but

may have been too late to save some of the drought-stressed crops in the southeast. The last week of August proved to be warm and dry. Corn and soybean phenological progress jumped ahead of the 5-year average. Harvest of third and fourth crop hay advanced with the cooperative weather.

September continued with above normal temperatures for the first three weeks. Rains returned statewide during the first week of the month. Northern areas received locally heavy rains. Topsoil moisture conditions for the first week were 15 percent very short to short, 73 percent adequate, and 12 percent surplus. With adequate moisture and warm temperatures, corn and soybeans progressed rapidly towards harvest. Soybeans turned color and dropped leaves swiftly. Corn silage harvest was in full swing, where farmers could get equipment into fields. Days suitable for fieldwork for the month ranged from 4.7 to 6.0 days per week. Machinery maintenance for the upcoming harvest season occupied any spare time. The final week of September turned cooler, with light precipitation reported in most areas of the state. The exception was in the already wet areas of the northwest. Additional rains there added to worries about upcoming harvest conditions. Most crops appeared to be safe from severe frost damage. Soybean harvest began in the southern counties on early-planted varieties.

October proved to be a wet month in Wisconsin. The first week had precipitation ranging between 1.25 and 2.50 inches. Topsoil moisture levels were significantly higher at 31 percent surplus and 67 percent adequate for the week. Temperatures 4 to 7 degrees above normal pushed crop progress forward for any late-planted fields. Temperatures returned to normal in the second week. A killing frost was reported across the northern tier of counties, with a light frost reported statewide. Farmers welcomed the end of vegetative growth and cooler temperatures in hopes of reducing moisture levels in grains. Unfortunately, rain and snow continued sporadically throughout the rest of the month. The last two weeks of October turned 6 to 9 degrees cooler than normal. Days suitable for fieldwork for the month ranged from 3.2 to 4.5 days per week, and were the lowest weekly figures since early May. Corn harvested for grain at the end of October was at 36 percent complete, compared to the 5-year average of 51 percent. Soybeans were at 69 percent complete, compared to the 5-year average of 87 percent. Fall tillage was delayed, due to the late harvest and wet conditions.

November began with temperatures 5 to 8 degrees below normal. Because of dry weather across the state, producers were able to progress with the fall harvest. The late harvest prompted many farmers to harvest dry, higher ground and go around wet spots. Farmers were switching from corn and soybean harvest to fall tillage, depending on local conditions. Normal temperatures returned for the remainder of the month. Precipitation remained very light across the state, except for the southeast, where most fall work was completed. Days suitable for fieldwork for the month ranged from 5.2 to 5.9 days per week. Producers were able to advance corn harvest to 88 percent by November 24. Moisture levels for corn remained above 20 percent in many instances, but farmers felt that crops could be dried in the bins, rather than risk not being able to harvest them. Yields for corn and soybeans were reported to be normal to above normal for much of the state. The mild and relatively dry weather allowed for harvest, tillage, and manure spreading to continue throughout the state.

CORN

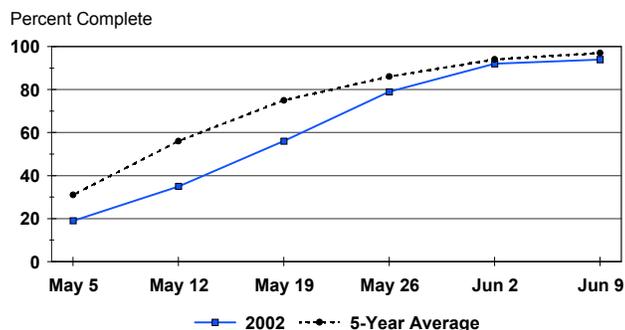
April is the time for the early birds to get the corn planting season started. Unseasonably warm temperatures for mid-April allowed some planters to get into the fields. Temperatures 14 to 17 degrees above normal, coupled with southerly winds, created good conditions for testing the soil temperature and planting early corn. During the last week of April, cooler temperatures returned, and planting progress slowed to 8 percent complete, compared to 10 percent last year, and 9 percent for the 5-year average. In the first week of May, corn planting progressed rapidly in the south, but overall planting was slower than normal, due to cold temperatures. Farmers in most of the state were waiting for warmer soil conditions to begin the 2002 planting season. Cooler than normal temperatures remained for the month of May. Planting progress by the end of the month was at 79 percent complete, compared to 76 percent last year, and a 5-year average of 89 percent. Farmers were anxious to get fields planted in anticipation of warmer temperatures. Continued colder than normal temperatures caused the emergence of corn plants to be delayed. Some farmers in the southern two-thirds of the state were rotary hoeing early-planted fields in hopes of helping emergence. Replanting of some early fields was being considered. The continued colder than normal temperatures, coupled with wet field conditions, caused some emerged corn to yellow. In July, the first signs of drought stress began to show across southern Wisconsin. In the rest of the state, temperatures were normal, and height of corn plants approached normal levels. Warm temperatures caused growing degree days to surpass normal levels and compensated for the cool spring weather. Late July rains came just in time for silking and tasseling, except in some southern and southeastern counties. Early August saw ample supplies of rain over most of the state, which contributed to improved crop conditions. Drought stress in the southeastern counties was the exception to the rule. Rains that

arrived in the second half of August helped relieve drought conditions in the south during ear-filling stages. Heavy rains in the north and northwest pushed soil moisture levels to surplus levels. Corn borer and rootworm problems were reported in scattered locations. September marked the beginning of corn silage harvest. Above normal temperatures for most of the month contributed to advancing maturity levels for the crop. At month's end, corn in the dent stage was at 93 percent, statewide, equal to the 5-year average. In October, continued wet weather, slowed silage harvest. Farmers were ready to begin high moisture corn harvest, but field conditions would not cooperate. Southern counties had much better field conditions. The first frost of the season was reported in mid-October, but most of the crop was safe from damage. Early November weather was colder than normal, but dry, which helped harvest progress. Corn harvested for grain reached 88 percent complete by November 24. This compared to 98 percent complete in 2001, and 95 percent complete for the 5-year average. Some corn was harvested for grain with moisture levels in the 20's, but producers were anxious to get corn out of the field before winter snows. Producer estimates for yield were at normal to above normal for most of the state. The exception was in the drought-stressed southeast.

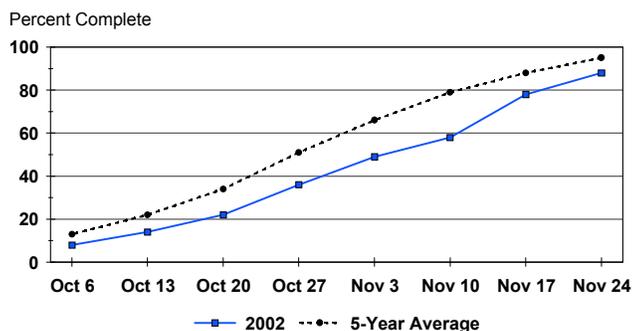
SOYBEANS

The soybean planting season started in early May. Cool weather during May caused some delays in planting, but by June 2, soybeans planted were at 81 percent complete, ahead of the previous year and equal to the 5-year average. Soil temperatures were at low levels early in May; many later-planted soybeans emerged in better condition than early-planted fields. Heavy rains in early June caused some damage, due to ponding in low-lying fields. Many fields were weedy, with producers waiting for drier conditions to begin spraying herbicides. July brought warmer temperatures, which helped the growth of soybeans. Lack of rainfall in the south and southeast began to stress soybean plants. The warm weather helped soybeans mature, and by mid-July, 23 percent of the crop was blooming, compared to 13 percent for the 5-year average. Soybean aphids were reported in some fields. Late July brought rains to the dry southeast in time for soybean blooming and pod setting. Rains across the state were helpful in replenishing the crop at a crucial time in plant development. August saw scattered rains and warm temperatures that, by mid-month helped raise soybeans setting pods to 86 percent complete, compared to 72 percent for the 5-year average. Crop condition for August 23 put soybeans at 68 percent good to excellent. The crop in the southeast continued to show drought stress. By early September, soybeans were beginning to turn color and showed, generally, good pod development. Many producers in the north and west reported soybeans to be the best looking crop in years. Warm temperatures in September pushed soybean maturity rapidly. The crop turned color and dropped leaves in quick succession. Late September brought the beginning of harvest in southern Wisconsin. Wet weather early in the month, and stems with high moisture levels, slowed the early harvest. Soybeans harvested by October 20, were reported at 53 percent complete, compared to 46 percent for the previous year, and 73 percent for the 5-year average. Southern Wisconsin had areas up to 70 percent complete at this time. Early yield reports were at normal to

**Corn Planted
2002 Wisconsin State Average**

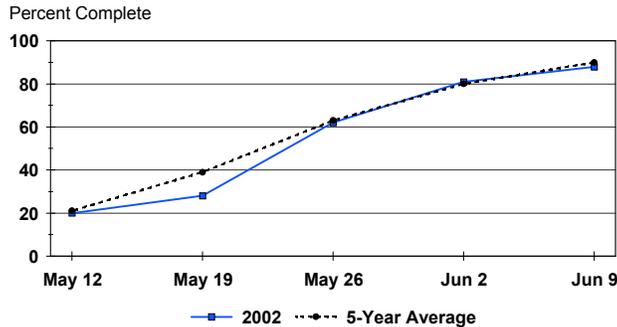


**Corn Harvest
2002 Wisconsin State Average**

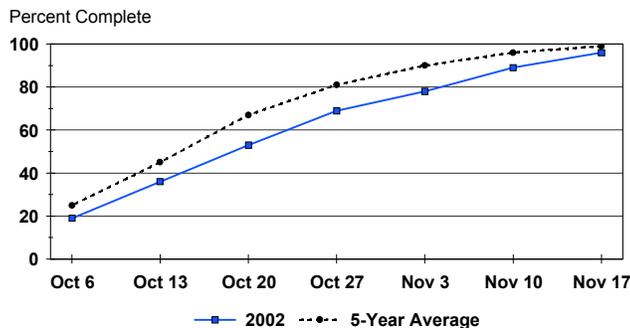


above normal. By November 10, 89 percent of the crop was harvested. Wet conditions in low-lying fields in the north and northwest caused harvest delays.

Soybean Planted
2002 Wisconsin State Average



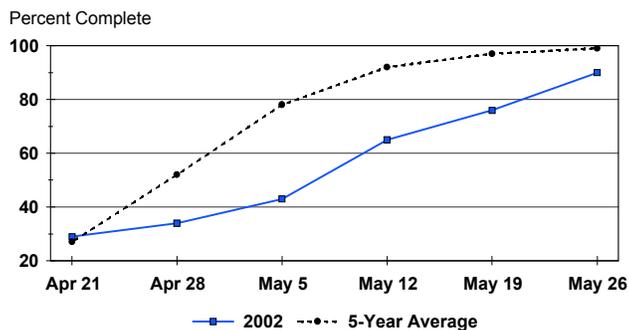
Soybean Harvested
2002 Wisconsin State Average



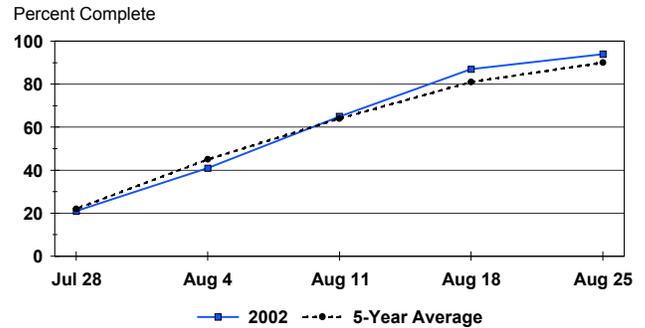
OATS

The southern tier of counties began planting oats in mid-April. A warm week ending April 21 saw temperatures in the 90's, and farmers in the south responded by drilling oats on open fields. Cooler temperatures returned, and planting was delayed in northern counties. As of May 19, 76 percent of the oats were planted, well behind the 89 percent in 2001, and the 97 percent 5-year average. The continued cool temperatures caused slow growth for the crop throughout the state. The first week of July saw oat harvest for forage beginning. The crop was reported to be generally shorter than normal. Harvesting of oats for grain began in late July. By August 11, harvest progress caught up to normal at 65 percent complete. Most oats were harvested by the end of August. Some yields were below normal, due to the late spring and cool temperatures.

Oats Planted
2002 Wisconsin State Average

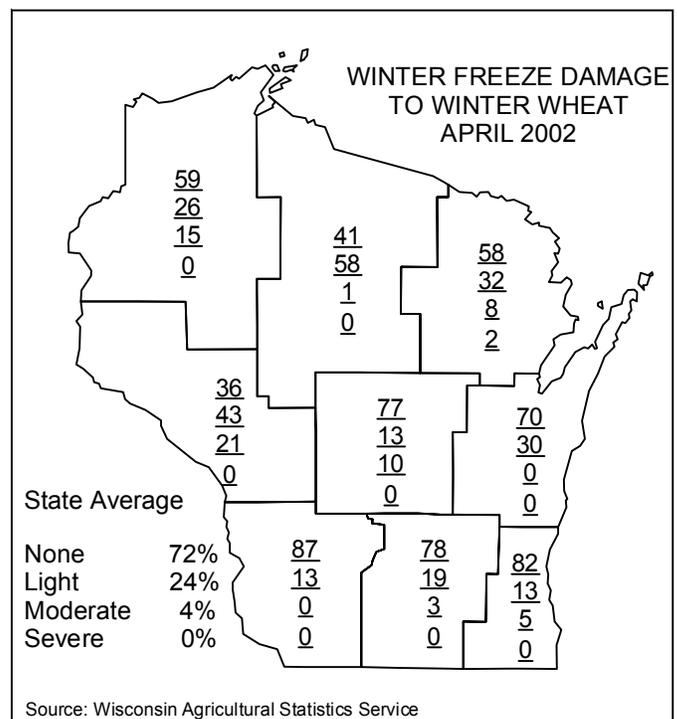


Oats Harvested
2002 Wisconsin State Average



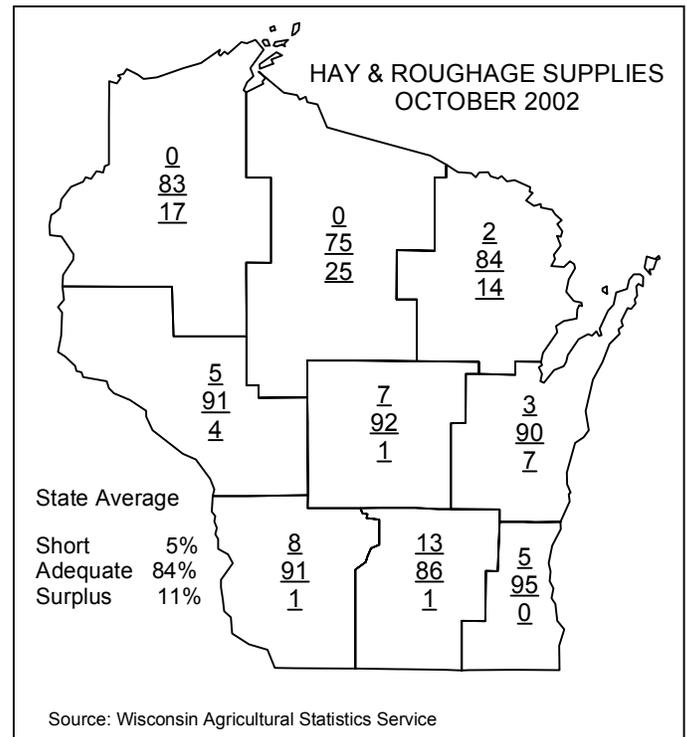
WINTER WHEAT

Spring rains in early April brought winter wheat out of dormancy, and the crop greened-up quickly. Most of the state had none or light winter freeze damage to wheat. Soil moisture conditions were favorable for wheat growth, and as of April 26, the crop condition was rated 89 percent good to excellent. Winter wheat began to head out in early June in southern Wisconsin. Warmer weather in June and July kept crop condition ratings in the 82 to 86 percent good to excellent range. Winter wheat harvest began in mid-July. Scattered areas of the state reported lodging of wheat before harvest. Wet weather stalled harvest progress in the north in early August. In the first week of the month, harvest was reported at 75 percent complete and progressed at an average pace until harvest was complete by mid-August. Yields were reported as extremely varied around the state. Fall planting of winter wheat began by the middle of September. Soybean harvest allowed winter wheat planting to progress. October precipitation caused delays in the soybean harvest, with subsequent delays in wheat planting. In some cases, wheat acres were not planted due to the delayed soybean harvest. Early-planted wheat emerged and was reported to be in good shape. Late-planted wheat was slow to emerge and may not have fully established a stand.



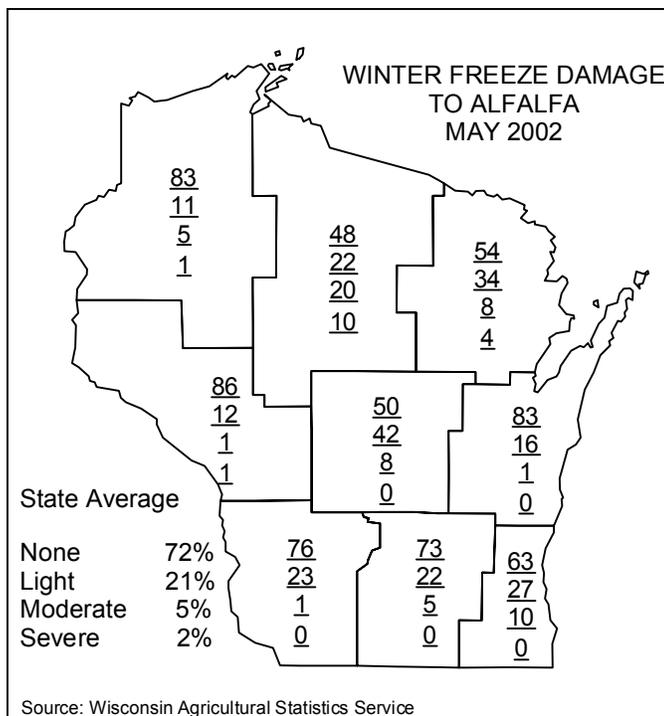
HAY

Alfalfa fields around Wisconsin appeared to come out of dormancy in April and did not show much winterkill damage. Warmer temperatures with adequate topsoil moisture gave alfalfa a quick start for April, but a return of cool temperatures eventually slowed growth. Continued cool weather through May slowed growth, and late-month frosts injured some fields. Harvest slowly began in late May as farmers continued planting corn and soybeans. Yields of first crop hay in the south were lighter than normal, but quality was described as good. Northern Wisconsin began first crop harvest with many short, thin stands. Rains followed for most of June, delaying opportunities to harvest first crop. Potato leafhoppers were reported in fields around the state. Late-cut stands also were subject to leaf and stem diseases, with subsequent leaf loss. Fields that were harvested showed good regrowth of second crop. July began with hot, dry conditions, allowing first crop to be finished, and second crop harvest to begin in the south. The quality of second crop was described as good, with lower quantities. July continued to be a dry month, aiding second crop harvest, but lowering yields. Lack of moisture until late in the month caused third crop growth to be very light. August brought welcome rains across the state. Quality of third crop was described as good, with quantity limited. Rain and warm temperatures in September increased growth of third and fourth crop hay. Quality and quantity of the crop in September increased, but harvest was made difficult, due to wet conditions. The month of October brought more wet conditions that helped late alfalfa growth, but made harvest difficult. Many farmers waited for the first hard frost to harvest the last crop. Some producers in southern Wisconsin were able to take advantage of the increased growth during the long fall and take a bonus fifth crop of hay. Hay and roughage supplies for October were ranked as 5 percent short, 84 percent adequate, and 11 percent surplus.

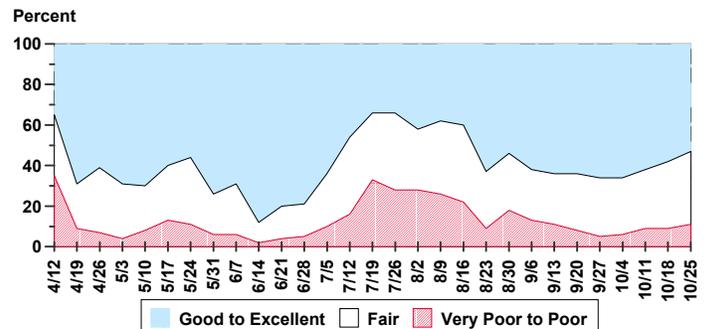


PASTURES

Pastures started to green up in April. The cool spring slowed growth, and conditions were rated at 69 percent good to excellent in late April. Continued cool weather across the state caused pasture conditions to drop in May. June brought warmer weather and conditions improved. The dry weather in the south during July caused stress to pastures. Rains returned in most areas of the state in late summer, and by late August, pastures were rated 82 percent fair to good. Fall conditions were wet enough to keep pastures green and growing, extending the pasture season for many cow/calf producers into late October. Pasture conditions for late October were rated 85 percent fair to good.



**Pasture Conditions
2002 Wisconsin State Average**



VEGETABLES

The third week of April arrived with temperatures spiking to 90 degrees. This caused a flurry of activity for potato growers in the Central Sands. Early pea planting also began in earnest. Cooler weather in May slowed progress, but early sweet corn planting began. Most potatoes were in the ground by mid-May, although they did not emerge in many areas until June, due to the cooler temperatures. Warmer weather in June helped sweet corn planting, and early pea blooming. Late June saw potato plants beginning to bloom. The potato crop looked good, but heavy rains caused localized flooding and fertilizer leaching. Some producers reported late potato blight appearing. July brought the pea, snap bean, and cucumber harvest. Sweet corn began tasseling in early-planted fields. The potato crop was set back by June's heavy rains. Early potato harvest began in mid-August. Commercial harvest of sweet corn was well under way in September. Red beets were harvested, with good quality. Potato harvest was mostly completed by mid-October, but freezing temperatures caused some acres to be passed.

FRUIT

Fruit trees experienced extreme variations during budding and blooming, with warm mid-April temperatures and then cold temperatures through May. Door County had frost in late May, causing blossom damage in cherry and apple trees. Cranberry beds had to be watched for freezing temperatures at night. Strawberry harvest started by the third week of June. Berries were reported to be smaller than normal this season. Cranberries were blooming and in fair to good condition. Late July saw the beginning of the cherry harvest. Raspberries were in good condition for the season. By early September, apple harvest was progressing, with variable yield projections. In late September, the cranberry harvest began, with fair to good quality and quantity reported. Poor cranberry color was reported in some areas.

MAPLE SYRUP

Maple syrup season began in mid-March, with favorable conditions throughout most of Wisconsin. Early April temperatures were below normal and quickly changed 5 to 15 degrees above normal for over a week. This period ended with a return to below normal temperatures. Trees began to bud in the later part of April, due to the warm temperatures. The season was reported as slightly shorter than normal. Extreme northern Wisconsin had a short, but good, maple syrup season. Reports were variable as to quantity and quality of the flow, though sugar content was higher than last year.