

ILLINOIS WEATHER & CROPS



**ILLINOIS
AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS SERVICE**

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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CROPS

Some signs of spring are popping up as farmers prepare for the 1996 crop season. Farmers have started to plant oats and are preparing to plant peas and potatoes. As of March 17, one percent of the oats crop had been planted. This compares to five percent last year and eight percent for the five-year average.

The condition of the winter wheat crop continues to deteriorate as erratic temperature changes caused freezing and thawing of the crop. As of March 15, winter wheat condition was rated as 13 percent good, 45 percent fair, 32 percent poor and ten percent very poor.

Precipitation remains slightly behind normal for this time of year. Topsoil and especially the sub-soil moisture is in need of replenishing. As of March 15, topsoil moisture was rated as two percent surplus, 57 percent adequate, 37 percent short and four percent very short.

Cattle farmers are in the calving season, with some areas of the state reporting excellent conditions for their livestock. Other livestock farmers are reporting muddy feedlots, having to feed more hay and reporting stress to the livestock due to weather conditions. Tight supplies of quality hay are being noted. Farm activities included spreading dry fertilizer on fields, applying nitrogen to wheat fields, preparing planters, hauling grain, hauling manure, fence row cleaning and brush removal.

ILLINOIS DISTRICT SUMMARY

: Topsoil Moisture Percent				
District	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus

: As of March 15				
Northwest	-	15	85	-
Northeast	-	15	85	-
West	5	35	60	-
Central	10	55	35	-
East	-	55	40	5
W Southwest	-	45	50	5
E Southeast	10	45	45	-
Southwest	5	55	35	5
Southeast	-	30	65	5

State	4	37	57	2

FEBRUARY WEATHER SUMMARY

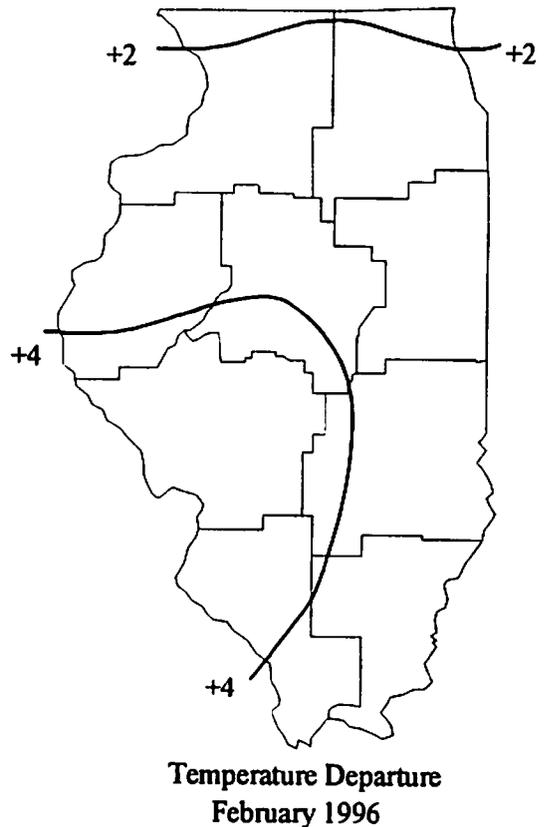
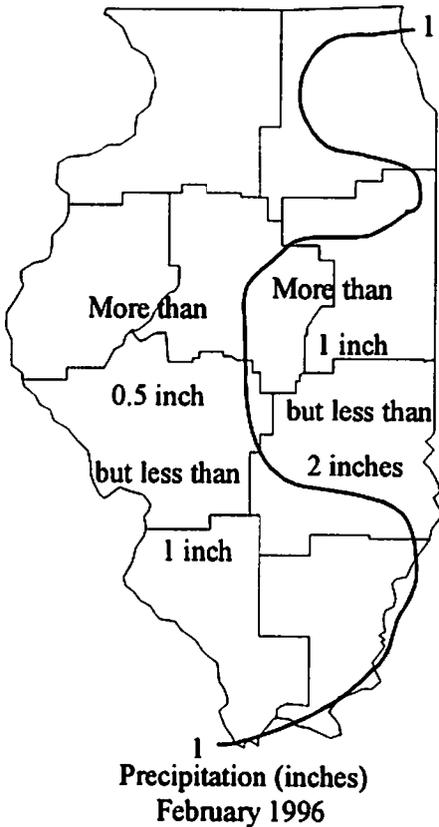
Temperatures were 3° to 5°F warmer than the 1961-1990 mean. Although the first and last few days of the month were dramatically below average, the remainder was above average, with less than average precipitation, most of which fell as rain as opposed to snow. Precipitation in the northern half of the state averaged about 60 percent of average, whereas that in the south varied from 35 percent to 65 percent of average.

PRELIMINARY DISTRICT PRECIPITATION AVGS. AND DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL IN INCHES

	NW	NE	W	C	E	WSW	ESE	SW	SE	STATE
February	0.63	0.78	0.88	0.85	0.87	1.15	0.87	0.84	1.07	0.88
Departure	-0.54	-0.52	-0.48	-0.64	-0.66	-0.61	-1.21	-1.66	-1.77	-0.86

PRELIMINARY DISTRICT TEMPERATURE AVGS. AND DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL IN DEGREES

	NW	NE	W	C	E	WSW	ESE	SW	SE	STATE
February	24.5	25.5	29.6	29.7	29.3	33.0	33.4	36.9	36.5	30.7
Departure	-0.3	-0.1	0.8	1.7	1.4	2.0	1.6	2.0	1.4	1.1



MARCH 1-15 WEATHER SUMMARY

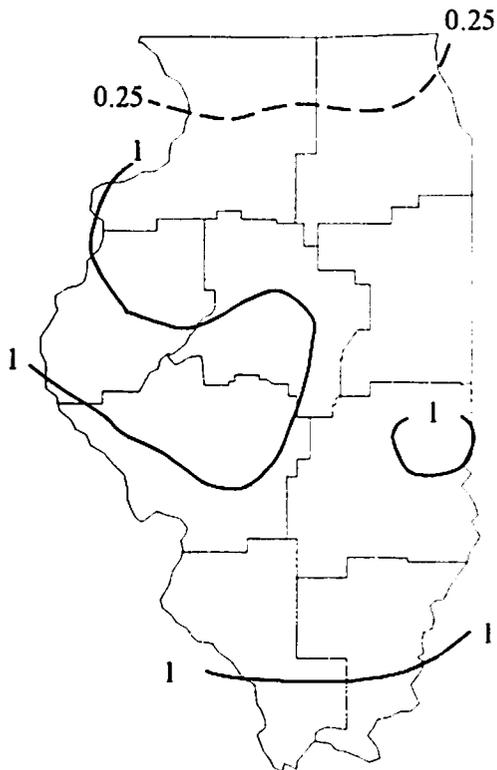
Precipitation during the first half of March was somewhat greater than that during February, averaging 57 percent of the long-term average for the state. Temperatures, on the other hand, were decidedly different than those of February, averaging 7° to 9°F colder than average across the state.

PRELIMINARY DISTRICT PRECIPITATION AVGS. AND DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL IN INCHES

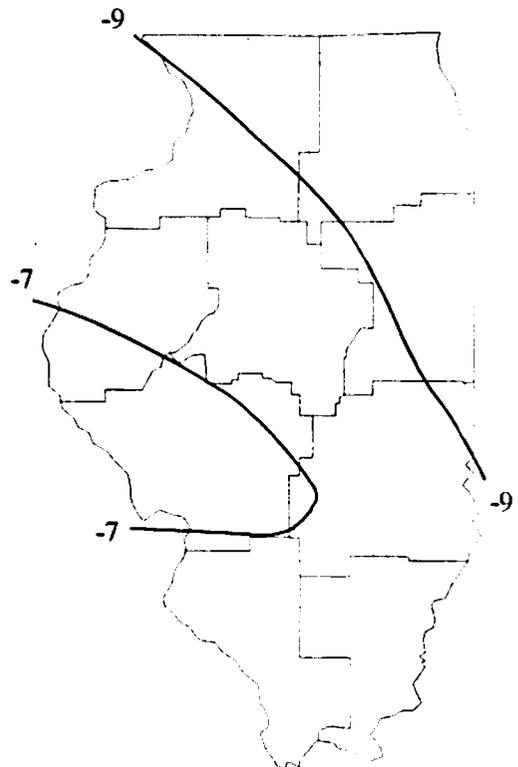
	NW	NE	W	C	E	WSW	ESE	SW	SE	STATE
March 1-15	0.47	0.49	1.06	0.88	0.81	1.03	0.47	1.14	1.44	0.83
Departure	-0.71	-0.64	-0.34	-0.48	-0.45	-0.40	-1.20	-0.63	-0.51	-0.61

PRELIMINARY DISTRICT TEMPERATURE AVGS. AND DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL IN DEGREES

	NW	NE	W	C	E	WSW	ESE	SW	SE	STATE
March 1-15	24.5	25.3	29.1	29.0	28.5	32.5	32.5	36.2	35.8	30.1
Departure	-9.2	-8.9	-8.4	-8.1	-8.5	-7.3	-8.1	-7.1	-8.0	-8.2



Precipitation (inches)
March 1-15, 1996



Temperature Departure
March 1-15, 1996

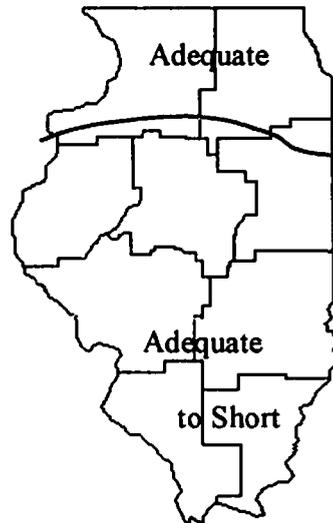
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Topsoil Moisture Supply
March 15, 1996

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