

Iowa Crops & Weather



USDA – National Agricultural Statistical Service
Iowa Field Office

210 Walnut, Room 833 • Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2195
515-284-4340 • 1-800-772-0825 • FAX 515-284-4342 • nass-ia@nass.usda.gov
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FARMERS COPE WITH WINTRY WEATHER

Snow and wind kept farmers busy caring for livestock during January and led to higher cattle and calf losses than a year ago. Grain movement was down from last January as drifting snow made many roads in the northern two-thirds impassable or dangerous for several days. Plowing snow along driveways and around lots and grain bins has been time-consuming and expensive. Use of corn stubble for grazing livestock was limited for most of the month due to snow cover.

The average depth of snow cover for the month of January was 9 inches, more than double last year's 4 inch average snow cover. Frost penetration averaged 19 inches, nearly 50 percent deeper than last year's 13 inches. Soil moisture availability rated 3 percent short, 83 percent adequate, and 14 percent surplus. Grain movement for the State was 33 percent none, 43 percent light, 21 percent moderate, and 3 percent heavy.

Availability of hay and roughage supplies was rated 11 percent short, 80 percent adequate, and 9 percent surplus. Reporters rated the quality of hay and roughage supplies at 10 percent poor, 50 percent fair, and 40 percent good. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing rated 46 percent none, 28 percent limited, 20 percent moderate, and 6 percent extensive.

Hog and pig losses in January were 7 percent below average, 86 percent average, and 7 percent above average. Cattle and calf losses were 9 percent below average, 83 percent average, and 8 percent above average.

IOWA PRELIMINARY WEATHER SUMMARY January 2009

Provided by State Climatologist Harry Hillaker

General Summary. Iowa temperatures averaged 14.2 degrees or 3.6 degrees below normal while precipitation totaled 0.70 inches or 0.25 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 34th coldest and 42nd driest January among 137 years of records. This was the coldest January since 1994 and coldest month since December 2000.

Temperatures. There were numerous wide swings in temperature during January but the most memorable weather definitely will be the very low temperatures and wind chills at mid-month. Wind chill readings dipped to minus 40 degrees or lower on the 13th, 15th and 17th with Cedar Rapids recording a -52 degrees wind chill at 8 a.m. on the 15th. This was Iowa's lowest wind chill recorded since February 1, 1996. Actual temperatures bottomed out at -40 degrees at Coggon on the morning of the 16th. This was only the ninth date in the past 120 years with an official low of -40 degrees or lower in Iowa and was the lowest reading recorded since Elkader tied the all-time state record low of -47 degrees on February 3, 1996. Maquoketa recorded a daytime 'high' temperature of only -15 degrees on the 15th. All-time record lows were set or tied at several locations on January 16 including:

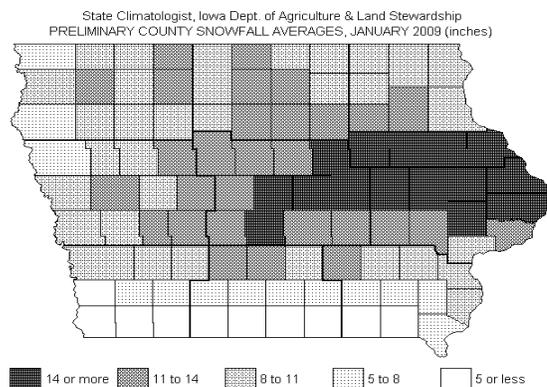
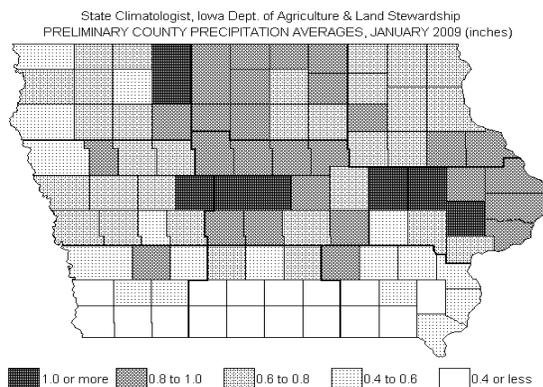
Temp.	Location	Old Record	Period of Record
-38°	Belle Plaine	-35 degrees, Feb. 3, 1996	116 years
-37°	Maquoketa	-34 degrees, Feb. 3, 1996	101 years
-34°	Waterloo	-34 degrees, Mar. 1, 1962	114 years
-32°	Washington	-29 degrees, Feb. 13, 1905	116 years

Although cold was the big story for the month temperatures occasionally rose well above normal over portions of southern and far western Iowa where snow cover was not as frequent or extensive. Leon recorded the state's highest temperatures with a high of 61 degrees on the 22nd and 64 degrees on the 31st.

Heating Degree Days. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree days, averaged 4 percent greater than last January and 7 percent greater than normal. Thus far this heating season, degree day totals are running 7 percent greater than last season at this time and 3 percent greater than normal.

Precipitation. Most of the month's precipitation came from a series of four storms from the 9th through the 14th and was concentrated over the northeastern three-fourths of the state. The largest of these events were on the 9th-10th when 3 to 7 inches of snow fell from northwest into east central Iowa and the 13th-14th with 2 to 8 inches over the same areas. However, there was also a period of freezing rain over the northeastern one-half of Iowa on the 3rd that brought a widespread glaze of about one-tenth of an inch of ice. Very little precipitation fell across far southern and southwest Iowa during January. Preliminary monthly snowfall totals vary from only 2.2 inches at Bedford up to 19.8 inches at Anamosa. There was a statewide average of 10.6 inches of snowfall. This is 2.4 inches more snow than usual and ranks this as the 22nd snowiest January among 122 years of records. Iowa's season-to-date snowfall average stood at 28.9 inches at the end of January, or 9.5 inches above normal. This is the fifth highest season-to-date total on record. Only 1978-79 (35.7"), 2000-01 (35.0), 1909-10 (34.0) and 1897-98 (29.3) have seen more snow up to this point in the winter.

Outlook. Overall this winter has been quite similar to last winter but has averaged just a little colder and snowier than one year ago. However, this winter has featured much more changeable weather conditions, with colder cold outbreaks and warmer warm spells. La Niña conditions prevailed both winters. Every La Niña event is different but the typical scenario is for Iowa to see a colder and wetter than normal February, a drier than normal March and a wetter than normal April. However, cooler than normal weather conditions would be only slightly favored in March and April based on previous La Niña experience. In the short term the National Weather Service is forecasting a notable warmup beginning on February 5 and continuing for several days. However, a return to stormy conditions is expected about the 8th. Much colder conditions may return about mid-month, thus the changeable weather we have been seeing looks to continue into February.



Snow Cover and Frost Penetration for the Month of January

Item	Districts									State	Last Month	Last Year
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE			
Snow cover	11	14	17	13	11	7	2	2	6	9	4	4
Frost penetration	22	21	20	21	20	17	16	16	16	19	14	13

**January Weather Summary For Iowa Agricultural Statistics Service
Prepared by AWIS, Inc.**

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				PRECIPITATION			HDD TOT	HDD DFN	DAYS OF 32 COLD	DAYS OF 28 COLD
	HI	LO	AVG	DFN	TOTAL	DFN	DAYS				
North West District											
Estherville	33	-24	12	-2	0.03	-0.68	1	1,654	30	31	31
Sioux Center	46	-28	15	-2	0.89	0.26	6	1,559	26	31	31
Spencer	34	-26	12	-2	0.06	-0.46	1	1,626	40	31	31
Spirit Lake	43	-24	12	-1	0.18	-0.38	3	1,653	261	31	31
North Central District											
Britt	32	-25	8	-7	0.62	-0.29	7	1,759	181	31	31
Humboldt	33	-27	10	-7	0.84	0.11	5	1,702	175	31	31
Mason City	30	-31	10	-4	0.34	-0.55	6	1,706	99	31	31
Osage	29	-27	7	-8	0.92	0.05	6	1,802	278	31	31
North East District											
Decorah	40	-34	9	-7	0.57	-0.17	9	1,734	190	31	31
Dubuque	33	-30	11	-5	0.78	-0.48	7	1,663	138	31	31
Elkader	37	-39	6	-11	0.87	-0.09	8	1,820	478	31	31
Fayette	30	-29	7	-9	0.92	-0.02	7	1,800	250	31	31
Waterloo	32	-34	11	-4	0.57	-0.23	7	1,681	117	31	31
West Central District											
Carroll	42	-23	13	-4	0.83	0.06	6	1,595	102	31	31
Castana	45	-21	16	-4	0.43	-0.12	6	1,523	-35	31	31
Guthrie Center	43	-30	14	-4	1.14	0.30	5	1,570	110	31	31
Harlan	45	-22	15	-5	0.78	0.11	9	1,532	18	31	31
Jefferson	36	-25	12	-5	1.10	0.33	11	1,627	134	31	31
Logan	49	-24	16	-3	0.39	-0.39	6	1,496	53	31	31
Rockwell City	37	-25	11	-7	0.81	0.16	6	1,661	184	31	31
Sac City	36	-31	12	-5	0.84	0.16	5	1,648	118	31	31
Sioux City	44	-19	18	2	0.37	-0.18	5	1,436	-32	31	31
Central District											
Boone	43	-30	11	-6	1.56	0.65	10	1,662	163	31	31
Des Moines	47	-19	19	-1	0.61	-0.35	9	1,421	7	31	30
Grundy Center	32	-31	9	-7	0.81	-0.05	6	1,735	177	31	31
Marshalltown	34	-28	13	-5	0.06	-0.77	3	1,615	124	31	31
Newton	40	-24	12	-8	0.95	0.11	6	1,645	197	31	31
Perry	40	-26	13	-5	1.02	0.32	5	1,604	124	31	30
Toledo	36	-27	10	-7	0.59	-0.26	7	1,685	177	31	31
East Central District											
Cedar Rapids	36	-27	12	-7	0.30	-0.71	9	1,649	180	31	31
Davenport	42	-25	14	-7	0.47	-0.60	10	1,562	170	31	30
Iowa City	42	-25	15	-6	0.37	-0.63	9	1,536	160	31	31
Lowden	39	-37	9	-8	1.13	-0.06	10	1,716	250	31	31
Maquoketa	32	-37	9	-9	0.96	-0.15	9	1,742	252	31	31
Muscatine	45	-26	15	-7	0.87	-0.38	9	1,544	-14	31	31
South West District											
Atlantic	54	-25	17	-2	0.74	0.02	8	1,474	19	31	31
Clarinda	56	-14	19	-2	0.10	-0.78	4	1,431	36	31	31
Glenwood	51	-15	19	-2	0.17	-0.57	5	1,428	53	31	31
Red Oak	53	-16	19	-4	0.45	-0.35	6	1,423	73	31	31
Sidney	56	-12	21	0	0.18	-0.51	3	1,358	-1	31	31
South Central District											
Allerton	58	-15	18	-3	0.11	-0.89	2	1,447	-218	31	31
Beaconsfield	55	-17	17	-3	0.30	-0.40	3	1,484	83	31	31
Chariton	53	-20	18	-2	0.43	-0.52	4	1,458	37	31	30
Indianola	48	-22	15	-5	0.52	-0.44	6	1,538	131	31	31
Leon	61	-15	19	-2	0.16	-0.81	3	1,426	33	31	31
South East District											
Bloomfield	58	-15	18	-5	0.18	-0.94	4	1,452	138	31	31
Burlington	49	-21	20	-3	0.06	-1.18	1	1,394	53	31	30
Ottumwa	54	-20	18	-3	0.11	-0.87	7	1,452	82	31	30
Washington	48	-32	13	-9	0.53	-0.56	7	1,594	80	31	31

Precipitation (rain, melted snow or ice) in inches. Precipitation Days = Days with precipitation of 0.01 inch or more. Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit. Copyright 2009: AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

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