



Iowa Crops & Weather

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MILD MARCH

As snow melted away, rivers around the state reached critical flood stages during the month of March. However, warm, dry conditions eased flooding concerns and even allowed for some spring field work to begin during the last week of March. Farmers have also harvested some of the corn left in the fields from last year's crop. After experiencing snow and cold temperatures over most of the winter, March was exactly what many farmers needed. However, livestock producers continue to struggle with mud as spring calving gets underway.

Soil moisture availability rated 0 percent very short, 3 percent short, 54 percent adequate, and 43 percent surplus. Grain movement for the state rated 22 percent none, 32 percent light, 38 percent moderate, and 8 percent heavy.

Availability of hay and roughage supplies rated 28 percent short, 69 percent adequate, and 3 percent surplus. Quality of hay and roughage supplies rated 17 percent poor, 51 percent fair, and 32 percent good. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing rated 54 percent none, 38 percent light, 7 percent moderate, and 1 percent heavy.

Hog and pig losses in March rated 11 percent light, 87 percent average, and 2 percent heavy. Cattle and calf losses rated 11 percent light, 81 percent average, and 8 percent heavy.

IOWA PRELIMINARY WEATHER SUMMARY

Provided by Harry Hillaker, State Climatologist

Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship

General Summary. Temperatures averaged 39.7 degrees or 3.4 degrees above normal while precipitation totaled 1.85 inches or 0.36 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 27th warmest and 64th wettest March among 137 years of state records.

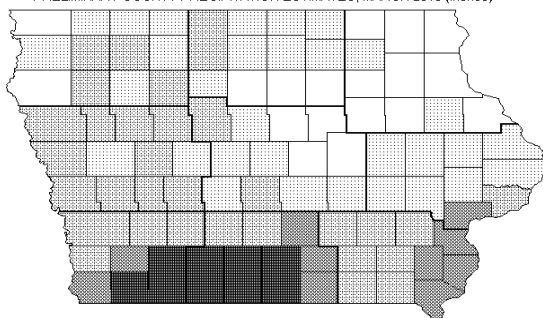
Temperatures. The cold weather pattern dominating most of Iowa's winter continued into the first five days of March. Morning lows dipped to -2 degrees at Atlantic on the 2nd, -3 degrees at Spencer on the 3rd and 0 degrees at Dakota City on the 4th. However, much warmer weather characterized most of the remainder of the month with below normal temperatures restricted to only 4 of the last 26 days of March. The temperature reached 59 degrees at Shenandoah on the 8th marking the first time readings climbed into the 50's anywhere in Iowa since December 17. At 80 consecutive days, this was the fourth longest streak of sub-50 degrees weather on record. Other temperature milestones were reached on the 10th (first 60 degrees); the 29th (first 70 degrees) and the 30th (first 80 degrees). Denison reported the highest temperature of the month with an 84 degrees reading on the 30th. This was the first time temperatures reached 80 degrees anywhere in Iowa since September 28.

Heating Degrees Days. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degrees day totals, averaged 13 percent less than normal and 10 percent less than last year. Thus far this heating season (since July 1, 2009) degrees day totals are running 3 percent more than normal and 1 percent more than last year at this time.

Precipitation. Iowa enjoyed a welcome period of dry weather from February 21 through March 5. Unfortunately, temperatures remained too low to allow substantial melting of the considerable Iowa snowpack during this dry spell. Rain, mostly in the light to moderate category, was frequent and widespread from the 6th through the 13th. The rain was accompanied by much warmer temperatures and resulted in rapid snowmelt. Snow cover, which ranged from 1 to 7 inches along the Missouri border to as much as 30 inches in northwest Iowa at the beginning of the month, was gone by March 17 (with the exception of some drifts). The combination of snow melt and rainfall pushed nearly all Iowa rivers above flood stage with major flooding reported at some northern Iowa locations. Despite much drier weather during the second one-half of March, flooding continued at month's end along the Des Moines River, the Mississippi River below Muscatine and over parts of northwest Iowa. Rainfall amounts for the month were generally above normal over southern Iowa and well below normal over the northeast. Rain totals varied from 0.58 inches at Waukon to 4.09 inches at Beaconsfield. There was only one snow event of consequence during the month. Snow fell over all but far northern Iowa on the 19th-20th with greatest amounts in the south where 6 or more inches fell at Lamoni, Leon, Corning and Des Moines. The statewide average snowfall was 2.0 inches for the month, or 2.8 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 23rd lowest March total among 123 years of record. However, the meager March snowfall was enough to push the statewide average seasonal snowfall total to 47.7 inches or seventh highest of record (greatest total since 1978-1979 winter).

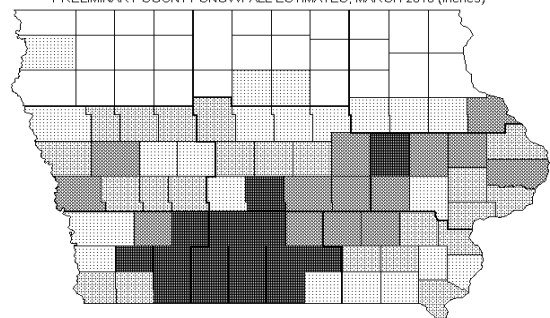
Outlook. The National Weather Service outlook for April favors warmer and wetter than normal conditions for Iowa. This is based almost entirely upon the forecasted weather pattern for the first week or two of the month. Longer range projections slightly favor cooler than normal weather owing to abundant soil moisture over most of the central U.S.

State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
PRELIMINARY COUNTY PRECIPITATION ESTIMATES, MARCH 2010 (inches)



3.0 or more 2.4 to 3.0 1.8 to 2.4 1.2 to 1.8 1.2 or less

State Climatologist, Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
PRELIMINARY COUNTY SNOWFALL ESTIMATES, MARCH 2010 (inches)



4 or more 3 to 4 2 to 3 1 to 2 1 or less

March 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	56	4	33	5	1.85	0.16	7	912	-81	18	11
Sioux Center	59	2	36	3	1.69	-0.01	10	816	-32	20	12
Spencer	60	-3	33	2	0.78	-0.96	7	908	-23	16	12
Spirit Lake	55	7	34	6	0.70	-0.85	4	862	-95	23	11
North Central District											
Britt	58	2	32	0	1.41	-0.27	4	943	-37	26	14
Humboldt	61	4	34	1	1.65	-0.12	9	867	-38	17	13
Mason City	60	3	34	4	1.48	-0.36	7	893	-52	15	13
Osage	60	8	35	3	1.39	-0.53	6	871	-105	21	14
North East District											
Decorah	64	8	39	7	0.79	-0.83	5	730	-181	19	11
Dubuque	62	16	40	7	1.00	-1.67	8	727	-173	14	8
Elkader	63	7	36	3	0.99	-0.97	9	823	-70	19	17
Fayette	63	12	37	5	1.00	-0.93	5	797	-171	16	14
Waterloo	62	4	37	4	0.91	-1.21	8	798	-100	15	12
West Central District											
Carroll	62	8	34	0	1.84	-0.21	9	894	9	23	14
Castana	64	10	35	-1	2.29	0.32	12	850	58	23	12
Guthrie Center	63	2	35	-1	1.94	-0.31	7	868	26	19	12
Harlan	64	8	35	-2	2.08	0.15	9	849	-9	19	13
Jefferson	63	2	34	0	1.54	-0.51	6	894	33	19	13
Logan	65	6	36	0	2.10	0.22	8	847	29	18	13
Rockwell City	63	5	35	1	2.09	0.36	7	867	-41	16	13
Sac City	62	4	33	0	2.30	0.16	6	925	9	24	15
Sioux City	66	9	37	3	1.38	-0.44	11	802	-39	12	10
Central District											
Boone	62	8	36	2	2.18	0.05	8	841	-7	18	13
Des Moines	64	14	40	4	1.94	-0.19	11	716	-69	11	5
Grundy Center	62	2	35	4	0.67	-1.38	5	853	-61	18	14
Marshalltown	61	4	37	4	0.74	-1.47	7	799	-82	13	11
Newton	62	9	37	1	1.20	-0.85	8	817	0	16	13
Perry	62	4	35	2	0.75	-1.09	9	870	7	20	13
Toledo	61	8	36	3	0.51	-1.57	5	834	-46	19	14
East Central District											
Cedar Rapids	64	10	39	5	1.65	-0.49	10	743	-97	14	9
Davenport	66	19	41	6	1.95	-0.11	9	680	-107	14	9
Iowa City	66	16	42	5	1.66	-0.50	10	672	-79	11	7
Lowden	65	15	39	5	2.02	-0.31	9	759	-110	18	13
Maquoketa	62	13	38	5	1.33	-0.77	10	775	-108	19	13
Muscatine	66	15	41	4	2.17	-0.32	11	697	-59	13	9
South West District											
Atlantic	63	1	35	0	1.83	-0.28	11	855	35	17	14
Clarinda	61	1	36	0	3.40	1.15	9	828	20	16	12
Glenwood	64	10	37	0	2.35	0.46	11	806	34	17	11
Red Oak	63	6	37	-2	2.32	0.25	11	802	1	15	10
Sidney	63	16	38	0	2.28	0.15	12	788	30	15	10
South Central District											
Allerton	64	9	38	2	2.97	0.94	15	740	-62	15	11
Beaconsfield	61	9	37	2	4.09	2.04	12	793	-16	14	10
Chariton	63	4	36	-1	3.40	1.28	13	820	-1	19	15
Indianola	62	6	36	-1	2.43	0.53	11	801	-17	16	12
Leon	63	5	38	1	3.14	1.04	12	789	-7	16	15
South East District											
Bloomfield	62	10	39	0	2.21	-0.16	9	745	-27	14	8
Burlington	66	17	43	5	2.99	0.36	9	637	-97	8	7
Ottumwa	65	12	39	2	1.38	-0.72	8	741	-9	12	9
Washington	67	8	39	1	3.27	1.12	11	746	-42	16	11

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 2010: AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.