Wet conditions continued to slow field activities throughout much of Iowa during the week ending June 21, 2015, according to the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. Statewide there were 3.5 days suitable for fieldwork. Activities for the week included cutting hay, chemical application, and nitrogen side dressing. Excessive moisture is preventing some farmers from controlling weeds and applying nitrogen. Wet fields in southwest and south central Iowa continued to prevent farmers from finishing planting.

Topsoil moisture levels rated to 0 percent very short, 2 percent short, 71 percent adequate and 27 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture levels rated 0 percent very short, 3 percent short, 76 percent adequate and 21 percent surplus. South central Iowa had the highest topsoil moisture level with 100 percent rated adequate to surplus. North central and south central Iowa rated the highest in subsoil moisture levels at 99 percent rated adequate to surplus.

Eighty-three percent of the corn crop was rated good to excellent. Soybean planting reached 95 percent complete, 19 days behind 2014, and 4 days behind the 5-year average. Southwest and south central Iowa have been able to plant less than 80 percent of their expected soybean acreage due to continued saturated soil conditions. Soybean emergence reached 90 percent, slightly behind normal. Soybean condition rated 80 percent rated good to excellent this week. Oats headed reached 75 percent this week, 3 days ahead of last year, and slightly ahead of the average. Oat condition increased to 83 percent good to excellent.

The first cutting of alfalfa hay reached 77 percent complete this week. The second cutting of alfalfa has begun in many areas. Hay conditions rated 76 percent good to excellent. Pasture condition rated 82 percent good to excellent. Livestock conditions were described as good. Muddy cattle lots are still reported throughout Iowa.
The past reporting week brought temperatures that were mostly slightly below normal until the weekend when heat and humidity returned. Thursday (18th) was the most pleasant day with high temperatures in the seventies and relatively low humidity. Very warm and humid weather prevailed over southern Iowa on Saturday (20th) with the temperature reaching 97 degrees at Lamoni. Overnight lows dipped as low as 50 degrees at Mapleton on Tuesday (16th) morning and at Sheldon and Spencer on Friday (19th) morning. Temperatures for the week as a whole averaged 0.6 degrees below normal although much of southwest and south central Iowa averaged a little warmer than normal. The week’s heaviest rain fell at the beginning of the period from Sunday (14th) afternoon into Monday (15th) afternoon with thunderstorms bringing rain statewide with greatest amounts falling across southern Iowa. Light rain fell across the eastern one-third of Iowa on Wednesday (17th). Thunderstorms brought locally heavy rain across parts of central and eastern Iowa on Saturday (20th). Large hail and high winds were reported from 16 east, central and southeast counties with the Saturday storms. Additional thunderstorms developed late Sunday and Sunday night (21st) but occurred too late to be reflected in this week’s crop conditions. Weekly rain totals varied from only 0.04 inches at Battle Creek (Ida County) to 4.45 inches at Bellevue. The statewide average precipitation was 1.40 inches while normal for the week is 1.17 inches.