Iowa experienced highly variable weather conditions ranging from almost no precipitation to heavy rain and isolated hail during the week ending June 26, 2016, according to the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. Statewide there were 5.6 days suitable for fieldwork. Activities for the week included cutting hay, herbicide and fungicide applications, and some hauling of grain. Heat and lack of moisture stressed some crops, causing corn leaves to curl.

Topsoil moisture levels declined to 8 percent very short, 21 percent short, 67 percent adequate and 4 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture levels also fell to 3 percent very short, 17 percent short, 76 percent adequate and 4 percent surplus. South central and southeast Iowa reported the lowest topsoil moisture levels with approximately two-thirds of topsoil moisture rated very short or short.

There were scattered reports of corn reaching the silking stage this week. Seventy-nine percent of the corn crop was rated in good to excellent condition. Soybeans blooming reached 5 percent, equal to both last year and the five-year average. Soybean condition rated 77 percent good to excellent. Oats headed reached 90 percent this week, 2 days ahead of last year, and 5 days ahead of normal. Oats coloring reached 22 percent, 4 days ahead of the average. Oat condition rated 81 percent good to excellent.

The second cutting of alfalfa hay reached 24 percent complete, almost one week ahead of average. Hay conditions rated 75 percent good to excellent this week. Pasture condition rated 68 percent good to excellent. Livestock were reported as experiencing some stress as a result of heat and insects.
It was another hotter than normal week across Iowa with highly variable precipitation. Daytime temperatures reached into the nineties somewhere in the state on every day except Thursday (23rd). Temperature extremes varied from a Tuesday (21st) morning low of 49 degrees at Elkader to a Wednesday (22nd) afternoon high of 97 degrees at Lamoni. Temperatures for the week as a whole averaged from about two degrees above normal northeast to five degrees above normal southwest with a statewide average of 3.2 degrees higher than usual. Showers and thunderstorms were scattered over the southern one-third of the state on Monday (20th) with some localized heavy rain in far southwest Iowa where Sidney reported 3.55 inches. Rain fell across the northeast two-thirds of the state between Tuesday (21st) evening and Wednesday (22nd) morning with very heavy rain centered upon the Iowa City area with 5.65 inches measured at North Liberty. Thursday and Friday were dry statewide while there were a few isolated areas of light rain on Saturday from southwest into north central Iowa. Finally, showers and thunderstorms dampened much of southwest, central, northeast and east central Iowa on Saturday (25th) night. No rain fell during the past week over parts of west central Iowa, such as Storm Lake, Sac City, Rockwell City and Denison while on the other extreme North Liberty picked up 7.47 inches. The statewide average precipitation was 1.18 inches, exactly matching the normal for the week.

Temperature and Precipitation Maps, courtesy of the Midwestern Regional Climate Center, are available at: http://mrcc.isws.illinois.edu/CLIMATE/