Widespread storms delivering heavy rainfall interrupted planting activities and held Iowa farmers to 2.9 days suitable for fieldwork for the week ending May 6, 2018, according to the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Topsoil moisture levels rated 3 percent very short, 7 percent short, 71 percent adequate and 19 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture levels rated 5 percent very short, 11 percent short, 70 percent adequate and 14 percent surplus. Saturated soil conditions have caused delays in fieldwork and planting activities in the northern two-thirds of the State, while recent rains have failed to eliminate the dry soil conditions in the southern one-third of the State.

Iowa growers have planted 40 percent of the expected corn crop, 3 days behind the 5-year average. Two percent of the crop has emerged, 5 days behind both last year and the average. Soybean growers have 11 percent of the expected crop in the ground, 2 days ahead of last year but equal to the average. Seventy-seven percent of the expected oat crop has been planted, 9 days behind last year and 1 week behind average. Thirty-two percent of the crop has emerged, 11 days behind last year.

Recent rain and warmer temperatures have revitalized pasture conditions statewide. Pasture condition rated 40 percent good to excellent, an increase of 12 percentage points from the previous week. Cattle have been turned out for grazing in many areas.
IOWA PRELIMINARY WEATHER SUMMARY

Provided by Michael Timlin, Regional Climatologist
Midwestern Regional Climate Center

It was a warm and wet week across Iowa. All but the southeastern corner of the state had above normal rainfall, more than half the state had more than twice the normal amount, and parts of northeastern Iowa had more than four times normal totals. The statewide rainfall total of 1.85 inches was more than 200% of normal. Much of the rain fell from May 1st to 3rd when thunderstorms were abundant. Severe weather reports on those three days included a handful of high wind reports each day, a dozen or so large hail (1.00 to 1.75 inches in diameter) reports on the 1st and 2nd, and five tornadoes on the 3rd. The highest rainfall totals for the state were 6.46 inches for the week, and a daily total of 4.42 inches reported on the morning of the 4th, both at Waukon. Across the state, measurable rainfall during the week was reported on two days in the southeast to five days in the west. Temperatures averaged 5 to 10 degrees above normal, a welcome change on the heels of the coldest April on record. Freezing temperatures were reported on the 30th of April but then remained above 40 degrees for the rest of the week. The coldest temperature of the week was 25 degrees reported at Elkader on the 30th and the warmest was 87 degrees at Little Sioux on the afternoon of the 30th. Most stations across the state reached the 80s both early in the week (30th) and again late in the week (5th). The warmth during the week allowed soil temperatures to climb to the upper 50s to mid 60s by the 6th of May.

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