Dry conditions and warming temperatures meant farmers had 6.2 days suitable for fieldwork during the week ending June 6, 2021 according to the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service. In addition to planting, field activities included spraying post emergence herbicides, side dressing nitrogen, baling cover crops and harvesting hay.

Topsoil moisture levels rated 7% very short, 32% short, 59% adequate and 2% surplus. Subsoil moisture levels rated 12% very short, 34% short, 53% adequate and 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture conditions in northwest, west central, central and south central Iowa were rated over 50% short to very short.

Some producers in the upper two-thirds of the State re-planted corn and soybeans due to frost damage that occurred in late May. Corn emergence reached 96%, 9 days ahead of the 5-year average. Iowa’s corn condition rated 77% good to excellent. At 98%, nearly all of Iowa’s soybean crop has been planted, almost 2 weeks ahead of normal. Statewide, soybeans emerged reached 86%, 9 days ahead of the 5-year average. Soybean emergence in southeast Iowa is slightly behind with over one-quarter of the soybean crop yet to emerge. Soybean condition rated 73% good to excellent. Oats headed reached 37%, 4 days ahead of normal. Iowa’s oat condition rated 68% good to excellent.

Iowa farmers took advantage of the week’s dry weather and completed 41% of the first cutting of alfalfa hay during the week ending June 6 to reach 58% complete, 2 days ahead of normal. Hay condition rated 62% good to excellent. Pasture condition rated 53% good to excellent. Some stress due to high temperatures was reported.
The first week of meteorological summer brought warmer conditions across much of Iowa with a statewide average temperature of 69.9 degrees, 3.7 degrees above normal. Dryness also persisted with a southwest to east-central swath of the state reporting no measurable rainfall. Statewide precipitation deficits were well over an inch with smaller departures in the northwest.

Rain showers dissipated into the afternoon hours on Sunday (30th) as a weak disturbance pushed eastward through Iowa. Afternoon temperatures were in the upper 50s northwest to upper 60s southeast where sunny skies prevailed. Foggy conditions were reported in southern Iowa early on Monday (31st) as overnight lows dropped into the upper 40s and low 50s. Rainfall reports from the previous 24 hours were generally light and located across Iowa’s northwestern third; pockets approaching 0.50 inch were found along the Iowa-Nebraska border and in north-central Iowa with totals around or below 0.25 inch elsewhere. Daytimes highs on Memorial Day were near seasonal for some parts of Iowa, though southern Iowa observed low to mid 60s. Light showers formed in southeastern Iowa early on Tuesday (1st), along with a line of thundershowers later in the day in northern Iowa, which produced heavier totals in Chickasaw County. Under light southerly winds, temperatures reached into the upper 70s with partly cloudy skies. Overnight lows into Wednesday (2nd) remained in the mid 50s with light and variable winds. Conditions during much of the day were pleasant, with highs in the upper 70s and low 80s as a dry pattern set up across the state.

Dry, westerly winds and sunny skies helped push temperatures into the low 80s on Thursday (3rd) as high pressure built in over the region. Winds shifted to a southerly direction overnight into Friday (4th), with dew points rising in response to more atmospheric moisture streaming north. Under stable and warm conditions, temperatures reached into the mid 90s in northwestern Iowa while the upper 80s persisted in the east. Clear conditions continued into Saturday (5th) with morning lows in the mid to upper 60s, up to fourteen degrees above average. With a lack of overnight cooling, afternoon highs climbed into the 90s, producing the warmest day of the season thus far; the statewide average high was 91 degrees, 13 degrees warmer than normal. Starry skies and a light southerly wind continued into Sunday (6th) morning along with very warm temperatures. Decorah (Winnebake County) observed a morning low of 70 degrees, 14 degrees above normal, while the statewide average low was eight degrees above normal at 65 degrees.

Weekly precipitation totals ranged from no accumulation at many Iowa stations to 0.53 inch near New Hampton (Chickasaw County). The statewide weekly average precipitation was 0.06 inch while the normal is 1.17 inches. Several western Iowa stations observed the week’s high temperature of 97 degrees on the 4th and 5th, on average 18 degrees above normal. Chariton (Lucas County) reported the week’s low temperature of 34 degrees on the 31st, 19 degrees below normal.

Average Temperature (°F): Departure from 1991-2020 Normals
May 31, 2021 to June 06, 2021

Accumulated Precipitation (in)
May 31, 2021 to June 06, 2021

Temperature and Precipitation Maps, courtesy of the Midwestern Regional Climate Center, are available at: http://mrcc.isws.illinois.edu/CLIMATE/
Growing Degree Days can be found at https://mrcc.illinois.edu/U2U/gdd/