

WEATHER SUMMARY - 2000

A wild temperature ride and mixed precipitation dominated **January** 2000 weather. The weather for the month provided tornadoes in Owensboro causing loss of life and great personal damage (over 1,000 homes damaged) at the beginning of the month, several winter storms which provided the entire State with snowfall and snowcover for over a week and a half, record high temperatures at the beginning of the month and near record low temperatures during the second half of the month. Temperatures averaged 34 degrees across the State which was 2 degrees above normal, 6 degrees colder than December 1999 and 4 degrees colder than January 1999. Precipitation totaled 3.79 inches statewide which was 0.60 inches above normal.

Very mild temperatures spurred trees and outdoor plants to break dormancy during the second half of **February**. Enough rain fell to lift Kentucky's long-term (PDSI) drought category to the mild drought levels and the crop moisture index (CMI) to surplus soil moisture. Temperatures averaged 43 degrees across the State which was 7 degrees above normal, 10 degrees warmer than January and 1 degree warmer than February 1999. Precipitation totaled 4.77 inches statewide which was 1.04 inches above normal. Heavy rainfall occurred statewide on the 17th/18th with North-central sections suffering from flooding/flash flooding which was a near repeat of the March 1997 flooding at Falmouth and Cynthiana, Kentucky.

March was a mild month with several short periods of seasonal temperatures. Most weeks received below normal rainfall but as similar to both January and February at least one very significant rainfall occurred and for March it occurred during mid-month. Temperatures averaged 49 degrees across the State which was 3 degrees above normal and 7 degrees warmer than March 1999. Precipitation totaled 3.59 inches statewide which was -0.99 inches below normal. Snowfall was nearly non-existent.

April was a mild but wet month with above normal rainfall amounts and a new weather pattern emerging. Each of the weeks had at least one significant rainfall event in many parts of the State. Temperatures averaged 55 degrees across the State which was 1 degree below normal. Precipitation totaled 4.63 inches statewide which was 0.38 inches above normal. The month contained many days of little or no sunshine which did not help field activities or plant growth and development.

Very warm temperatures were the rule during the first half of **May** but shifted to seasonal during the second half of the month, averaging above normal for

the month. Dry conditions occurred for the first three weeks of May but severe storms provided hail, high winds and tornadoes during the final week, along with much needed rainfall. Temperatures averaged 67 degrees across the State which was 2 degrees above normal and 12 degrees warmer than the previous month. Rainfall totaled 4.70 inches statewide which was within 0.05 inches of normal.

The first half of **June** was dry and cool. A lengthy run of rainfall events from daily, scattered showers and thunderstorms started on June 15th and lasted until month's end which improved the moderate/severe hydrologic drought situation to mild/moderate across the Bluegrass state. Temperatures averaged 73 degrees across the State which was 1 degree above normal and 5 degrees warmer than the previous month. Rainfall totaled 4.38 inches statewide which was 0.53 inches above normal.

What some weather forecasters expected to be one of the driest and hottest **July's** turned out to be one of the coolest July's on record (13th to be exact) with above normal rainfall. Temperatures averaged 74.5 degrees across the State which was 1.6 degrees below normal. Rainfall totaled 4.68 inches statewide which was 0.18 inches above normal.

Wide variation of weather occurred across the Bluegrass State during **August**. While cooler, wetter conditions dominated Eastern Kentucky, Western Kentucky was very hot/dry and cancelled out monthly statewide temperature/rainfall departures to near zero. Temperatures averaged 75 degrees across the State which was near normal. Rainfall totaled 4.06 inches statewide which was 0.24 inches above normal.

By the end of **September** drought conditions continued to persist in the Western half of the State but had improved significantly in the Eastern half. Western Kentucky ended the month in Incipient hydrologic drought category; Central in Mild drought and Bluegrass and Eastern Kentucky areas had ended the drought and were in the Moist Spell category. Western Kentucky needed 2.16 inches of above normal rainfall to end the drought; Central needed 3.35 inches. Temperatures averaged 67 degrees across the State which was 1 degree below normal. Rainfall totaled 3.16 inches statewide which was 0.44 inches below normal, 88 percent of normal.

Usually Kentucky's driest month of the year, **October** will go into the record books as the 8th driest October since 1896. The very mild temperatures didn't keep Kentucky from having one of the earliest frosts since 1987. Temperatures averaged 59.4 degrees across the State which was 2.4 degrees above normal. Rainfall totaled 0.89 inches statewide which was 2.04 inches below normal.

November was the coldest November since 1991 and will go into the record books as the 32nd coldest for the past 106 years and the 41st driest since 1896. Both near-record high temperatures and near-record low's occurred during the month. Temperatures averaged 44.1 degrees across the State which was 2.7 degrees below normal. Precipitation totaled 3.14 inches statewide which was 0.88 inches below normal and 78 percent of normal rainfall.

December will go into the record books as the fourth coldest December for the State in the past 106 years. The coldest was in 1989 with an average temperature of 25.3 degrees. For several locations, it was the coldest December on record: Paducah, Louisville, Lexington and Jackson all reported record-breaking cold temperatures. Numerous Arctic cold fronts moved through the Ohio Valley providing snowcover and bitter cold temperatures for much of the month. Temperatures averaged 26.3 degrees across the State which was 10.2 degrees below normal. Precipitation totaled 4.50 inches statewide which was 1.05 inches above normal.

Condensed version of narrative provided by Tom Priddy, Kentucky Extension Agricultural Meteorologist, University of Kentucky Agricultural Weather Center. Additional Kentucky weather data are available on the internet at: <http://www.wagwx.ca.uky.edu/>

KENTUCKY CLIMATOLOGICAL DIVISIONS AND SELECTED WEATHER STATIONS

