



Crop Progress and Condition

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U.S. Dept. of Commerce - NOAA
Kentucky Department of Agriculture
Cooperative Extension Service

Released: March 27, 2017

Issue: 04-17

Agricultural News (March): For the month of March, the Commonwealth experienced mostly above normal temperatures and mixed rainfall amounts. Mid-March brought a return to unseasonably cold conditions in Kentucky. The coldest temperatures dipped into the middle teens to low 20s for much of the Bluegrass State. Freeze Warnings were issued multiple nights with winter wheat, plasticulture strawberries, peaches, and other fruit trees all in advanced growth stages for this time of year. For the week ending March 26, 2017, days suitable for field work was 4.4 out of seven. Topsoil moisture was rated as 1% very short, 8% short, 76% adequate and 15% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated as 1% very short, 11% short, 78% adequate and 11% surplus.

Wheat fields continue to be monitored for damage resulting from the mid-March freeze. Some areas appear to have experienced significant damage. Producers will be deciding how to proceed moving forward with their wheat crop this year. Winter wheat condition was reported as 5% very poor, 17% poor, 35% fair, 36% good, and 7% excellent.

A relatively mild winter has helped most producers to have adequate hay stocks on hand. Hay is still being fed where needed. Hay and roughage supplies were reported as 4% very short, 13% short, 71% adequate, and 12% surplus. At the end of February, 81% of supplies were rated as adequate to surplus, compared to 83% currently. Spring calving is going well. The condition of livestock were reported as 1% very poor, 4% poor, 19% fair, 62% good, and 14% excellent. Fertilization and spring seeding of pastures continued on many operations.

Alfalfa and peaches in some areas will be impacted by the mid-March freeze. Producers marketed their grain and tobacco crops and attended various commodity meetings across the state. Farmers were busy performing routine equipment maintenance in preparation for the upcoming planting season. Some producers have applied burndown applications in preparation for corn and soybean planting.

