Agricultural News: Kentucky experienced above normal temperatures and slightly below normal rainfall over the past week. Precipitation for the week totaled 1.07 inches, 0.06 inches below normal. Temperatures averaged 71 degrees for the week, 6 degrees above normal. Topsoil moisture was rated 2 percent very short, 12 percent short, 79 percent adequate, and 7 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 1 percent very short, 11 percent short, 81 percent adequate, and 7 percent surplus. Days suitable for fieldwork averaged 5.5 out of a possible seven.

Primary activities for this week included planting corn and soybeans, setting tobacco, and cutting hay. Farmers contended with unstable weather this past week as they forged ahead in the fields whenever possible. Despite some severe weather and rain, producers made strong progress. The rain was a positive in some instances as the ground was getting very hard. The heavy wind brought forth by a few storms caused farmers to halt spraying at times. Corn planting is on par with last year and the five year average as grain producers made up a lot of ground over the past two weeks. Fifty-four percent of the corn crop has now emerged. Soybean planting is slightly behind last year and ahead of the five year average at this time. Twenty-seven percent of the soybean crop has emerged. The recent rain should help emergence as the ground softens a bit. The amount of set tobacco showed a strong increase from the previous week and is ahead of both last year and the five year average. Tobacco transplant supplies are reported as 100 percent adequate.

Winter wheat condition has deteriorated slightly. Some areas of the state had a very hot, dry stretch that led to drought stress on the wheat crop during grain fill. Also, some freeze damage from earlier in the spring has now been identified. The wheat crop is 91 percent headed. Pastures remain in mostly good condition and have benefitted from rain as of late. A good deal of hay has been cut as weather has permitted. Although strawberry condition is reported as good overall, there were reports of hail damage to the crop from recent storms.
The above information is provided by Matthew Dixon, Senior Meteorologist, University of Kentucky Ag’l Weather Center (859) 218-4364.