

MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MONTANA FIELD OFFICE
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 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION MONTH OF DECEMBER 2017

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: The month of December was mostly cold for the state of Montana, though there were brief periods of above average temperatures between storm systems. High temperatures ranged from the high 30s to the high 60s. Low temperatures ranged from the teens to -43 degrees in Saco. Precipitation in the form of snowfall was present across most of the State but a few areas are still below normal. The highest recorded precipitation for the month was in Heron 5.46 inches of moisture. Topsoil moisture conditions were 67 percent adequate to surplus which is below last year's 88 percent. Subsoil moisture conditions are 46 percent adequate to surplus which is well below last year's 77 percent. So far, winter freeze and wind damage to winter wheat remains low but reporters note the extent of damage may be hard to gauge until the crop breaks dormancy in the spring, particularly in the northeastern portion of the state. Snow coverage for the state is rated 58 percent good to excellent compared with 59 percent at this time last year. Winter wheat condition is rated 40 percent good to excellent, compared with 58 percent last year. Pasture and range conditions improved from the last report with 12 percent rated good to excellent, but are still lagging compared to 45 percent at the same time last year. Livestock producers are providing supplemental feed at similar rates as the previous year at this time with 94 percent of cattle and 98 percent of sheep being fed.

Monthly reports will be released for January on Monday, January 29, 2018; for February on Monday, February 26, 2018; and for March on Monday, March 26, 2018.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
Cattle and calves				
Receiving supplemental feed	94	63	97	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Receiving supplemental feed	98	64	98	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	11	15	2	NA
Short.....	22	28	10	NA
Adequate.....	62	51	83	NA
Surplus.....	5	6	5	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	18	22	5	NA
Short.....	36	42	18	NA
Adequate.....	44	35	73	NA
Surplus.....	2	1	4	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
Grazing accessibility				
Open.....	13	NA	23	NA
Difficult.....	34	NA	39	NA
Closed.....	53	NA	38	NA
Pasture and range				
Very poor.....	50	40	8	NA
Poor.....	19	25	21	NA
Fair.....	19	25	26	NA
Good.....	10	9	36	NA
Excellent.....	2	1	9	NA
Winter wheat				
Very poor.....	3	3	--	NA
Poor.....	10	12	4	NA
Fair.....	47	52	38	NA
Good.....	31	27	48	NA
Excellent.....	9	6	10	NA
Winter wheat – wind damage				
None.....	79	NA	66	NA
Light.....	16	NA	28	NA
Moderate.....	5	NA	6	NA
Heavy.....	--	NA	--	NA
Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage				
None.....	73	NA	78	NA
Light.....	18	NA	15	NA
Moderate.....	5	NA	7	NA
Heavy.....	4	NA	--	NA
Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover				
Very poor.....	1	NA	7	NA
Poor.....	10	NA	5	NA
Fair.....	31	NA	29	NA
Good.....	24	NA	40	NA
Excellent.....	34	NA	19	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

Montana's weather data can be accessed at the following:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Montana/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/2017/MT_Weather_12312017.pdf