

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
 July 22, 2024

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CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION WEEK ENDING July 21, 2024

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: The week was, once again, marked by mostly above normal temperatures and dry conditions, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Average temperatures were in a range of about 3 – 9 degrees above normal for most of the State, according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). Average temperatures were as high as 12 degrees above normal in northwestern Lincoln County. Precipitation levels ran from about average to 0.6 inches below average for most of Montana. A few isolated areas received higher amounts of moisture. Drought conditions worsened with the ongoing heat. The U.S. Drought Monitor report released July 18 indicates that the amount of land rated drought free was unchanged at 3 percent. Abnormal dryness fell by one percentage point to 56 percent. Moderate drought conditions fell to 24 percent, down from 37 percent the previous week. Severe conditions increased by 11 percentage points to 14 percent. Extreme drought conditions returned to Montana measuring at almost 3 percent. It was hot in Big Horn County, but winds were low which helped preserve soil moisture. Crops were showing stress from the dryness and need for moisture in Dawson County. Reports from Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties noted that ground water levels were dropping, which affected irrigation. Winds worsened the effects of the ongoing heat and dry conditions. Lakes and reservoirs had reserves and river flow streams remained normal. Painted Rocks was still spilling over but was expected to stop and flow into the reserves. Como Lake stopped spilling last week, and water was being taken from the surplus. Irrigation water, however, was expected to cease in September, sooner than usual. Wildfires were burning at Miller Peak and Butler Creek. The Butler Creek fire required evacuations. Alberton also had a fire. Conditions were smokey in Ravalli County. Heat sensitive livestock and crops needed water, shade, and cool evenings. Conditions were, nonetheless, ideal for haying. Hay ground, spring crops, and native ranges were impacted from significant numbers of grasshoppers in Powder River County. An agent in Roosevelt County also reported abundant grasshoppers, in addition to the extreme heat and dry conditions. Several grassfires burned grounds in Wibaux County. No rain had fallen for a couple of weeks. Temperatures ran high, along with wind, with more of the same expected in the new week. Some farmers were filing notices of loss for grass hay.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Alfalfa hay				
1 st cutting harvested.....	72	63	88	81
2 nd cutting harvested.....	4	2	NA	NA
Barley				
Booted.....	94	90	95	NA
Headed.....	80	73	78	86
Coloring.....	14	3	15	32
Harvested.....	2	--	4	1
Canola				
Blooming.....	78	66	81	89
Coloring.....	41	15	31	36
Dry edible beans				
Blooming.....	72	53	93	76
Dry peas				
Blooming.....	96	92	92	NA
Harvested.....	3	--	4	10
Durum wheat				
Booted.....	99	86	92	NA
Headed.....	86	59	79	75
Coloring.....	31	3	17	13
Flaxseed				
Blooming.....	66	37	82	83
Coloring.....	29	2	12	10
Lentils				
Blooming.....	96	93	93	NA
Mustard seed				
Coloring.....	38	10	35	31
Oats				
Booted.....	86	81	93	NA
Headed.....	82	57	75	74
Coloring.....	52	23	19	18
Harvested.....	2	NA	NA	NA
Other hay				
1 st cutting harvested.....	78	64	84	77
2 nd cutting harvested.....	8	--	NA	NA
Safflower				
Blooming.....	38	30	40	42
Spring wheat				
Booted.....	99	93	NA	NA
Headed.....	88	72	93	86
Coloring.....	34	19	13	22
Winter wheat				
Coloring.....	78	75	75	76
Harvested.....	3	--	2	7

NA – not available
 (--) – zero

DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK AND SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
Days suitable for field work	7.0	6.8	7.0	6.7
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	6	6	12	23
Short	44	35	43	28
Adequate.....	50	59	44	46
Surplus.....	--	--	1	3
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	7	6	8	22
Short	46	38	48	33
Adequate.....	47	56	43	43
Surplus.....	--	--	1	2

NA – not available
 (--) – zero

CROP, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Barley				
Very poor	--	--	1	7
Poor	5	5	10	18
Fair.....	23	29	51	29
Good.....	71	65	26	30
Excellent	1	1	12	16
Canola				
Very poor	--	--	1	1
Poor	1	1	1	11
Fair.....	30	31	39	31
Good.....	64	63	49	44
Excellent	4	4	10	13
Corn				
Very poor	1	--	--	4
Poor	5	4	18	12
Fair.....	34	37	21	23
Good.....	58	57	59	53
Excellent	2	2	2	8
Dry peas				
Very poor	--	--	1	9
Poor	--	1	2	12
Fair.....	18	20	33	31
Good.....	77	76	60	43
Excellent	5	3	4	5
Durum wheat				
Very poor	--	--	--	9
Poor	6	6	20	15
Fair.....	31	33	58	38
Good.....	61	59	20	33
Excellent	2	2	2	5
Lentils				
Very poor	--	--	1	8
Poor	1	1	15	13
Fair.....	19	22	33	35
Good.....	74	72	47	40
Excellent	6	5	4	4
Mustard seed				
Very poor	--	--	1	1
Poor	5	--	10	10
Fair.....	6	2	36	52
Good.....	88	97	50	35
Excellent	1	1	3	2
Pasture and range				
Very poor	4	5	2	17
Poor	17	17	15	14
Fair.....	40	35	44	21
Good.....	33	37	36	39
Excellent	6	6	3	9
Safflower				
Very poor	1	1	--	6
Poor	7	14	--	10
Fair.....	57	59	45	34
Good.....	34	25	55	47
Excellent	1	1	--	3
Spring wheat				
Very poor	--	--	--	12
Poor	5	6	11	16
Fair.....	19	21	54	27
Good.....	71	68	29	38
Excellent	5	5	6	7
Winter wheat				
Very poor	--	1	1	7
Poor	6	8	6	18
Fair.....	47	38	45	35
Good.....	35	32	29	23
Excellent	12	21	19	17

¹Current conditions for Dry Edible Beans, Flaxseed, Oats, and Sugarbeets are available using the QuickStats on-line database at:

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/

NA – not available
 (--) – zero