



USDA/NASS
New Mexico Field Office

Weekly Ag Update

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Crop Weather Annual Livestock Slaughter Livestock, Dairy and Outlook

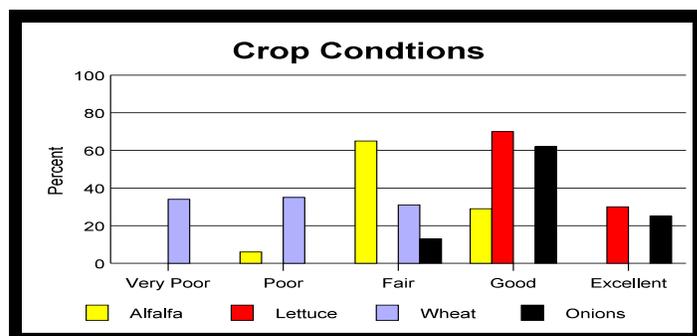
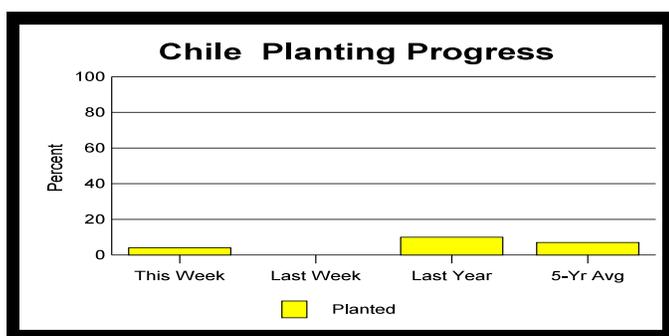
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CROP SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK ENDING MARCH 12, 2006

NEW MEXICO: There were 5.4 days suitable for fieldwork. Topsoil moisture was 74% very short, 18% short, and only 8% adequate. Farmers spent the week laser leveling, preparing fields for pre-irrigation, and making other preparations for this year's crops. The windy conditions made field work difficult last week, and the increasing fire danger is a major concern across the state. Wind damage was 20% light, 21% moderate, and 3% severe. Wind damage was reported to onions and pasture. Freeze damage was minimal last week, with 4% light and 8% moderate damage reported. The outlook for alfalfa is not promising with limited irrigation water expected this season. Alfalfa conditions were listed as 6% poor, 65% fair, and 29% good. The dry, warm winter has left our winter wheat in bad shape. Conditions for all winter wheat were reported as 34% very poor, 35% poor, and 31% fair. Only 13% of pastures were being grazed. Lettuce was reported as 70% good and 30% excellent. Chile was 4% planted. Onions were 13% fair, 62% good, and 25% excellent, and 92% of the crop planted. With forage from wheat pastures and rangeland limited, livestock producers have been busy supplementing feed. If these conditions continue, we will see heavy culling come springtime. Cattle were reported as 1% very poor, 6% poor, 51% fair, 41% good, and 1% excellent. Sheep were 87% fair and 13% good. Range and pasture conditions were 7% very poor, 25% poor, 52% fair, and 16% good.

CROP PROGRESS PERCENTAGES WITH COMPARISONS

CROP PROGRESS		This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
CHILE	Planted	4	N/A	10	7
ONIONS	Planted	92	N/A	N/A	N/A
WHEAT	Grazed	13	N/A	N/A	N/A



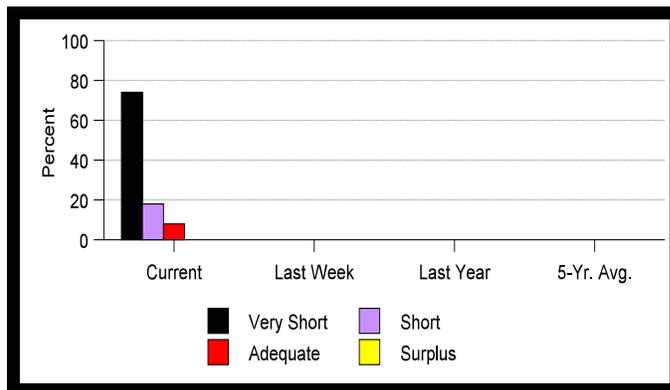
CROP AND LIVESTOCK CONDITION PERCENTAGES

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Alfalfa	---	6	65	29	---
Lettuce	---	---	---	70	30
Onions	---	---	13	62	25
Wheat (All)	34	35	31	---	---
Cattle	1	6	51	41	1
Sheep	---	---	87	13	---
Range/Pasture	7	25	52	16	---



SOIL MOISTURE PERCENTAGES

	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
Northwest	100	---	---	---
Northeast	85	12	3	---
Southwest	78	22	---	---
Southeast	45	33	22	---
State Current	74	18	8	---
State-Last Week	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
State-Last Year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
State-5-Yr Avg.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A



WEATHER SUMMARY

The season's first strong winter storm brought welcome heavy snow to western and northern areas of the state. Many areas recorded their first substantial snow of 3-5 inches in the northern valleys and excessive amounts of 20-35 inches in the high mountains. However, overall effect on the current drought will be marginal as water equivalents from the snow remained light for most locations. Above normal temperatures in the east and south reflected a continuation of dry and windy conditions. Snow in the west and north was also preceded by several bouts of gusty drying winds and blowing dust.

NEW MEXICO WEATHER CONDITIONS - MARCH 6 - 12, 2006

Station	Temperature			Precipitation				
	Mean	Maximum	Minimum	03/06 03/12	03/01 03/12	Normal Mar.	01/01 03/12	Normal Jan-Mar
Farmington	38.4	71	24	0.29	0.60	0.81	1.00	1.97
Gallup	33.9	65	11	0.52	0.58	1.05	0.96	2.59
Capulin	38.3	68	11	0.03	0.03	0.89	0.39	1.85
Chama	31.1	63	8	0.31	0.33	1.99	1.41	5.34
Johnson Ranch	33.1	69	12	0.00	0.00	0.74	0.06	1.98
Las Vegas	39.4	68	18	0.00	0.00	0.63	0.03	1.71
Los Alamos	36.1	65	19	0.13	0.13	1.22	0.32	2.88
Raton	39.0	72	14	0.00	0.00	0.83	0.22	1.84
Red River	29.0	57	13	1.73	1.73	1.78	2.51	4.07
Santa Fe	39.7	69	19	0.24	0.24	0.74	0.28	2.06
Clayton	47.6	74	24	0.00	0.00	0.55	0.06	1.10
Clovis	54.8	80	31	0.00	0.03	0.59	0.10	1.49
Roy	43.6	73	19	0.00	0.00	0.55	0.06	1.32
Tucumcari	53.8	81	31	0.00	0.08	0.40	0.15	1.13
Grants	35.9	71	17	0.47	0.47	0.50	0.67	1.50
Quemado	38.6	69	18	0.26	0.27	0.80	0.93	2.35
Albuquerque	45.9	73	29	0.10	0.11	0.54	0.15	1.44
Carrizozo	50.1	75	29	0.15	0.15	0.57	0.25	1.74
Socorro	50.4	80	27	0.00	0.00	0.27	0.02	1.05
Gran Quivera	47.4	72	26	0.02	0.02	0.72	0.02	2.24
Moriarty	38.2	72	18	0.01	0.01	0.53	0.05	1.44
Ruidoso	42.9	68	25	0.20	0.20	1.33	0.67	3.61
Carlsbad	59.4	87	38	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.30	1.00
Roswell	55.5	82	32	0.00	0.00	0.45	0.05	1.34
Tatum	54.1	82	29	0.00	0.00	0.52	0.20	1.41
Alamogordo	54.1	78	34	0.00	0.00	0.46	0.33	1.67
Animas	51.8	81	31	0.15	0.15	0.47	0.38	1.66
Deming	51.4	82	32	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.58	1.36
Las Cruces	54.3	82	36	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.18	1.05
T or C	50.1	80	31	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.08	1.18

(T) Trace (-) No Report (*) Correction

All reports based on preliminary data. Precipitation data corrected monthly from official observation forms.

LIVESTOCK AND DAIRY OUTLOOK

February 15, 2006

Sheep/Lamb: The January *Sheep and Goats* report by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) indicates that all sheep and lamb numbers increased in 2005 for the second straight year. On January 1, 2006, the inventory totaled 6.23 million head, up 2 percent from a year earlier, and nearly equal to that of 2003. Despite concerns about over-finishing, first quarter demand is expected to be boosted by the upcoming religious holidays early in the second quarter of 2006. Slaughter lamb prices for the first quarter of 2006 are expected to stabilize between \$93 and \$95 per hundredweight (cwt).

Cattle/Beef: The NASS *Cattle* inventory report released January 27, 2006, confirmed that the national cow herd and cattle inventories are in the second year of an expansion phase of a new cattle cycle. While heifers for beef and dairy cow replacement were both up 4 percent, the real increase in 2006 heifer inventories was in the implied number of heifers to be bred this summer and later. Whether these heifers are actually bred in 2006 will depend on pasture and forage conditions this spring and summer, and some may have been placed in feedlots since January 1, 2006 because of deteriorating soil moisture conditions and forage supplies below January-February 2005 levels. Despite declining poultry and hog prices, beef prices at both wholesale and retail levels remain relatively high. However, beef price strength may be dampened by deteriorating prices for other meats and poultry, low packer margins, and shrinking wholesale-to-retail price spreads.

Beef Trade: Cattle imports showed strength in the fourth quarter of 2005, reaching 788,000 head, bringing the 2005 total to 1.815 million head. Imports from Canada resumed in July 2005, and total cattle from Canada during 2005 were 558,000. The cattle import forecast for 2006 was left unchanged at 2.175 million head. Beef imports dipped somewhat in the last quarter of 2005, totaling 797 million pounds. Beef imports during 2005 were down slightly from 2004, as Australia and New Zealand both reduced their shipments. Beef imports during 2006 are also forecast to fall slightly on a year-to-year basis, totaling 3.5 billion pounds. U.S. beef exports in the fourth quarter of 2005 reached their highest level yet after the December 2003 BSE case, totaling 220 million pounds. Japan reopened its market to U.S. beef, though it has been temporarily halted due to a shipment containing prohibited materials. Taiwan has reopened its market, and South Korea is putting regulations in place to do so, as well. U.S. beef exports for 2006 are forecast at 905 million pounds, about 36 percent of the record level set in 2003.

Dairy: The January 1 inventory showed almost 4.3 million dairy replacement heifers, up almost 4 percent from a year earlier and more than 6 percent from 2 years earlier. The larger-than-expected rise was triggered by the very high replacement prices of 2004 that encouraged unusual measures to keep as many heifers as possible.

Hogs/Pork: The first month of 2006 presented a mixed picture for the U.S. pork and hog markets. Supply side signs were strongly positive in January, but in line with most expectations, while cautionary flags are beginning to emerge on the demand side.

ANNUAL LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER

NEW MEXICO: Commercial cattle slaughter during 2005 for New Mexico totaled 11,500 head, down from the 13,100 head slaughtered in 2004. The average live weight was 994 pounds compared to 972 one year ago. **Commercial hog slaughter** totaled 2,000 head. The average live weight was 300 pounds. **Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter** totaled 14,800 head compared to 21,500 head in 2004. The average live weight in 2005 was 120 pounds compared to 135 pounds in 2004.

UNITED STATES: Commercial cattle slaughter during 2005 totaled 32.4 million head, down 1 percent from 2004, with federal inspection comprising 98.3 percent of the total. The average live weight was 1,256 pounds, up 16 pounds from a year ago. **Commercial hog slaughter** totaled 103.6 million head, slightly higher than 2004 with 99.0 percent of the hogs slaughtered under federal inspection. The average live weight was up 2 pounds from last year, at 269 pounds. **Commercial sheep and lamb slaughter**, at 2.70 million head, was down 5 percent from 2004 with 94.7 percent comprised by federal inspection. The average live weight was up 2 pounds from 2004 to 138 pounds.

Commercial Livestock Slaughter, New Mexico and U.S., 2004-2005 ^{1/}

	New Mexico						United States					
	Number Slaughtered		Total Live weight		Average Live weight		Number Slaughtered		Total Live weight		Average Live weight	
	'04	'05	'04	'05	'04	'05	'04	'05	'04	'05	'04	'05
	1,000 Head		1,000 Pounds		Pounds		1,000 Head		1,000 Pounds		Pounds	
Cattle	13.1	11.5	12,731	11,478	972	994	32,728.3	32,387.7	40,589,097	40,688,693	1,240	1,256
Calves ^{2/}	---	---	---	---	---	---	842.4	734.4	278,199	259,371	330	353
Hogs	2.1	2.0	632	608	306	300	103,463.4	103,581.5	27,588,318	27,827,948	267	269
Sheep/Lambs	21.5	14.8	2,914	1,769	135	120	2,839.3	2,697.8	386,938	373,305	136	138

^{1/} Includes slaughter under Federal Inspection and other commercial slaughter, excludes farm slaughter. ^{2/} State data included in U.S. total. Data not published to avoid disclosing individual operations.