

South Dakota Monthly Crop Weather Report

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARM SERVICE AGENCY

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY

Many South Dakota producers faced both winter storms and warmer temperatures that reduced snow cover during the month of February. Average snow depth for the state on February 28, 2009 was 6.3 inches. County road conditions in the state were rated at 89 percent open, 10 percent difficult, and 1 percent closed. Township road conditions were rated at 75 percent open, 18 percent difficult, and 7 percent closed. Farm activities focused on the start of calving and lambing, routine chores, hauling and marketing grain, tending to livestock, and plowing snow.

This report is based on information from county extension educators, Farm Service Agency county directors, and other reporters across the state.

WEATHER INFORMATION

A couple major storms impacted the state during the month, according to the State Climate Office of South Dakota. A strong storm across much of the western and central parts of the state on February 9-10 dropped a combination of rain and snow, with some locations reporting over an inch of precipitation, much of it in the form of rain. A second large storm dropped over a foot of snow in some locations of the northeast on February 27-28, but did bring several inches of snow over most of the state.

Total precipitation for the month ranged from a high of 1.98 inches at Mobridge to a low of 0.34 inch at Brookings. The wettest areas were well over an inch above average for the month. The driest areas were at most at few tenths of an inch below average.

Warmer temperatures began to move back the snow pack over large parts of the state. The north central, northeast and east central areas were the only areas that maintained snow pack through the month. Even the main part of the snow pack was reduced in depth. Some areas along the North Dakota border maintained over a foot of snow pack.

The snow pack did influence average monthly temperatures. Areas with consistently deep snow pack (roughly north of a line from Bison to Brookings) were again below average in temperature for the month by 2 to 4° F. The rest of the state had above-average temperatures for the month, ranging up to as much as 4 to 5° F above average in the west and southern border of the state. Winner recorded the warmest temperature of the month at 70° F, while Mobridge had the coldest at -19° F.

SOIL CONDITION

Soil temperatures continued to be well below freezing across the state, even in non-snow covered areas. The lowest four-inch soil temperature was recorded in Aberdeen at 25° F. The highest soil temperature was recorded in Caputa at 31° F. The state continues to have adequate soil moisture, with the U.S. Drought Monitor only rating 1.1 percent as D0 (Abnormally Dry). This rating covers a small area in southwestern Fall River County and northern Harding County. Last year at this time 69.9 percent of the state was rated D0 or drier.

FIELD CROPS REPORT

While recent snowfall has provided protection for South Dakota winter crops, a mid-winter thaw left many winter wheat and alfalfa fields without snow cover for weeks in February. While most producers do not believe that warmer temperatures caused the crops to break dormancy, it is yet to be seen how much winterkill took place. Winter wheat condition is rated as 1 percent very poor, 7 percent poor, 38 percent fair, 46 percent good, and 8 percent excellent, with snow cover for wheat rated at 36 percent poor, 57 percent adequate, and 7 percent excellent. Alfalfa snow cover is rated as 28 percent poor, 61 percent adequate, and 11 percent excellent.

LIVESTOCK, PASTURE, AND RANGE REPORT

Livestock producers were affected by February winter storms, but overall access to grazing, feed and water supplies remains in good shape. Most producers are reporting no significant problems with the start of the calving and lambing season. Feed supplies are rated 93 percent adequate to surplus, up 3 percentage points from last year. Stock water supplies are rated 92 percent adequate to surplus, up 19 percentage points from last year. Cattle conditions are rated at 78 percent good to excellent, with calf deaths since February 1 rated at 17 percent below average, 82 percent average, and 1 percent above average. Cattle death losses since February 1 were rated at 22 percent below normal, 77 percent normal, and 1 percent above normal. Sheep conditions are rated at 67 percent good to excellent; with sheep and lamb deaths rated 4 percent below average, 75 percent average, and 21 percent above average.

Average Soil Temperatures Week Ending March 1, 2009 (4-inch Depth)

Location	Temp	Location	Temp
Aberdeen	25	Nisland	30
Beresford	30	Oacoma	30
Bowdle	30	Parkston	30
Brookings	26	Pierre	29
Caputa	31	South Shore	26
Cottonwood	30		

Crop and Livestock Conditions as of March 1, 2009

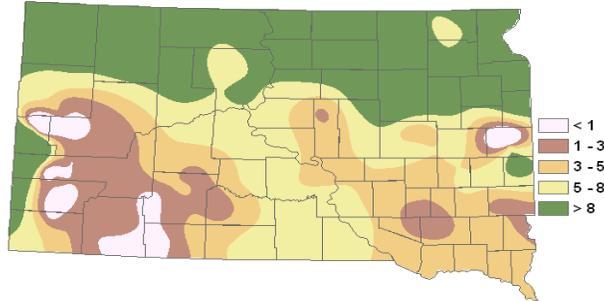
Item	V Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excel
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Winter Wheat	1	7	38	46	8
Cattle	0	2	20	64	14
Sheep	1	3	29	56	11

Feed and Water Supplies Comparison as of March 1, 2009

Rating	Feed Supplies			Stock Water Supplies		
	This Week	Last Year	5 Yr. Avg.	This Week	Last Year	5 Yr. Avg.
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Very Short	1	2	6	2	14	19
Short	6	8	14	6	13	19
Adequate	86	83	74	86	69	60
Surplus	7	7	6	6	4	2

The next Crop Weather Report will be for the month of March and will be released March 30, 2009

SNOW DEPTH (inches)
As of Saturday, February 28, 2009



TEMPERATURE and PRECIPITATION
Month Ending March 1, 2009,

District And Station	Temperature Past Month				Precipitation		
	Average	Departure from Normal	High	Low	Monthly Total	Total Since Oct 1, 2008	Departure from Normal Since Oct 1, 2008
	<i>Degrees</i>	<i>Degrees</i>	<i>Degrees</i>	<i>Degrees</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>	<i>Inches</i>
Northwest							
Bison	21	-3	55	-14	1.54	6.94	3.48
Buffalo	23	1	60	-9	1.08	4.24	1.03
Dupree	22	-1	57	-11	1.43	5.47	2.16
McIntosh	17	-4	51	-14	0.96	5.42	2.32
Newell	28	3	60	-5	0.33	3.31	0.16
Timber Lake	20	-2	54	-13	1.87	7.22	3.46
North Central							
Aberdeen	15	-3	38	-14	0.87	7.31	3.59
Faulkton	19	-1	49	-12	0.43	4.10	0.13
Mobridge	19	-2	45	-19	1.98	5.93	2.72
Roscoe	16	-2	44	-12	1.65	6.70	2.79
Northeast							
Britton	16	-2	41	-18	1.06	9.06	5.13
Clear Lake	16	0	44	-14	0.64	8.08	2.76
Sisseton	15	-3	47	-15	1.04	9.12	4.34
Watertown	15	-2	40	-18	0.67	6.35	2.08
Webster	15	-2	42	-15	0.27	6.79	2.45
West Central							
Faith	22	-2	58	-11	0.89	4.78	1.22
Milesville	26	1	62	-15	1.26	4.88	1.16
Philip	29	4	66	-13	1.29	5.07	2.00
Rapid City	28	1	63	-9	0.78	4.62	1.40
Spearfish	34	5	61	3	0.53	6.34	1.28
Central							
Chamberlain	28	4	67	-14	0.34	4.97	0.67
Highmore	21	0	55	-14	0.85	3.50	-0.36
Huron	21	0	53	-13	0.58	7.80	3.87
Onida	19	-2	51	-10	1.36	5.31	1.11
Pierre	25	0	60	-13	0.94	4.27	0.39
East Central							
Brookings	18	0	51	-14	0.34	7.52	3.74
Forestburg	23	1	56	-12	0.42	7.15	2.75
Madison	21	2	54	-9	0.35	6.41	1.50
Mitchell	26	4	58	-10	0.40	6.47	2.06
Sioux Falls	24	3	57	-6	0.41	8.02	3.19
Southwest							
Custer	28	0	53	0	0.64	3.17	-0.51
Hot Springs	33	3	63	-5	0.38	2.67	-0.28
Oelrichs	31	4	66	-11	0.62	5.26	1.98
Porcupine	30	5	67	-6	0.96	5.01	1.73
South Central							
Kennebec	27	2	64	-16	1.01	5.32	2.14
Mission	29	3	67	-10	1.47	5.06	1.52
Murdo	28	4	67	-5	1.76	5.93	2.05
Winner	30	1	70	-12	0.58	3.62	-0.95
Southeast							
Armour	26	0	62	-6	0.47	6.13	1.37
Centerville	25	3	59	-4	0.81	7.70	3.04
Pickstown	30	4	67	-9	0.40	6.75	2.51
Vermillion	29	4	60	-4	0.58	9.90	5.08
Yankton	28	4	63	-3	0.47	9.76	5.19

DATA AND MAP SOURCE: State Climate Office of South Dakota