

2009 Agricultural Summary

January precipitation was observed early in the month with the most moisture received in Northeast Texas of up to 3 inches of rain while most of the state accumulated 0.01 to 1 inch of rain. Wheat in the High Plains, Northern Low Plains, and the Cross Timbers was in need of moisture and growing slowly. Cotton harvest in the High Plains was completed shortly before Christmas and yields were low. Peanut harvest was completed in the Southern High Plains and South Texas. As January came to a close, Northeast Texas continued to experience variable amounts of rainfall, ranging from 0.5 inch to 4 inches of rain while the rest of the state observed trace amounts of moisture. Small grain fields improved after rains across some parts of the state, however, conditions were still very dry and wheat needed more favorable conditions to alleviate the stress on the crop. Fertilizer spreading on wheat fields continued in the High Plains. Cotton field preparation and stalk shredding were underway in the Trans-Pecos and the Northern Low Plains. Corn producers in the Blacklands and South Central Texas had prepared most of their land for planting. Toward the end of the month, pecans in the Trans-Pecos were being pruned and hedged. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued across most of the state. Pasture conditions were very dry and in need of rain across the majority of the state.

In the beginning of **February**, the eastern part of the state received moderate to heavy amounts of moisture; the most occurring in South East Texas with up to 5 inches of rainfall. Wheat in the High Plains and the Southern Low Plains continue to struggle due to lack of moisture, however, wheat in the Cross Timbers, Northern Low Plains and the Blacklands responded well to rain showers that passed through earlier. In South Texas, dry land sorghum producers began seed bed preparation. Fall planted onions in the Trans-Pecos were breaking dormancy while preparation for onion harvest began in the Lower Valley. Spinach producers prepared for a second cutting of fields harvested earlier in the season in South Texas. The eastern and southern part of the state received a small amount of rainfall while the rest of the state received little to no rainfall as February ended. Cotton field preparation continued in the Northern Plains and the Trans-Pecos. Also, field preparation continued for corn in the Northern High Plains and pre-irrigation occurred in South and South Central Texas as producers prepared their land. Spinach and cabbage harvest continued in South Texas. Stock tank levels continued to decline in the Cross Timbers and South Texas. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued across most of the state. Mild temperatures in North East Texas continued to help livestock maintain condition. Lambing and kidding was active in the Edwards Plateau. Range and pasture conditions across the state were very dry and more rain was needed.

The onset of **March** began with extremely dry conditions in the western part of the state with little to no moisture while the northern, eastern and southern parts only had trace amounts of rainfall. Wheat in the High Plains was helped by earlier rainfall but continued to struggle due to lack of moisture. Cotton and corn field preparation continued in the Northern High Plains. Corn producers continued to plant in the Blacklands and began planting in Northeast Texas, South Central Texas, and the Upper Coast. Sorghum field preparation was active in the Northern

Plains. Planting was active in the Upper Coast. In South Texas, spinach and cabbage harvest continued while onion fields were being irrigated. Cattle culling continued in South and South Central Texas as hay supplies were being depleted. As the month progressed, the eastern and central part of the state received up to 6 inches of rainfall while the rest of the state observed moderate amounts of moisture. Producers were spraying small grain fields for insects in the High Plains. Cotton field preparation took place in the Northern Low Plains; however, dry conditions were making it difficult to cultivate the land. Corn had emerged in the Blacklands, the Edwards Plateau, and South Texas. Sorghum producers in South Central Texas were in need of more rain for land preparation. Producers continued to supplement livestock in most areas of the state. Range and pasture conditions improved in areas of rainfall.

The northern, eastern and southern parts of the state received moderate amounts of rainfall in the early part of **April**; however the western part of the state only observed little to no moisture. Producers continued to irrigate wheat fields in the Plains. Cotton field preparation took place in parts of the Plains. Corn planting continued in South Central Texas and progressed well in South Texas. Sorghum producers were planting in the Blacklands while planting was almost complete in South Texas. Toward the middle of the month, sunflower and pumpkin field preparation took place in the Northern High Plains. Pecan growers were applying a zinc spray in the Blacklands. Onions were progressing well in the Southern Low High Plains and the Trans-Pecos. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued across the state. In the Edwards Plateau, ranchers were shearing sheep and goats while marking lambs. Pasture and range land remained dry across the state. At the end of the month, some parts of the eastern region of the state received up to 21 inches of rainfall while the rest of the state received moderate amounts. Russian aphids and green bugs continued to damage the wheat crop in the Northern High Plains. The wheat and oat crops were under stress from the freeze across the state. Cotton planting conditions improved in the Plains with additional precipitation. Sorghum producers were preparing their land for planting in the Northern High Plains and the Cross Timbers. Corn planting was nearing completion in the Blacklands and only a small percentage of the crop suffered from the freeze. The peach crop in North East Texas received cover sprays. Also cabbage, potato, and green bean crops continued to progress well in South Texas. Rainfall in the Low Plains improved pasture conditions as well as provided an infusion for tank water.

In early **May**, the central and northern part of the state experienced up to 10 inches of rain, the eastern part received 6 inches, and the rest of the state observed trace amounts of moisture. Winter wheat was heading in the Trans-Pecos. Producers were ready to harvest wheat and oats in South Texas. In the High Plains, cotton planting was in full swing. Most of the cotton crop has been planted in the Blacklands and had emerged in the Edwards Plateau. Corn was being planted in the Northern High Plains and beginning to tassel in South Texas. Sorghum was being planted in the Southern High Plains. In South Texas, sorghum was reaching critical development stages where water applications were essential. Some planted rice did not germinate in the Upper Coast due to flooding. Cabbage harvest continued in South Texas while green bean, potato, and onion producers were harvesting.

Showers swept through most of the state bringing up to 6 inches of rain in many areas of the state toward the end of the month. The Edwards Plateau and South Texas received the most rainfall while the remainder of the state received scattered showers. Wheat continued to develop in the Panhandle and harvest neared completion in the Blacklands and South Texas. Freeze damaged wheat and oats across the state were being baled for hay. Cotton planting was in full swing and progressing well in the Edwards Plateau and the Panhandle. Corn continued to develop across the state. Sorghum began to emerge along the Coastal Bend and continued to progress in the Cross Timbers. Peanut planting neared completion in the Low Plains while planting was in full swing in South Texas. Range and pasture conditions improved across the state due to rainfall, however, further moisture was needed for very dry parts of the state.

June began with precipitation varying across the state with up to 8 inches received in the central part of the state, the northern areas received up to 3 inches, while the rest of the state observed scattered showers. Wheat continued to mature rapidly in the Northern High Plains with harvest beginning. Winter wheat harvest was nearing completion in North East Texas. Irrigated cotton in the Southern High Plains progressed well. In the Northern High Plains, dry land sorghum planting was in full swing. Corn progressed well due to the rainfall in the Northern High Plains. Producers continued planting soybeans in the Northern High Plains. Cabbage and onion harvest was completed in South Texas. Pecan nutlets activity took place in parts of the Trans-Pecos and Edwards Plateau. Peaches progressed well in North East Texas while blackberry, blueberry, and vegetable harvest continued. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued in parts of the state. Producers were baling hay in most areas of the state. Range and pasture conditions continued to improve across the state due to the rainfall. Toward the end of the month, the western, northern and central parts of the state received 5 inches or more of rainfall while the southern part saw minimal amounts. Wheat harvest neared completion in the Plains. In South Texas, cotton boll setting continued, corn in the mature stage continued to progress well under heavy irrigation, peanuts had emerged and watermelon harvest was active. Hay baling in most areas of the state progressed well due to warm, dry seasonal weather. Grain sorghum was heading out in the Northern Low Plains and Blacklands. Insects caused vegetable crops to suffer in North East Texas. Chilies were in the blooming stage and pecans were in the nut growth stage in the Trans-Pecos. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued in localized parts of the state. Range and pasture condition was mostly very poor to fair statewide.

In the beginning of **July**, South East Texas and the Upper Coast received up to 5 inches of moisture while the Plains and the Trans-Pecos received up to 1.5 inches of rainfall. In the Northern High Plains, cotton blooming suffered due to the heat and dry winds while irrigated corn and sorghum progressed well. Cotton bolls opened in the Coastal Bend. In late July, the southern part of the state received little to no rainfall while scattered showers brought up to 3 inches of rainfall across the rest of the state. In the Northern High Plains, wheat field preparation took place, grain sorghum headed out, and sunflowers were in full bloom. Irrigated cotton was blooming and corn matured in the Southern High Plains. Grain sorghum heads were turning color in the Blacklands. In the Trans-Pecos, cotton

squaring continued, chilies were in full bloom, and pecan nut development continued. Drought conditions in South East Texas and the Upper Coast caused the corn crop to suffer. Peanut pegging was active in the Northern Low Plains and South Texas. Stock tank levels were very low in the southern part of the state and in need of rain. Livestock herd liquidation continued across the state. Rainfall improved range and pasture conditions in the northern part. Range and pasture condition was mostly very poor to fair statewide.

August began with the eastern part of the state receiving up to 15 inches of rainfall while the southern part of the state received little to no rainfall. Across the rest of the state, 0.25 inch to 4 inches of moisture were observed. Localized hail and high winds caused some damage to crops in the Northern and Southern Plains. Wheat field preparation continued in the Northern Plains. In the Northern High Plains, cotton and corn progressed well under heavy irrigation. Cotton bolls opened in the Southern High Plains and grain sorghum headed out in the Southern Low Plains. In the Blacklands, cotton progressed well and corn harvest was in full swing. In South Central Texas, cotton matured rapidly. In the Coastal Bend, grain sorghum harvest neared completion. Corn harvest and peanut pegging was active in South Texas. Pecans neared the nut drop stage in the Trans-Pecos. Rainfall improved range and pasture conditions in the northern part of the state while range and pastures in the southern part of the state were in need of moisture. In late August the Northern High Plains, North East Texas, and the Upper Coast observed up to 6 inches of rainfall. The rest of the state observed a trace to 2 inches of rainfall. Producers prepared for the winter wheat seeding in the northern part of the state. Cotton was setting bolls in the Plains. Sorghum harvest was active in the Southern Low Plains. Corn harvest was in full-swing and grain sorghum was turning color in the Blacklands. Pecans neared completion of the water stage in the Trans-Pecos. Cotton harvest continued in the Coastal Bend. Bolls were opening in South Texas and progressed well under heavy irrigation. Wheat seeding began in parts of the Cross Timbers. Range and pastures improved in Central and Northern Texas where rainfall was received. Top soil moisture was mostly very short to short across the state.

Areas of the state observed 0.1 to 3.0 inches of moisture in early **September**. In the Northern High Plains, producers were seeding wheat, and corn was progressing well. Land preparation was underway for wheat seeding, early planted sorghum was drying out, and peanuts and sunflowers continued to mature in the Southern High Plains. Wheat seeding began and drought conditions caused stress on cotton in the Northern Low Plains. Wheat seeding continued in the Cross Timbers. Cotton harvest had begun and corn harvest neared completion in the Blacklands and continued in the southern areas of the state. Corn harvest continued in the Edwards Plateau. Pecan nuts were in the gel stage in the Trans-Pecos. Producers were looking for hay to buy before winter. Range and pastures were in need of rainfall in the Northern part of the state while improving in South East Texas due to cooler temperatures and rainfall. Top soil moisture was mostly very short to short across the state. In mid to late September the southern part of the state received up to 6 inches of rainfall while the eastern and northern part of the state observed up to 2 inches of moisture. The rest of the state received moderate amounts of moisture. Winter wheat seeding continued and sorghum harvest was active in the Northern High Plains. In the Northern Low Plains, cotton

continued to open and rainfall improved wheat growing conditions. Wheat seeding progressed well in the Southern Low Plains due to adequate moisture. In the Trans-Pecos, pecans continued to mature and hail damaged cotton. Cotton harvest continued in southern areas of the state. Cool and damp conditions continued to delay corn harvest in the High Plains. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued but declined due to improved pasture conditions. Range and pastures progressed well due to the rainfall across most of the state, however, the southern part of the state continued to be in need of moisture. Top soil moisture was mostly short to adequate across the state.

The beginning of **October** brought scattered showers across much of the state. The eastern and southern parts of the state received the most rain with up to 2 to 6 inches in isolated areas. Low lying areas of the Northern High Plains experienced freezing conditions. Winter wheat seeding continued, cool temperatures slowed cotton maturity, and corn harvest made good progress. Rainfall improved wheat growing conditions in the Northern Plains. Wheat seeding was in full-swing in the Cross Timbers. Producers sprayed defoliant on cotton in the Northern Low Plains. Cotton received adequate moisture for boll development in the Edwards Plateau. Cotton harvest continued in southern areas of the state and cotton ginning continued in South Texas. Sorghum harvest neared completion in the northern part of the state. Soybeans were dropping leaves in North East Texas. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued to decline due to improved pasture conditions. Range and pastures progressed well due to the rainfall across most of the state. Top soil moisture was mostly short to adequate across the state. In late October, showers swept across the central and eastern part of the state leaving up to 2 to 6 inches of moisture in isolated areas. The rest of the state observed light to moderate amounts of rainfall. Cool temperatures have accelerated cotton maturity in the Northern High Plains. Rain delayed cotton harvest and Milo matured in the Southern High Plains. Winter wheat in the Northern Low Plains continued to emerge, while wheat and oat seeding continued in the Cross Timbers and the Edwards Plateau. Winter wheat responded well to the rainfall in South Central Texas. Cotton bolls were opening in the Edwards Plateau. Pecan scab increased in North East Texas. Pecan shuck splitting was active in the Trans-Pecos. Range and pastures continued to improve due to the rainfall across most of the state. Top soil moisture was mostly adequate to surplus across the state.

In the month of **November**, showers swept across the eastern part of the state leaving up to 2 to 10 inches of moisture in isolated areas. The rest of the state observed light to moderate amounts of rainfall. Rainfall and cooling temperatures improved wheat growing conditions in the High Plains. Cotton harvest was in full-swing across the Plains; however, harvest was delayed in some areas due to wet conditions. Harvest of late-planted corn continued in parts of the Northern High Plains. Wheat seeding was delayed due to wet conditions in the Cross Timbers and Blacklands. Wheat emerged and progressed well in the Edwards Plateau and South Texas. Supplemental feeding of livestock increased in localized areas of the state as summer forages became dormant due to the cooler weather. Range and pastures continued to improve due to the rainfall across most of the state. Top soil moisture was mostly adequate to surplus across the state. By late November, South Central Texas and the Coastal Bend received up to 2 inches of rainfall. The rest of the state observed little to no rainfall. Winter wheat was in need of moisture in parts

of the Plains. Wheat and oats made good progress in South Central Texas. Dry land wheat and oats responded well to cooler temperatures and rainfall in South Texas. Cotton harvest made good progress due to favorable weather conditions in the Plains. Cotton harvest was active in the Edwards Plateau. Grain sorghum harvest continued in some areas of the Plains. Pecan harvest made good progress in the Northern Low Plains, Trans-Pecos, and North East Texas. Top soil moisture was mostly short to adequate across the state

In the month of **December**, the Upper Coast, Coastal Bend and Lower Valley received up to 2 inches of moisture while the rest of the state observed 0.01 to 1 inch of moisture. Winter wheat continued to make good progress in the High Plains due to the adequate moisture. Wheat in some areas of the Northern Low Plains suffered due to rust and green bugs. Wheat progressed well in the Southern Low Plains, Cross Timbers, and South Texas. Cotton harvest was delayed in most areas of the state due to wet conditions. Wet conditions delayed pecan harvest in the Northern Low Plains, Trans-Pecos, and the Edwards Plateau. Supplemental feeding of livestock was in full-swing across the state due to cooler temperatures and wet conditions. Native pastures declined in most areas of the state due to cooler soil temperatures. Top soil moisture was mostly short to adequate across the state.