

Texas Crop Weather



Released: March 24, 2003 (3:00 P.M. CST)
 For the week of March 17 - 23, 2003
 TX-CW1203

1-800-626-3142
 www.nass.usda.gov/tx

Crop Progress Table - March 23, 2003

Crop	2003	2002	Average 1998-2002
	<i>Percent</i>		
Corn			
Planted	22	46	37
Emerged	6	27	24
Cotton			
Planted	4	6	6
Rice			
Planted	8	19	14
Sorghum			
Planted	20	29	26
Wheat			
Headed	2	3	3
Other Field Crops			
Planted			
Soybeans	2	4	4

Crop Condition Table - March 23, 2003

Item	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
	<i>Percent</i>				
Wheat	11	37	35	12	5
Range & Pasture . . .	8	28	34	20	10

Agricultural Summary: Weather conditions varied during the week. The week began with cool, wet and windy conditions. By late week, conditions changed to warm and dry and farmers were able to resume field activities. Much needed rain fell in the plains as well as across central and southern locations. Small grains continued to suffer in some areas where rain was nonexistent. In areas where rains fell, the benefit was noticed and harvest prospects for small grains improved. Irrigation remained active in drier locations; both for replanting and for grain fields. The cost of natural gas and diesel fuel was still a concern to producers. Applications of fertilizer and herbicides were being done as fields dried out. In parts of North Central Texas, green bugs have been a problem, and producers were spraying to control infestations. Peach trees have begun to bloom. Warm temperatures and plenty of sunlight allowed pasture and range conditions to improve. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued to decline.

Field Crops Report

Small Grains: Small grains benefitted in areas where rains fell. Some areas received a few inches while other areas received only trace amounts. Some fields in the plains showed signs of stress. Producers continued to pull cattle off fields that will be harvested for grain. Weeds were appearing in some wheat fields. High winds and cool temperatures caused stress in some areas, especially drier locations. Statewide wheat condition was rated at 70 percent of normal compared with 43 percent last year.

Corn: Some producers remained concerned by delays in land preparation due to previous wet spells. Planting and land preparations moved ahead in drier locations. Wet conditions prevented planting in many areas.

Cotton: Land preparations continued in drier locations with some producers finishing up herbicides applications. Planting conditions were enhanced by recent rain. In the high plains, pre-irrigation of cotton fields was underway.

Sorghum: Rainfall delayed land preparation and planting in many areas. Limited planting continued in parts of the Valley, South and Central Texas. Earlier planted fields were emerging.

Peanuts: Land preparation and field work were active where conditions allowed. Preparations were interrupted by rain and high winds in a few areas.

Rice: Some rice farmers were able to get into their fields last week. Field work in locations with wet ground were on hold until more drying occurs.

Soybeans: Planting got underway in a few fields. Ground-work was slow in the Upper Coast where wet conditions persisted.

Fruit, Vegetable and Specialty Crop Report

In the **Rio Grande Valley**, producers continued to harvest sugarcane, citrus, greens, carrots, and cabbage. Preparations for onion harvest continued. Melon crops were progressing.

In the **San Antonio-Winter Garden**, seed bed preparations for planting watermelons had begun. Harvest of carrots and onions continued.

In the **Trans Pecos Region**, the fall onion crop was progressing well. Grapes were beginning to swell and break.

In **East Texas**, spring vegetable planting continued, and fruit trees were beginning to bloom. Blueberries were also starting to bloom. Watermelon land preparation and planting continued where conditions allowed.

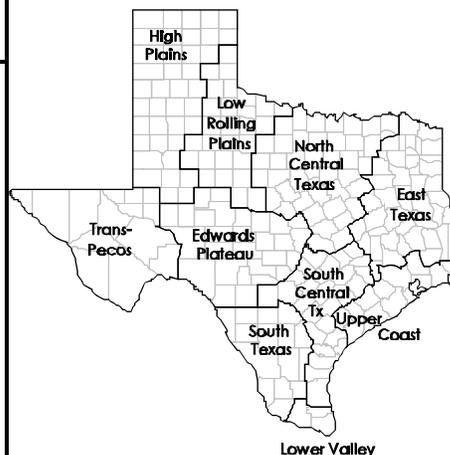
Peaches & Pecan: General maintenance continued in orchards across the state. In many areas, early and mid season orchards had begun to bloom. Pecans were starting to bud in a few areas.

Livestock, Pasture and Range Report

Most producers were pulling cattle off of wheat fields expected to be harvested for grain. On the Plains, high winds and rain occurred early in the week. Range and pasture conditions on the Plains, East Texas and Trans Pecos improved due to recent rainfall. In other areas of the state, pasture conditions improved as warm, dryer weather made a welcome appearance. In some areas, ranchers were treating pastures with lime. Spring grasses continued turning green and emerging in more locations. Supplemental feeding continued, but was slowing down as cattle were being moved to grass pastures. Spring calving and lambing continued in many locations.

Weather Information Table ¹

National Weather Service Climatic Divisions	Previous week (Mar 17 -23) Accumulation	Month-to-date (Mar 1 - 23) Accumulation	Year-to-date (Jan 1 - Mar 23) Accumulation	1961-90 Annual Normal	Previous three months (Dec - Feb) Percent of Normal
High Plains	0.37	0.37	0.67	18.87	76
Low Rolling Plains	0.22	0.28	1.35	23.78	109
North Central Texas	0.51	0.80	3.69	34.00	100
East Texas	0.72	1.55	5.54	45.69	62
Trans Pecos	0.16	0.29	1.30	12.96	118
Edwards Plateau	0.60	0.87	2.46	24.01	78
South Central Texas	0.24	0.96	3.92	34.48	92
Upper Coast	0.26	1.41	5.93	47.63	84
South Texas	0.06	1.31	3.45	23.49	91
Lower Valley	0.04	0.86	2.23	25.34	48



¹ Average of all stations reporting precipitation data.

Top Soil Moisture by District* - March 23, 2003

Condition	1-N	1-S	2-N	2-S	3	4	5-N	5-S	6	7	8-N	8-S	9	10-N	10-S
	Percent of Acreage														
Very Short	27	25	34	32	6	1	0	0	53	18	0	0	0	1	0
Short	47	49	53	52	21	3	0	0	34	28	1	0	2	21	6
Adequate	25	26	13	16	70	56	61	63	13	51	55	53	31	65	92
Surplus	1	0	0	0	3	40	39	37	0	3	44	47	67	13	2

* High Plains: 1-N, 1-S; Low Rolling Plains: 2-N, 2-S; North Central Plains: 3, 4; East Texas: 5-N, 5-S. Trans-Pecos: 6; Edwards Plateau: 7; South Central Texas: 8-N, 8-S; Upper Coast: 9; South Texas: 10-N; Lower Valley: 10-S.

Cooperating Agencies:

Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Department of Agriculture, National Weather Service.

PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID AT
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Texas Crop Weather (USPS 396-770) is published weekly by the Texas Agricultural Statistics Service, 300 E. 8th St., Austin, TX 78701, (512) 916-5581. PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID at Austin, TX. POSTMASTER: Send change of address to Texas Crop Weather, P.O. Box 70, Austin, TX 78767.

AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS SERVICE
NASS - USDA
P.O. BOX 70
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78767

T
E
X
A
S

Penalty for Private Use, \$300