

# Texas Crop Weather



Released: March 10, 2003 (3:00 P.M. CST)  
 For the week of March 3 - 9, 2003  
 TX-CW1003

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

**Crop Progress Table - March 9, 2003**

Crop	2003	2002	Average 1998-2002
	<i>Percent</i>		
<b>Corn</b>			
Planted . . . . .	4	25	21
Emerged . . . . .	3	5	7
<b>Cotton</b>			
Planted . . . . .	1	1	2
<b>Sorghum</b>			
Planted . . . . .	7	13	14

**Crop Condition Table - March 9, 2003**

Item	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
	<i>Percent</i>				
Wheat . . . . .	12	39	34	11	4
Range & Pasture . . .	6	25	35	22	12

**Agricultural Summary:** Winter's sting was wearing off as warmer temperatures were experienced during the week. While temperatures in the Plains continued to reach freezing during the evening hours, by the latter half of the week producers were enjoying warmer daytime temperatures. The rest of the state also experienced a welcome break from cold weather as temperatures state-wide warmed up for the last few days of the week. Precipitation and cloud cover varied greatly across the state. Overcast skies and some scattered showers were common for most areas of Central, East, and South Texas. Producers in some of the wettest areas will need at least a week of dry weather before any planting can begin. The lower valley area, though cloud covered during much of the week, received almost no precipitation. West Texas and the Plains area experienced very dry and windy conditions. Lack of soil moisture had some producers irrigating though many were waiting, hoping for rain due to rising fuel prices. Areas of the state that had been too wet for weeks were still suffering from saturated conditions and virtually no field work was possible. Producers in some locations of the Plains were listing and deep breaking in preparation for summer crops. Supplemental feeding of livestock continues. Hay supplies were decreasing across many areas.

**Field Crops Report**

**Small Grains:** While too early to tell the extent of freeze damage in wheat, some fields suffered freeze burn to the upper foliage. The lack of soil moisture in the Plains remained a problem and did not improve any over the week. Some producers were irrigating wheat, though sparingly due to high fuel costs. Statewide wheat condition was rated at 72 percent of normal compared with 47 percent last year.

**Corn:** Planting was delayed in most places due to excessive

moisture. Some producers, worried about the lateness of planting, were beginning to consider other crop alternatives. The only region where corn was in the ground was the Rio Grande Valley, where planting continued and early plantings were emerging.

**Cotton:** Some producers in drier locations of the High Plains were pre-watering fields due to a lack of winter moisture. Planting continued in the Rio Grande Valley and earlier plantings were coming up.

**Sorghum:** Planting continued to be at a standstill in the Coastal Bend and could be delayed by more than a week. Limited planting continued in parts of the Valley and a few other isolated areas.

**Peanuts:** Land preparation and field work were active where conditions allowed.

**Fruit, Vegetable and Specialty Crop Report**

In the **Rio Grande Valley**, producers continued to harvest sugarcane, citrus, greens, and cabbage. Some watermelon planting has begun. Spring melon growth was slowed by cool overcast weather. Preparations for onion harvest continued. Cool and damp weather interfered with farm activity.

In the **San Antonio-Winter Garden**, harvest of spinach and cabbage continued where conditions allowed.

In **Trans Pecos Region**, the fall onion crop was progressing well. Potato planting continued with some areas finishing up.

In **East Texas**, some fruit trees were beginning to bloom. Where conditions allowed, watermelon land preparation and planting continued.

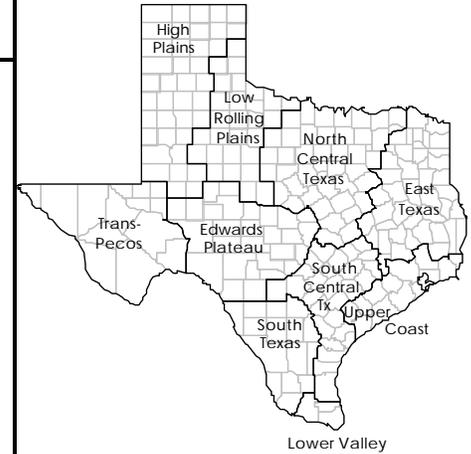
**Pecans:** General maintenance continued in orchards across the state.

**Livestock, Pasture and Range Report**

Cattle continued to graze on small grains and supplemental feeding continued. In areas where wheat will be harvested for grain, cattle were being moved off. Range and pasture conditions on the Plains and Trans Pecos were declining quickly due to lack of moisture. Several ranchers in the Trans Pecos region were having problems with livestock consuming noxious weeds. In other parts of the state, wet weather prevented any relief in already soaked pastures. From North Texas to The Upper Coast, conditions were wet and supplemental feeding increased as cattle were bogging down in mud. Hay supplies were beginning to run short in areas that have been consistently soaked by rain during the winter. Supplemental feeding of cattle was heavy in the Plains, East Texas and West Texas, but began to decrease in South Texas and the Rio Grande Valley as temperatures warmed and days got longer. Spring grasses continued turning green and emerging in some locations. More moisture was needed in some Western areas. Spring calving and lambing continued in many locations.

**Weather Information Table <sup>1</sup>**

National Weather Service Climatic Divisions	Previous week (Mar 3 - 9) Accumulation	Month-to-date (Mar 1 - 9) Accumulation	Year-to-date (Jan 1 - Mar 9) Accumulation	1961-90 Annual Normal	Previous three months (Dec - Feb) Percent of Normal
High Plains	0.00	0.00	0.30	18.87	76
Low Rolling Plains	0.03	0.03	1.10	23.78	109
North Central Texas	0.21	0.21	3.10	34.00	100
East Texas	0.62	0.64	4.63	45.69	62
Trans Pecos	0.00	0.00	1.01	12.96	118
Edwards Plateau	0.12	0.17	1.76	24.01	78
South Central Texas	0.36	0.47	3.43	34.48	92
Upper Coast	0.52	0.53	5.05	47.63	84
South Texas	0.66	0.87	3.01	23.49	91
Lower Valley	0.00	0.16	1.53	25.34	48



<sup>1</sup> Average of all stations reporting precipitation data.

**Top Soil Moisture by District\* - March 9, 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	31	19	30	20	7	0	0	0	61	14	0	0	0	2	0
Short	45	51	55	49	15	1	0	1	30	21	0	0	0	6	8
Adequate	24	30	15	31	60	38	36	9	9	58	16	25	1	63	92
Surplus	0	0	0	0	18	61	64	90	0	7	84	75	99	29	0

\* 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.**