

Texas Crop Weather



Released: March 17, 2003 (3:00 P.M. CST)
 For the week of March 10 - 16, 2003
 TX-CW1103

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

Crop Progress Table - March 16, 2003

Crop	2003	2002	Average 1998-2002
	<i>Percent</i>		
Corn			
Planted	12	38	31
Emerged	4	11	15
Cotton			
Planted	2	3	4
Rice			
Planted	3	2	6
Sorghum			
Planted	14	19	20
Wheat			
Headed	1	1	1
Other Field Crops Planted			
Soybeans	1	1	2

Crop Condition Table - March 16, 2003

Item	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
	<i>Percent</i>				
Wheat	9	42	30	15	4
Range & Pasture . .	6	26	39	19	10

Agricultural Summary: Mild weather descended on most of state during the week. Most areas of the state experienced highs in the 70's and 80's at the end of the week. The High Plains and West Texas continued to deal with dry conditions as the week brought little or no precipitation to these areas. North Central, Central, and Northeast Texas received a break from several weeks of almost constant wet weather with a few days of scattered sunshine. The Coastal Bend and parts of the Upper Coast enjoyed sunshine, but weekend rains interfered with the drying trend. South Texas and the Lower Valley also received a welcome break from wet weather, experiencing only mild precipitation and warm temperatures during the week. Field activity in North Central, North East, Central and South Texas was spurred on by the few days of sunny weather that dried out a few areas enough to work in. Many places were still too wet to support field work. In the High Plains, field preparation activities continued. Rising fuel prices continued to play a large part in producer decision making process. In the nearby Rolling Plains, and also in parts of North Central Texas, green bugs have been a problem with producers spraying to control outbreaks. Peach and Pecan trees benefitting from the warmer weather had begun to bloom. Pasture growth and green-up made progress with the improved conditions. Some producers were able to lighten supplemental feeding due to better pasture conditions.

Field Crops Report

Small Grains: Producers were pulling cattle off some wheat fields during the week as the March 15 grazing deadline approached. The lack of soil moisture in the Plains remained a problem. Some

producers were irrigating wheat, though sparingly due to high fuel costs. In some areas of the High Plains, wheat was being irrigated using electric powered irrigation. Some areas of South Texas were seeing rust in wheat fields. Statewide wheat condition was rated at 70 percent of normal compared with 42 percent last year.

Corn: After weeks of delay in most areas, mild weather during the week allowed some producers to plant corn. Wet conditions kept many producers from being able to plant during the week.

Cotton: In parts of the High Plains region producers have been going over fields to prevent erosion. Planting continued in the Rio Grande Valley and earlier plantings were coming up.

Sorghum: Planting remained slow in many areas due to wet fields. Limited planting continued in parts of the Valley, South and Central Texas.

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

Rice: Planting had begun despite very wet conditions.

Soybeans: Preparations and planting were 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.

In the **San Antonio-Winter Garden**, harvest of carrots and onions continued. Seed bed preparation for planting of watermelons had begun.

In the **Trans Pecos Region**, the fall onion crop was progressing well.

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

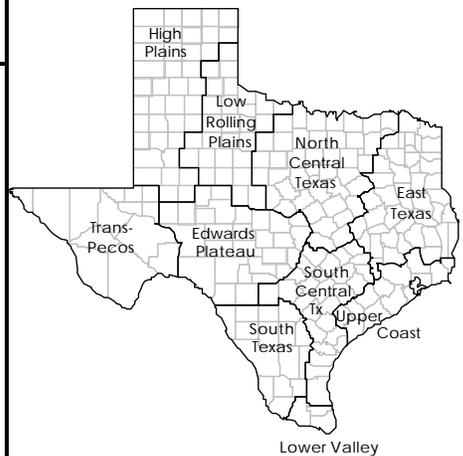
Pecans and Peaches: General maintenance continued in orchards across the state. In many areas orchards had begun to bloom.

Livestock, Pasture and Range Report

Cattle were moved off wheat pasture in areas where wheat will be harvested for grain. Range and pasture conditions on the Plains and Trans Pecos were declining quickly due to a lack of moisture. In other areas of the state, pasture conditions improved as the sun made a welcome appearance in these areas. In parts of East Texas, ranchers were treating pastures with lime. Hay supplies were beginning to run short in areas that have been consistently soaked by rain during the winter. Supplemental feeding of cattle continued in the Plains, East Texas and West Texas. Spring grasses continued turning green and emerging in more locations. Spring calving and lambing continued in many locations. Poultry growers were relieved with warmer temperatures reducing the financial strain caused by heating expenses.

Weather Information Table ¹

National Weather Service Climatic Divisions	Previous week (Mar 10 - 16) Accumulation	Month-to-date (Mar 1 - 16) Accumulation	Year-to-date (Jan 1 - Mar 16) 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	0.06	1.13	23.78	109
North Central Texas	0.08	0.29	3.18	34.00	100
East Texas	0.19	0.83	4.82	45.69	62
Trans Pecos	0.13	0.13	1.14	12.96	118
Edwards Plateau	0.10	0.27	1.86	24.01	78
South Central Texas	0.25	0.72	3.68	34.48	92
Upper Coast	0.62	1.15	5.67	47.63	84
South Texas	0.38	1.25	3.39	23.49	91
Lower Valley	0.66	0.82	2.19	25.34	48



¹ Average of all stations reporting precipitation data.

Top Soil Moisture by District* - March 16, 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	35	20	32	36	6	1	0	0	61	19	0	0	0	0	0
Short	57	51	55	40	24	2	0	0	36	25	0	0	0	7	6
Adequate	8	29	13	24	68	53	61	49	3	55	33	88	18	74	93
Surplus	0	0	0	0	2	44	39	51	0	1	67	12	82	19	1

* 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.