



## USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Texas Field Office

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TX-CW0906

### **Texas Crop Weather**

Released February 27, 2006 (3:00 PM CST)

For the week of February 20 - 26, 2006

**Agricultural Summary:** Rain actually fell in some areas of the state over the week. Drought conditions were lessened in a few locations, but a vast majority of the state remained extremely dry. Many locations received moisture in the form of misty rains and thick fog. However, there were some pockets of heavy precipitation. The larger accumulations occurred in North Central, Central and East Texas. Rain gauge readings generally ranged from ½ to 1 ½ inches. The heaviest rain fell in an area ranging from just southwest of Fort Worth to the vicinity of Texarkana. Rainfall accumulations of 2 to over 3 inches were recorded for the week. Locations on the Upper Coast, the Edwards Plateau and Trans Pecos experienced a few rain showers, but generally light totals were reported. Temperatures throughout the state were near normal for this time of year. Soil moisture continued to be short in nearly all regions, but it did improve in locations that received rain. Moisture deterioration was slowed in most areas due to overcast skies and foggy conditions. Western districts were still waiting on a soaking rain to improve spring planting conditions. Planting in southern regions increased and should be in full swing the next few weeks given the increased precipitation. Supplemental feeding remained very heavy and hay costs were taking a bigger chunk out of producers' pocketbooks. Wildfire danger was lessened but only temporarily.

### **Field Crops Report**

**Small Grains:** Some limited green-up occurred in a few wheat fields that received rain. However, much of the crop remained in bad shape. Heavy grazing continued under irrigation pivots, but was decreasing as producers began to thin out herds. Any future rain event on the Plains could be too late for any type of recovery from drought damage. Growers on the Blacklands were hopeful that vernalization would occur in wheat that germinated in January. Some producers applied top dressing fertilizer in a few eastern locations. Statewide, wheat condition was rated mostly poor to very poor. Statewide, oat condition was rated mostly very poor.

**Cotton:** Only a handful of gins were still operating and they should finally shut down within the next week. Planting had begun in the Rio Grande Valley and should begin shortly on the Coastal Bend. In other regions, land preparations continued. Some growers on the Blacklands were looking at cotton as an alternative to corn due to dry conditions.

**Corn:** Planting made some progress across the Rio Grande Valley, Coastal Bend, Upper Coast and Central Texas. While the limited rain accumulations were helpful, they fell well short of adequate. There still remained enough time to wait for moisture before planting, but the

clock was ticking. Producers on the Blacklands were preparing to plant within the next few weeks if enough soil moisture was available. If not, cotton and sorghum were options.

**Sorghum:** Planting began on a limited basis in the Rio Grande Valley and Coastal Bend. Many other producers were awaiting additional precipitation. Land preparation, including fertilization and herbicide applications continued in other regions.

**Rice:** Preparations on the Upper Coast were ongoing. Because of the drought, there was concern with high salinity levels of irrigation water.

### Fruit, Vegetable and Specialty Crop Report

In the **San Antonio-Winter Garden**, cabbage and spinach harvest continued. Onions developed well under heavy irrigation. Frost damage had to be cut off some spinach.

In the **Trans Pecos** region, winter onions were emerging with fair stands.

In **East Texas**, onion planting began. Sweet potato growers were plowing fields. Watermelon transplanting was expected within the next few weeks.

### Livestock, Pasture and Range Report

Range and pastures were still in desperate need of a good soaking rain. Some pastures in eastern regions showed some signs of green-up. Western areas received little or no relief from rain. The only grazing that remained on the Plains and surrounding locations was irrigated small grains. Cattle were feeding almost exclusively off hay and protein supplements. Hay was very expensive and was being imported from neighboring states. Herd liquidation continued and cattle auctions were very active. Body conditions were fair to poor. Some weaning of fall calves was ongoing. Fuel, in the form of dry and dead grass, remained in abundance for wildfires. All Texans were vigilant in fire prevention and control as the drought lingered.

**Crop Progress Table - February 26, 2006**

Crop	Stage	2006	2005	Average 2001-2005
- Percent -				
Corn	Planted	1	--	--
Cotton	Planted	1	--	--
Sorghum	Planted	2	2	4

**Top Soil Moisture by District – February 26, 2006 \***

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	91	79	90	92	87	45	9	14	34	69	69	90	6	75	90
Short	8	17	10	8	13	39	43	36	56	29	23	10	39	23	10
Adequate	1	4	0	0	0	16	45	46	10	2	7	0	51	2	0
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	0	0	1	0	4	0	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.

**Crop Condition Table – February 26, 2006**

Crop	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Index <sup>1/</sup>	
	Percent					2006	2005
Wheat	0	3	8	26	63	17	81
Oats	0	1	7	24	68	15	--
Range & Pasture	0	2	12	33	53	--	--

<sup>1/</sup> The formula for the condition index is  $I = (5V + 25P + 60F + 90G + 110E)/100$  where I=crop condition Index and V, P, F, G, E = percentage of crop rated very poor, poor, fair, good, excellent.

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

National Weather Service Climatic Divisions	Previous Week (Feb 20 - 26) Accumulation	Month-to-date (Feb 1 - 26) Accumulation	Year-to-date (Jan 1 - Feb 26) Accumulation	1961-90 Annual Normal	Previous Three Months (Nov - Jan) Percent of Normal
High Plains	0.12	0.14	0.15	18.87	7
Low Rolling Plains	0.23	0.27	0.36	23.78	5
North Central Texas	1.53	1.85	3.41	34.00	31
East Texas	1.34	3.76	7.29	45.69	48
Trans Pecos	0.19	0.19	0.19	12.96	8
Edwards Plateau	0.41	0.44	1.00	24.01	23
South Central Texas	0.25	0.69	1.43	34.48	31
Upper Coast	0.43	1.25	2.87	47.63	52
South Texas	0.01	0.02	0.09	23.49	14
Lower Valley	0.04	0.13	0.29	25.34	46

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

For more weather information, please visit the following web sites:  
[www.srh.noaa.gov/fcshare/precip\\_analysis\\_new.php](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/fcshare/precip_analysis_new.php) and [www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html](http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html)

**Cooperating Agencies:**

Texas Agricultural Extension Service  
 Texas Department of Agriculture  
 National Weather Service

