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TX-CW1806

Texas Crop Weather

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For the week of April 24 - 30, 2006

Agricultural Summary: Severe weather thundered through the state once again. Strong winds and hail cut a swath across many areas. In the hardest hit locations, dangerous straight line winds and baseball sized hail caused extensive structure and crop damage. The rain associated with these storms was more than welcomed. Precipitation totals ranging from ½ to over 3 inches were realized across the Edwards Plateau, Blacklands, eastern portions of the Upper Coast, Central and East Texas. The Panhandle and South Plains reported rainfall amounts of a trace to over ½ inch. Scattered showers dumped over 2 inches of rain in some locations of South Texas. Trace amounts of rain fell across the Rio Grande Valley and Coastal Bend with some isolated locations receiving up to ½ inch. Cooler temperatures in many areas replaced the intense heat of the previous week. A light freeze was experienced across the Panhandle and temperatures fell below normal throughout the state. The lower thermometer readings decreased the evaporation rate of soil moisture. The increased precipitation was very beneficial to summer crops and pastures. For those regions that missed the rain, conditions remained extremely dry. Fields in southern regions were especially in need of moisture as crop stands continued to show drought stress. Supplemental feeding declined for the most part but was still necessary in some areas. Insect problems were reported in some fields and livestock.

Field Crops Report

Small Grains: Producers were cutting wheat for hay in many regions. On the Panhandle, much of the irrigated wheat that was not grazed out was expected to be harvested for silage. Plant maturity progressed northward as fields headed out on the South Plains. Due to the lack of adequate cold degree days this past winter, vernalization failed to occur in some fields on the Blacklands. Rust was reported in eastern areas of the state. Grain harvest will begin shortly in southern regions. Statewide, wheat condition was mostly rated very poor to poor. Oats condition statewide was mostly rated very poor to poor.

Cotton: For areas of the South Plains that received rain, producers were expected to take advantage of the increased moisture and start seeding cotton. Some early planting has already begun in the region. The cooler weather was not expected to delay planting.

to much extent. Some fields on the Blacklands were being replanted after wind and hail damage. Fields in the Rio Grande Valley and Coastal Bend continued to suffer from drought. Dryland fields will be in serious trouble if moisture is not received soon. Irrigation was heavy where available.

Corn: Planting was in full swing on the Panhandle. Early emerged fields on the South Plains had decent stands. Some fields on the Blacklands were damaged by wind and hail. Most corn that had been hit the previous week by severe weather was showing signs of recovery. However, there were fields that were a total loss. Dryland corn in the Rio Grande Valley and Coastal Bend was in poor shape due to drought. Irrigation was extensive where possible. The corn condition statewide was mostly rated fair to good.

Sorghum: Planting has begun on the South Plains and Panhandle. Fields were damaged by wind and hail on the Blacklands. Some sorghum fields were destroyed by the severe weather from the previous week. In the Rio Grande Valley and Coastal Bend, drought stress was apparent and increased precipitation would be needed soon in order to make a crop this season. The condition was mostly rated very poor to fair statewide.

Rice: Adequate rice stands were reported. Some fields had to be replanted due to storm damage. The condition of rice was mostly rated fair to good statewide.

Soybeans: Planting was expected to begin on the Panhandle shortly. The increased precipitation on the Blacklands and Upper Coast was well received. Statewide, the condition was mostly rated fair to good.

Fruit, Vegetable and Specialty Crop Report

In the **Rio Grande Valley**, growers continued to cut sugarcane and pick Valencia oranges under hot and dry conditions.

In the **San Antonio-Winter Garden**, cabbage, carrots and potatoes were being harvested. Onions were under heavy irrigation. Green bean planting continued.

Pecans were budding out and blooming. Producers kept an eye out for pecan nut casebearer infestations. Some producers were spraying. Irrigation was ongoing in many orchards.

Peaches on the Edwards Plateau were hit hard by hail storms. Some orchards reported a total loss for the season while others should show a decrease in production.

Livestock, Pasture and Range Report

Pastures were responding favorably to the increased moisture. Grazing conditions improved for the most part but were still bad across southern regions. In many cases, cattle were grazing on undesirable weeds such as huisache for lack of adequate forage. Producers were fertilizing pastures and hay fields. Growers were making their first hay cutting in some regions. Cattle body conditions were rated at generally fair. Herd liquidation continued in the driest locations as the cost of feed and hauling water required cut backs. Spring calving and lambing were wrapping up. Sheep and angora goat shearing was ongoing as was lamb and kid marketing.

Crop Progress Table - April 30, 2006

Crop	Stage	2006	2005	Average 2001-2005
- Percent -				
Com	Planted	80	78	76
	Emerged	62	64	64
Cotton	Planted	24	22	21
Peanuts	Planted	0	6	6
Rice	Planted	91	91	91
	Emerged	87	76	79
Sorghum	Planted	66	48	48
Soybeans	Planted	85	57	57
	Emerged	53	-	-
Sunflowers	Planted	36	13	21
Winter Wheat	Headed	54	56	53
Oats	Headed	78	-	-

Crop Condition Table - April 30, 2006

Crop	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	Index ^{1/}	
	Percent					2006	2005
Com	5	35	33	17	10	62	82
Rice	3	27	64	6	0	68	86
Sorghum	1	20	20	20	39	38	-
Soybeans	7	42	39	10	2	72	82
Wheat	0	3	17	26	54	22	75
Oats	0	7	20	31	42	28	-
Range & Pasture	1	9	28	29	33	-	-

^{1/} 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.

Top Soil Moisture by District - April 30, 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	78	29	52	22	24	11	7	11	57	30	59	93	14	60	95
Short	14	46	40	53	34	43	38	32	37	57	17	7	43	35	5
Adequate	8	25	8	25	42	45	51	56	9	13	24	0	41	5	0
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	0	2	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.

Weather Information Table ^{1/}

National Weather Service Climatic Divisions	Previous Week (April 24 - 30) Accumulation	Month-to-date (April 1 - 30) Accumulation	Year-to-date (Jan 1 - Apr 30) Accumulation	1961-90 Annual Normal	Previous Three Months (Jan - Mar) Percent of Normal
High Plains	0.16	0.48	1.98	18.87	70
Low Rolling Plains	0.41	1.07	3.01	23.78	60
North Central Texas	1.21	2.28	9.25	34.00	104
East Texas	1.41	2.30	13.48	45.69	105
Trans Pecos	0.02	0.22	1.06	12.96	72
Edwards Plateau	0.95	1.66	4.27	24.01	73
South Central Texas	0.28	1.31	4.24	34.48	48
Upper Coast	0.96	1.89	6.40	47.63	50
South Texas	0.27	0.49	0.98	23.49	16
Lower Valley	0.08	0.08	0.77	25.34	19

^{1/} Average of all stations reporting precipitation data.

For more weather information, please visit the following web sites:

www.srh.noaa.gov/ffcshare/precip_analysis_new.php and www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html

Cooperating Agencies:

- Texas Agricultural Extension Service
- Texas Department of Agriculture
- National Weather Service

