



NATIONAL
AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS
SERVICE

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WEATHER & CROPS



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WEATHER CONDITIONS AND CROP SUMMARY FOR MARCH, 2012

Exceptionally warm weather has graced Virginia throughout the month with temperatures in many areas in the 70's to 80's during the day and down in the 50's at night. Some areas need more moisture but many areas have received steady rain over the past few weeks. Small grains are well ahead of schedule but there is a fear of another heavy frost. Many growers are preparing their fields to plant corn. Hay consumption by livestock has been down in a few areas since the pastures are so strong. Strawberry growers are seeing an early bloom and set due to the warm weather. Growers are providing maintenance on their equipment and preparing their fields for the spring crops.

TOPSOIL MOISTURE PERCENT

Month	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
March 2012	2	7	76	15
February 2012	18	38	42	2
January 2012	2	22	71	5

SUBSOIL MOISTURE PERCENT

Month	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
March 2012	0	7	89	4
February 2012	17	40	43	0
January 2012	7	27	65	1

CROP CONDITION PERCENT

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pasture	0	3	24	59	14
Livestock	0	3	23	61	13
Small Grain and Winter Grazing Crops	0	1	14	63	22

FORAGE PERCENT OBTAINED FROM PASTURES

Crop	This Month	Last Year
Beef Cattle Forage % Obtained from Pastures	34	---
Milk Cow Forage % Obtained from Pastures	14	---
Sheep Forage % Obtained from Pastures	46	---

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Virginia Cooperative Extension
Service

Virginia Tech

Virginia State University



VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

VIRGINIA WEEKLY WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK ENDING March 25, 2012

City	Temperature						Precipitation				
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal *	Last Week	Since Mar 1	Mar. 1 dep. from normal *	Jan. 1 to date	Jan. 1 dep. from normal *
Lynchburg	77	52	84	50	65	18	4.46	5.67	2.72	10.50	0.87
Norfolk	75	59	84	53	67	17	0.70	2.57	-0.56	7.04	-3.31
Richmond	78	56	85	52	67	18	1.28	2.35	-0.82	7.30	-2.43
Roanoke	77	55	84	52	66	18	1.93	3.31	0.39	7.21	-2.03
Wash/Dulles	73	54	83	51	64	19	0.40	1.31	-1.36	5.40	-3.17

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY

Comments are based on comments reported by extension agents, farmers, commodity specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals.

NORTHERN

CLARKE (Jacob Grove)

Grass growth is well above normal for march, Hay feeding has stopped for many producers unexpectedly.

FREDERICK (Jeanette Smith)

We are having temperatures in the 70-80 degree range in the daylight hours and temperatures moving down to the 50's at night. Still need moisture. Cattle are grazing and producers not feeding. Apple and peach trees are blooming.

ROCKINGHAM (John Welsh)

Steady rain over the week's end was welcome with most of the county receiving over an inch. Warmer than usual temperatures have small grains well ahead of schedule with some producers planning harvest of rye for silage this week. Pastures are greening up nicely and producers are reporting slower hay feeding than normal.

CENTRAL

AMELIA (Joan D Poore)

March has been unseasonably warm - above average temperatures. Moisture has been average up until this past week. Thunderstorms March 20, heavy rains 24 and 25. The ground is saturated for now. Concerns about the small grains maturing too quickly with still time of the possibility of a heavy frost.

CAROLINE (Mike Broaddus)

Due to an abnormally warm and damp winter, livestock pastures and small grains are looking well. Small grains are two weeks or more ahead of their normal schedule.

CHESTERFIELD (Joan D Poore)

March has been unseasonably warm - above average temperatures.

Maybe record warm (average) temperatures for March. Rain has been average - until this past week with thunderstorms with small hail, March 20. Steady and heavier rain Saturday and Sunday March 24 & 25. Concerns are the small grains heading out prematurely and for insect problems.

CENTRAL (continued)

FLUVANNA (John Thompson)

Lack of rainfall, warm early temperatures and a steady wind are reducing soil moisture rapidly. Without rainfall in the very near future, we will be moving to droughty conditions.

HANOVER (Jim Tate)

March has been an unusual month. It started out wet and muddy and warmer than normal. The later part of the month has brought continuous high temperatures both day and night and generated an early spring. The mud has mostly gone away and it had actually gotten dry. Then the storms came back this weekend. While we did not have the severe weather of the southwestern part of the state I measure right at an inch of rain at my western Hanover home over the weekend. Sunday night this was topped off by yet another aftershock from the August earthquake. Reported this morning as a 3.3. Small grain all over has track in it. Cover crops are being sprayed as well. I have not seen corn planters in the field but have heard of some. The prediction for tonight and tomorrow is for near freezing temperatures over night.

EASTERN

KING GEORGE (Mike Broaddus)

All livestock, crops and pastures seem normal. Due to abnormal warm and damp winter, small grains are two weeks or more advanced than normal.

SOUTHWESTERN

GRAYSON (Kevin Spurlin)

A mild winter with ample moisture is leading to an unusually early start to spring. Conditions are easily 3 weeks ahead of normal, and with cooler temperatures in the upcoming week, the risk of spring freeze damage is high. Hay consumption by livestock has been down since mid-March with pastures coming on strong.

SCOTT (Scott Jerrell)

Warm weather has forced plants and trees into early green up and bloom, with 7 weeks before potential last killing frost of the year. Concerns are being voiced about the damage that could be incurred. Beef cattle and sheep producers still enjoying high prices.

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY (continued)

Comments are based on comments reported by extension agents, farmers, commodity specialists, and other knowledgeable individuals.

SOUTHERN

FRANKLIN (Cynthia Martel)

Weather in Franklin County has been amazing, hot days, warm nights and rain. Fields are growing and getting green. Soil temperatures are getting warmer, but still wouldn't suggest planting corn even with the nice weather, yet. Remember it still is only March, and the weather could change quickly, as the saying goes if it comes in like a lamb it goes out like a lion. I have seen farmers out spreading manure prepping fields for the upcoming season. Cows on pasture are getting early grass, because of the mild winter. Remember the key is pasture management, don't over graze fields. Beef cattle have had an easy winter, thus BCS are a looking good. The next week calls for rain chances with temperatures in 60 and 70's.

SOUTHEASTERN

PRINCE GEORGE (Scott Reiter)

Wheat development is ahead of schedule for March. The last of the top-dress nitrogen has been applied to most of the small grain crop. Growers are preparing to plant corn and surely some will be in the ground before March 30. Pastures and hay are growing well providing some early season grazing.

SOUTHAMPTON (John Rudy)

Wheat is coming along nicely. Producers are busy with equipment and field preparation for spring crops. With the warmer temperatures there has actually been some corn planted. Most corn planting will start in the next two weeks or so.

SOUTHEASTERN

SURRY (Glenn Slade)

Due to warm weather through March small grain is ahead of schedule and has producers concerned about effects of a late frost. Burn down sprays are going out with most corn planting to start in April.

SUSSEX (Kelvin Wells)

Spring-like weather has gotten farmers busy going to the field. Topdressing and scouting small grain along with lime and fertilizer applications. There is some excitement as we move into the 2012 production season.

CHESAPEAKE CITY (Watson Lawrence)

Farmers are trying to finish winter nitrogen applications to wheat but being delayed by wet fields. Wheat is physiologically ahead of schedule due to warm weather. Heavy pollen falling 3rd week in March. Strawberry farmers seeing early bloom set also.

VIRGINIA BEACH (Roy D. Flanagan III)

Our strawberry crop here in Virginia Beach seems to be quite advanced. We will most likely see ripe berries two weeks ahead of our normal schedule.



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