

WEATHER & CROPS

USDA/NASS/Virginia Field Office
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Week Ending: April 19, 2009

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WEATHER CONDITIONS AND CROP SUMMARY FOR WEEK ENDING APRIL 19, 2009

Most of the Commonwealth experienced rain showers this week. Temperatures cooled down as the rain moved across the state. However, several warmer than normal days were observed in between the storms. Days suitable for fieldwork were 4.3. The rain delayed fieldwork. Corn plantings were about one week behind normal for this time of the year. The majority of Virginia's crops were in fair to good condition. Crops that were not fertilized or received below recommended rates were poorer in quality compared to crops that did receive fertilizer. Other farm activities include field top dressing small grains with fertilizer, tending to the strawberry crop, and harvesting haylage.

TOPSOIL MOISTURE PERCENT				
Week Ending	Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
April 19, 2009	0	6	84	10
April 12, 2009	0	10	80	10
April 5, 2009	1	7	79	13



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CROP CONDITION PERCENT					
Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Pasture	2	7	36	50	5
Livestock	2	6	27	57	8
Hay, Other	1	4	44	44	7
Hay, Alfalfa	1	4	36	51	8
Winter Wheat	0	2	20	63	15
Barley	0	2	21	68	9
Tobacco, Greenhouse	0	3	9	76	12
Tobacco, Plantbeds	0	5	56	39	0
Potatoes, Summer	0	0	60	30	10
Apples, All	0	6	70	24	0
Peaches	0	4	71	25	0
Grapes	0	0	10	90	0
Oats	0	1	11	87	1

CROP PROGRESS PERCENT – WITH COMPARISONS				
Crop	This Week	Last Week	Last Year	5 Year Avg.
Corn Planted	15	11	27	30
Winter Wheat Headed	2	0	11	NA
Potatoes, Summer Planted	90	80	100	93

VIRGINIA WEEKLY WEATHER SUMMARY FOR THE WEEK ENDING APRIL 19, 2009													
City	Temperature						Growing degree days (modified base 50) 1/		Precipitation				
	Avg. max.	Avg. min.	High max.	Low min.	Avg.	Avg. dep. from normal *	Mar. 1 to Apr. 18	Mar. 1 to Apr. 18 normal	Last Week	Since Mar. 1	Mar. 1 dep. from normal *	Year to date	Year dep. from normal *
Lynchburg	64	38	79	33	51	-4	284	279	.70	4.95	-.87	9.22	-3.23
Norfolk	62	42	75	36	52	-5	303	303	.49	6.53	.43	9.61	-3.73
Richmond	63	40	80	36	52	-4	311	333	.82	6.08	.07	8.31	-4.28
Roanoke	65	42	80	37	54	-1	306	NA	.68	5.80	-.11	9.75	-2.43
Wash/Dulles	62	39	79	32	50	-2	232	NA	.59	4.54	-.86	7.56	-3.72

1/ Formula used: GDD = (daily maximum (86°) + daily minimum (500)); where 86° is used if the maximum exceeds 86° and 50° is used if the minimum falls below 50°. * Normal based on 1971-2000 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>. NA = not available. T=trace. Source: USDA, NASS, Virginia Field Office.

REPORTER COMMENTS BY COUNTY

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

NORTHERN

CULPEPER (Carl Stafford)

Rain started last night and continued Monday morning.

ROCKINGHAM (John Welsh)

Warmer weather towards mid-week prompted some harvesting of rye for haylage. Conditions were not generally favorable for drying as moisture and cooler weather returned over the weekend.

CENTRAL

APPOMATTOX (Bruce Jones)

Corn producers were busy applying herbicides in preparation for planting. Fertilizer activity seems to be high with many trucks and buggies on the road. Hay and pasture are significantly benefiting from the regular rainfall over the recent weeks. Poor looking fields are those receiving minimal fertilizer and/or cut rates over the past several years.

CAROLINE (McGann Saphir)

Grain farmers are top-dressing small grains with their final fertilizer applications and planting corn. Vegetable farmers are putting out plastic on raised beds for summer vegetables: squash, tomatoes, eggplant, and okra. Strawberry fields are being watched very carefully and any threat of frost is taken very seriously with cold protection methods employed. Soil moisture is adequate. Pastures and hay fields are looking good.

ORANGE (Steve Hopkins)

Recent low temperatures have delayed grass growth in pastures and hay fields. Corn planting has also been delayed by the cool conditions and recent rains.

EASTERN

MIDDLESEX (David Moore)

Wet week delayed corn planting. Corn planting finally got back into swing at week's end. Field work to prepare for corn planting continues. Scouting of wheat and barley continues. Some spray decisions are being made. Barley began heading this week. Wheat will not be far behind. Numerous field plots are on hold due to the weather. Pastures and hay fields look good due to the cool damp weather.

NORTHUMBERLAND (Matt Lewis)

Wet weather has delayed corn planting and begun to cause disease problems in wheat and barley. By week's end, farmers had resumed planting corn in fields that weren't too wet for field work.

SOUTHWESTERN

MONTGOMERY (Barry Robinson)

Conditions late last week were excellent for hay and winter grain crop fertilization, followed by a nice soaking rain. Fruit trees are doing well, except some peach blossoms may have suffered freeze damage a couple weeks back.

SCOTT (Scott Jerrell)

Had a good week of light showers and sunshine. Pastures are beginning to get rank with growth, and we were able to find the first ripe strawberries of the season. A lot of farmers are interested in using liquid fertilizers in replacement of granulars, and have been attending sponsored meetings.

SOUTHEASTERN

PRINCE GEORGE (Scott Reiter)

Light rains have halted most field work again this week. Some fertilizer and burn down herbicides were applied to soybean fields by late week. Very little corn was planted last week and growers are concerned about germination under cool & wet conditions. Hay and pasture looks good where growers made early fertilizer applications. There is some concern about getting rye cut for hay with the rainy conditions over the last 10 days. Wheat producers are scouting fields looking for disease problems before making any fungicide applications due to lower wheat prices.

SUFFOLK (Rex Cotton)

The county received rain this week. Farmers are trying to plant corn, but they are a little behind due to the rain. If we get dry weather, it will be no problem to make up lost time for corn plantings.