



Wisconsin Crop Weather

Compiled by the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

April 14, 2003

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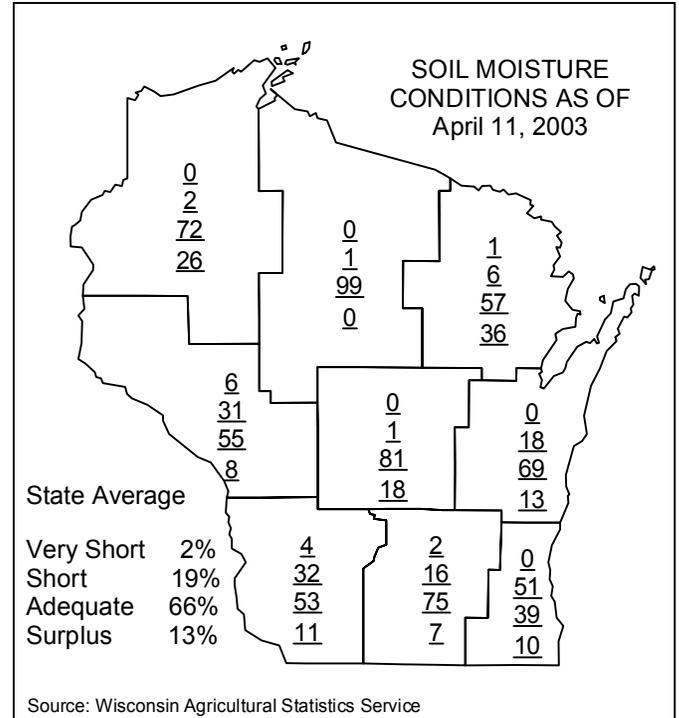
Cold Weather Delays Spring Activities

Wisconsin saw a wide variety of weather conditions for the past week. Freezing temperatures at night were common statewide. Southern Wisconsin experienced a snowstorm with some icy conditions early in the week. The end of the week saw temperatures in the high 60's. Temperatures for the week averaged 2 to 8 degrees cooler than normal, which kept plant growth behind schedule. The snowfall in the southern part of the state helped to bring some needed moisture to that part of the state. Total precipitation for the week remained behind normal, with little to no precipitation in the north, and under .5 inch in the remainder of the state. Rainfall totals are .5 inch to 1.5 inch below normal for the season so far, and 1.5 inches to 4.5 inches below average year-to-date levels. Soil moisture conditions were reported to be 2% very short, 19% short, 66% adequate, and 13% surplus. For the week ending April 13, there were an average of 2.4 days suitable for fieldwork across the state.

Spring tillage has just begun in many parts of Wisconsin. Spring tillage was reported at 6% completed, compared to 4% complete last year, but behind the 5-year average of 11%. Early activities included manure spreading, fertilizer application, alfalfa and oat seeding, and equipment maintenance. There will undoubtedly be a flurry of activity once conditions improve, as many farmers feel they are behind schedule. Many farmers are waiting for warmer temperatures and drier field conditions to begin planting on most soils. Sowing of **oats** was reported at 5% completed, statewide, compared to 5% last year and 14% for the 5-year average.

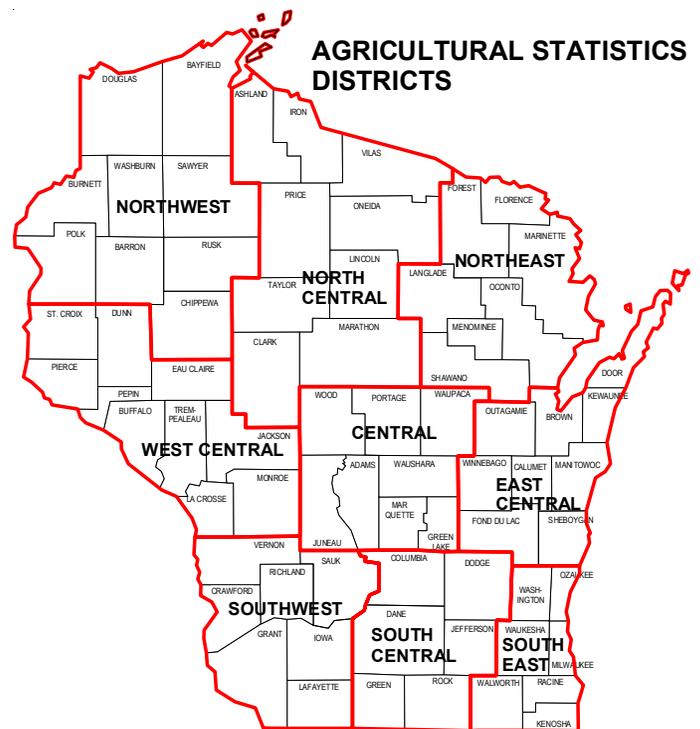
Pasture condition was rated as 27% very poor, 16% poor, 23% fair, 30% good, and 4% excellent. Warm rains would help conditions to improve quickly. **Winter wheat** is green-ing up across the state. Most reporters felt that early-seeded wheat looks to be in good shape early, with late-planted wheat condition still to be determined. Freezing temperatures at night has some producers looking closely at **alfalfa** for evidence of winterkill. Reports vary around the state as to the condition of alfalfa. Many are taking a wait and see attitude concerning damage from the deep frost and cold temperatures last winter.

The **maple syrup** harvest is winding down in northern Wisconsin and nearing completion in the south as trees are beginning to bud out. Reports of a poor run are common-place, but overall appears similar to last year. **Potato** planting was being readied in the Central Sands area, with a few producers already beginning to plant.



Wisconsin Crop Conditions as of April 11, 2003

Item	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	Percent				
Pasture	27	16	23	30	4
Winter wheat	4	3	34	52	7



Wisconsin Crop Progress, April 13, 2003

Crop and percent of acreage	District average									State average		
	NW	NC	NE	WC	C	EC	SW	SC	SE	This year	Last year	5-year average
Spring tillage completed	2	0	0	3	5	1	13	6	5	6	4	11
Oats planted	1	0	0	5	1	1	14	6	16	5	5	14

Quotes from Farm Reporters and County Ag Agents

BARRON-A.B.: Frost still in the ground at 8 inches down and 4 feet thick. Maple syrup season is now over, and it was a poor run, but better than last year by a bit. Winterkill on alfalfa appears spotty, but winter wheat is in sad shape for the most part. Some manure being spread where the ground holds up.

WASHBURN-K.S.: No activity in the fields yet. Frost is slowly coming out, especially on sandy soils. Maple sap run was excellent for a few days this week. Overall, syrup season should be average. Evidence of winterkill should be more apparent in the coming weeks.

MARATHON-M.K.: Alfalfa looks alright for now-too early to tell. Lots of frost still in the ground.

ONEIDA-P.L.: Frost starting to come out of the ground, too early to make a good call on winter wheat, alfalfa, and pasture. Maple syrup season is about over, and they had a few good runs; but it was late, and quality and quantity suffered.

OCONTO-K.H.: Alfalfa and winter wheat producers still holding their breath over winter damage to stands. Maple syrup season was not good. A number of small scale producers did not even tap their trees.

SHAWANO-T.A.: Alfalfa fields are just starting to green up. Fieldwork should begin soon.

DUNN-S.S.: Maple syrup season is fair to poor in our area. Have not seen any fieldwork of any type as of yet, except a few Amish plowing.

PIERCE-D.J.: Farmers are in the field planting oats. However, still wet in most areas.

WAUPACA-D.L.H.: Too early to determine condition of alfalfa. Winter wheat survived well. Frost still in the ground. Some fieldwork on lighter soils is being done. Maple syrup production is better than last year. Spring planting will be delayed because of frost in the ground.

WAUSHARA-L.K.: As it looks now, there could be a 25% chance of winterkill in alfalfa; mostly in fields that were cut three times or more. Early-sown wheat looks pretty good. Frost is out in the sandy soil. I have not seen any fieldwork being done so far.

FOND DU LAC-R.P.: Winter wheat is mixed. Alfalfa looks alright, but recent cold weather and ice may have harmed it. Winter is still hanging on, with snow drifts of 6-8 inches in some fields.

KEWAUNEE-J.B.: Alfalfa and winter wheat just starting to grow. Still have snow on the ground.

MANITOWOC-H.W.: Early winter wheat looks very good and green, but late-planted wheat is starting to sprout. Some fertilizing of winter wheat as a top dressing is going on.

CRAWFORD-V.H.: We are looking for rain. Very short on topsoil moisture.

GRANT-L.F.: Alfalfa starting to look pretty good, getting a green color. Winter wheat looks good and green. Amish have been plowing and sowing oats for a week already. Some farmers are about half done sowing oats. Also, have chisel plowed quite a few acres for corn already. Snow and rain put a lot of moisture in the ground, but now we need warmer nights. Planting is going to be later than usual. Maple syrup trees are running sap.

DANE-D.F.: Planting activity has been slow. While we have had sun, light winds have slowed drying of top soil. Alfalfa and winter wheat continues to look good. Several producers on lighter soils have managed to plant some alfalfa and oats.

JEFFERSON-M.H.: Anhydrous applications were in full speed after soils dried from the rain and snow earlier in the week. Some small grain planted two weeks ago, no signs of growth yet. Winter wheat fields are perking up. Alfalfa is slowly progressing.

WALWORTH-P.R.: We are headed into this growing season with low sub-soil moisture. Concerns about winterkill in alfalfa have not been realized for the most part.

WASHINGTON-R.B.: Alfalfa is looking very good. Wheat is greening up very fast. Finding very little winterkill. Surfaces of fields are muddy, but deep down it is dry. Planted 5 acres of alfalfa no-till. On the days it froze, farmers were spreading fertilizer on wheat and spreading manure on frozen, snowy ground.



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Wisconsin Weekly Weather, Selected Cities, Ending as of 7:00 a.m. on April 13, 2003

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. 12	Mar. 1 to Apr. 12 normal *	Last week	Since Mar. 1	Mar. 1 dep. from normal*	Year to date
Eau Claire	55	25	71	14	40	-2	93	25	0.00	2.31	-0.65	3.27
Green Bay	45	25	64	12	35	-6	40	22	0.00	2.41	-0.67	3.56
La Crosse	54	28	73	19	41	-4	98	43	0.11	2.68	-0.58	3.77
Madison	49	22	71	10	35	-8	81	46	0.33	2.42	-1.19	3.27
Milwaukee	44	29	62	23	36	-7	64	n.a.	0.13	2.42	-1.68	3.21

1/Formula used: GDD = (daily maximum (86°) + daily minimum (50°))/2-50°; where 86° is used if the maximum exceeds 86° and 50° is used if the minimum falls below 50°. *Normal based on 1961-90 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>>. N.a. = not available. T = trace.