



Wisconsin Crop Weather

Compiled by the Wisconsin Agricultural Statistics Service

April 25, 2005

Vol. 05, No. 04

Winter Freeze Damage to Alfalfa

Warmer than normal temperatures during the week allowed many producers to begin spring planting. Temperatures were 4 to 6 degrees higher than normal for this time of year. Low temperatures were reported in the 30s, while high temperatures reached the 80s during the week. Rainfall this past week ranged from 0.28 to 1.31 inches. Soil moisture conditions were reported as 2 percent very short, 12 percent short, 76 percent adequate, and 10 percent surplus. There was an average of 4.7 days suitable for fieldwork last week.

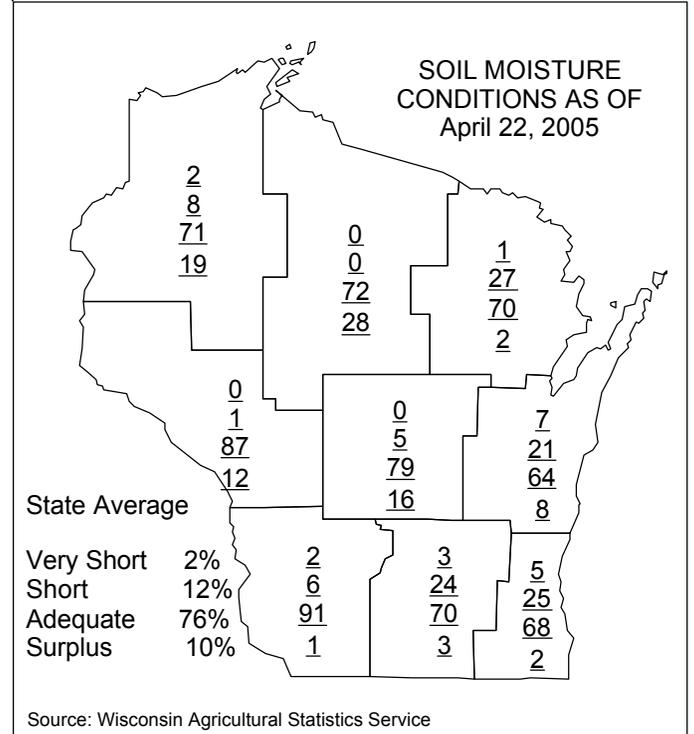
Winter freeze damage to **alfalfa** was reported at 31 percent none, 25 percent light, 27 percent moderate, and 17 percent severe. There were many reports of damage occurring in low spots where ice formed during the winter, older stands, and fields that were harvested late last fall. Some northern producers are still waiting for the alfalfa to green-up before making decisions. Producers in other parts of the state are plowing severely damaged alfalfa stands to plant other crops, or seeding other forage crops in areas with severe damage.

Corn planted was reported at 8 percent complete, above both last year's 2 percent, and the 5-year average of 4 percent. Northern producers are planting in lighter soils that have warmed up. Producers in the central and southern parts of the state took advantage of the warm weather during the week to get some corn in the ground. Soil temperatures are a concern for many producers.

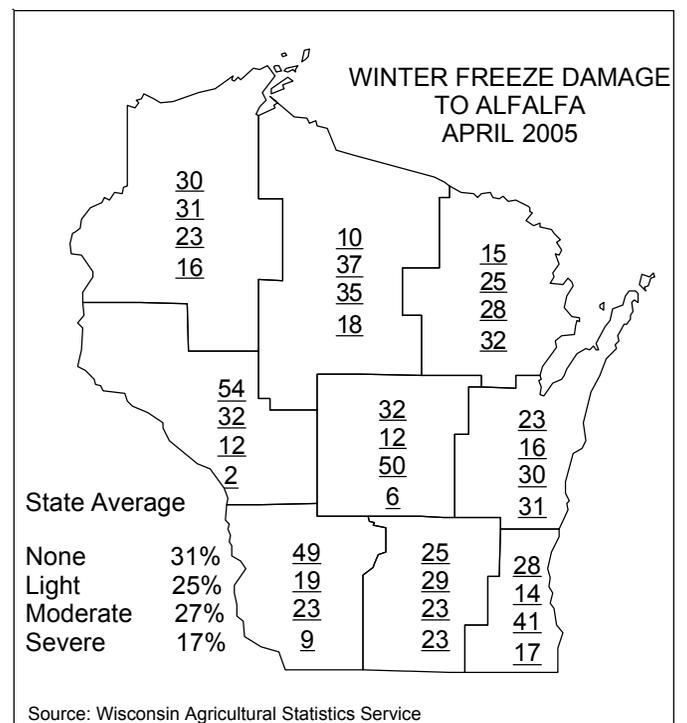
Oats planted was reported at 51 percent complete, behind last year's 59 percent, but above the 5-year average of 40 percent. Oats emerged was reported at 11 percent, behind last year's 13 percent, but above the 5-year average of 8 percent. **Spring tillage** completed was reported at 36 percent, behind last year's 38 percent, but above the 5-year average of 27 percent.

Pasture conditions were reported as 1 percent very poor, 5 percent poor, 34 percent fair, 52 percent good, and 8 percent excellent. **Winter wheat** conditions were reported at 7 percent very poor, 12 percent poor, 35 percent fair, 40 percent good, and 6 percent excellent.

Potato planting is in full swing in the central area of the state. **Peas** are also being planted. There were also reports of **plum** and **apple** trees beginning to bloom. There were reports of a few farmers starting to plant **soybeans** in the southern part of the state.



Wisconsin Crop Conditions as of April 22, 2005					
Item	V.-poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	Percent				
Pasture	1	5	34	52	8
Winter Wheat	7	12	35	40	6



Wisconsin Crop Progress, April 24, 2005

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
Oats Planted	28	17	34	33	34	62	84	86	85	51	59	40
Oats Emerged	1	0	0	4	2	6	25	35	20	11	13	8
Corn Planted	2	3	3	2	2	9	13	14	19	8	2	4
Spring tillage completed	20	32	43	26	29	35	51	41	54	36	38	27

Quotes from Farm Reporters and County Ag Agents

BARRON-A.B.: Alfalfa seeding well underway in most areas. Fertilizer and manure are being spread. Level areas suffered the heaviest winter damage on alfalfa-probably from ice after January rains. First corn planting will start this week.

POLK-C.S.: Older stands of alfalfa suffered very severe winterkill. New seedings appear to have come through alright. The spring weather has been favorable. Spring tillage and fertilizing are progressing ahead of normal. Small grain seedings are moving along quite rapidly. There has been no corn planted yet.

CLARK-N.S.: Winterkill in alfalfa is showing up in low spots, old stands, and some fields with a late harvest last fall. Damage may be a little worse in the northeast corner of the county. Tillage is starting to pick up as soon as soils dry.

TAYLOR-D.E.: Last week's rain helped bring out the frost in the ground. Tillage is well underway, and some oats have been planted. Some winterkill on hay has been reported.

SHAWANO-T.A.: Winterkill on the alfalfa is present. Even last year's seedings are affected by the ponding and freezing of winter rain. Winter wheat appears to have fared a little better than the alfalfa. Spring tillage on the light ground is well underway. Heavier soils are going slower for tillage and seeding.

DUNN-J.F.: Some corn has been planted on the sandy soils. Potato planting will near completion this week. Oats are up on the light soils. Alfalfa looks to be pretty good this year. New seedings are very good, older stands are pretty good as well.

TREMPEALEAU-J.Z.: Very little winterkill has been seen. Tillage is progressing slow; soil is slow to dry.

PORTAGE-D.Z.: Much-needed 1.50 inches rain on Tuesday; now alfalfa is starting to green up. We are finding some winterkill damage. Potatoes, oats, and alfalfa planting is in progress.

WAUPACA-D.L.H.: Winterkill is showing up in alfalfa fields as high as 30 percent. Some oats sowed.

FOND DU LAC-E.A.: Alfalfa has a lot of winterkill. Winter wheat seems to be in good shape. Some sewing of small grains and grass seed is going on.

OUTAGAMIE-E.W.: Most alfalfa in immediate area is good. Some low areas in other fields show winterkill damage. Some wheat looks great, others in fair to good condition. A lot of seeding went in very nicely. There is no corn planting done in our area.

SHEBOYGAN-E.P.: Alfalfa winterkill is spotty. Wonderful weather for planting. Most oats are planted, and some has emerged already.

GRANT-E.B.: A lot of corn going in this week. With the warm temperatures, it is germinating fast. Everything seems to be 7-10 days ahead of normal.

IOWA-S.M.: Lots of alfalfa acres are being sprayed with Roundup. Peas, corn, and alfalfa are being planted. Ground temperature has cooled off a little. Weeds are starting to appear on no-till ground.

DANE-D.R.: Ice sheet damage showing in alfalfa and winter wheat fields. Assess damage as crop progresses. Corn planting began with good weather last week.

DODGE-M.H.: Corn planting began this week. Light rains early in the week helped the oats to germinate. Many alfalfa fields suffered winterkill. Fields will likely be planted to corn or interseeded with grasses to increase forage yield.

RACINE-L.F.: The wonderful weather has corn planting taking front seat and some larger farmers have 350-500 acres planted. Many are running scared because of last year's spring.

WALWORTH-E.P.: Most farmers around here replanted lost alfalfa fields.

WASHINGTON-K.R.: Most winter wheat has some winterkill. About half the fields are a real question as what to do with them, keep them in, or take out and plant something else.

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This report has been made possible through the cooperative efforts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and the National Weather Service.

Wisconsin Weekly Weather, Selected Cities, Ending as of 7:00 a.m. on April 24, 2005

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 April 23	Mar. 1 to April 23 normal *	Last week	Since March 1	March 1 dep. from normal*	Year to date
Eau Claire	65	40	82	29	53	6	231	86	1.31	3.84	-0.16	5.73
Green Bay	63	39	80	32	51	5	161	74	0.94	2.49	-1.52	5.42
La Crosse	66	45	82	32	56	5	267	113	1.15	3.82	-0.72	6.50
Madison	65	42	80	31	54	6	241	117	0.28	3.13	-1.68	6.78
Milwaukee	60	42	80	34	51	4	135	n.a.	0.49	2.18	-3.27	7.28

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 1971-2000 data. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center <<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov>>. N.a. = not available. T = trace.