Rain, Heat, and Humidity

The past week brought warm, humid days and scattered showers across the state. In some areas, the added moisture really aided crop growth, while in other areas it caused stress. Many reporters stated that crops growing on lighter, higher soils looked excellent, while crops growing on heavier, lower soils were waterlogged and uneven. Weeds were also becoming a larger problem for many growers as rain showers and wind continued to slow herbicide applications.

Across the reporting stations, average temperatures last week ranged from 3 to 9 degrees above normal. Average high temperatures ranged from 84 to 87 degrees, while average low temperatures ranged from 66 to 72 degrees. Precipitation totals ranged from 0.89 inches in Madison to 3.49 inches in Green Bay. There were 4.6 days suitable for fieldwork. If you are interested in further weather data, please reference the following sites:

http://www.was.wisc.edu/~scc/
http://www.cocorahs.org/
http://www.weather.gov/

Corn continued to look good overall, with the average height of corn throughout the state reported at 59 inches high. Corn silked was reported at 13 percent complete, 9 percentage points above the five-year average. Throughout the state growers reported that corn responded well to the moisture really aided crop growth, while in other areas it caused stress. Many reporters stated that crops growing on lighter, higher soils looked excellent, while crops growing on heavier, lower soils were waterlogged and uneven. Weeds were also becoming a larger problem for many growers as rain showers and wind continued to slow herbicide applications.

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[Soybeans were reported at 21 percent in bloom statewide. While mold was reported as a concern in Juneau County. In Kewaunee County, sandhill cranes were reported as a problem since they have been eating leaves and small pods that had started to form. Across the state, oats headed was nearing completion, reported at 98 percent complete. Harvest of oats is ahead of schedule, with 2 percent reported complete statewide. This is the earliest oat harvest has been reported since records began in 1985.]

Winter wheat was reported as looking excellent and having turned a golden color. Some growers reported that they have begun harvesting winter wheat.

First cutting hay was wrapping up, with 98 percent reported complete statewide. Second cutting hay continued, reported at 50 percent complete statewide. Reported yields for second crop were good to excellent. Third crop was reported as coming back and looking good.

Raspberries and blueberries were reported as being picked in Clark County.

In Vilas County, potatoes were reported as being ahead of previous years, as they were in blossom and tubers had begun to form. Harvest of potatoes was reported as beginning in Portage County, and a report stated potatoes were starting to rot in the ground in Vernon County.

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Selected Quotes from Farm Reporters and County Ag Agents

All comments are used in creating this report, but only a few are published below.

BARRON-J.N.: Hay crops have been good. All crops are doing well, quality seems on track.

POLK-R.S.: Farms that have been able to harvest second crop alfalfa between the rains are harvesting excellent quality and yield. A fair amount of hay down has been rained on, though. Soybeans are progressing well. Corn is also doing well, but there is a significant number of uneven stands.

MARATHON-S.N.: Sunny, high humidity and temperatures dominated the week. Intermittent showers produced 1.4 inches of rain on the Fourth of July weekend. Mid-week showers produced 0.30 inches to 0.60 inches of rain. Corn and soybeans look good for most of Marathon County. Farmers reported wheat and oats are looking very good with both crops turning a golden color. Farmers predict that they will be able to combine oats in two weeks. Farmers in the southeast part of the county report yellowing of corn and soybeans due to excessive moisture in their heavy soil.

VILAS-R.K.: Potatoes are ahead of previous years. Most are in blossom and tubers are forming. Heavier soils could use some drying. The crops in those fields are under some stress from excess moisture. Conditions are very favorable for the development of blight. Fungicides need to be applied to susceptible crops.

FLORENCE-T.B.: Not much change from the previous week. The weather for the most part was wet from rain or very high humidity. Was an excellent week for corn growth. Second crop hay has gotten off to a very good start.

LANGLADE-A.K.: Enough rain, 5.0 to 6.0 inches in our area this past week, impossible to hay. Over-all crop growth is the best in years.

BUFFALO-R.S.: Saw a few corn tassels on July 4th, now a lot of fields are starting to silk. About 1.0 inch of rain for the week. With humidity it is hard to dry hay. Oats have turned color. Barley and wheat harvest looks like it will start in a week. Second cut hay is good yield. Some soybean fields really look poor.

TREMPEALEAU-J.H.: In general corn and soybeans look great except for a few wet areas. Corn just starting to tassel. Second crop hay yields okay. Wheat is turning color.

PORTAGE-J.W.: Snap beans flowering, but slightly paler. Saw a field of potatoes being harvested. Three inches of rain slowed a lot of activity. Soybeans and corn suffering from excessively wet fields. Soybean fields are weedy. Too wet to apply herbicide.

WOOD-M.L.: It has been very difficult to harvest small grain nurse crops for alfalfa establishment typically harvested as forage. Fields are soft, oats and barley are thick, lodged and beginning to turn color. Second crop hay is excellent, corn in low areas appear to be permanently damaged.

WINNEBAGO-S.E.: Crops look good except for drowned out areas and fields that didn’t get sprayed. Wheat is uneven in ripening.

CRAWFORD-J.B.: Wet weather earlier in the week caused minor flooding in the Gays Mills area. Also, heavy down pours in other parts of the county caused some prevented planting of both soybeans and vegetable crops. Vegetable crops hit by flash flooding a couple of weeks ago are recovering nicely. Some potatoes hit by that same flash flooding will be lost. With the exception of those situations, overall, crops in the county seem to be doing very well. Corn is beginning to tassel, oats and wheat are beginning to ripen and soybeans are starting to bloom. Hay has also done very well; however, as wet weather set in, quantity went up, quality went down.

GREEN-M.M.: Many corn fields have started shooting tassels. Majority of second crop has been harvested with yields above average. Most beans are flowering. Majority of corn and beans look good except in low-lying field were excess moisture has stunted growth.

OZAUKEE-K.A.: Dry and hot; could use rain. Spraying is almost done. Corn is looking good; seen some tassel July 4th. Soybeans are tall for this time of year. Not much disease pressure yet; alfalfa being sprayed for leaf hoppers. First crop hay all done. Wheat and oats turning fast.