Cold Snap Brings First Snows

There were 6.4 days suitable for fieldwork for the week ending November 20, 2016, according to the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service. Warm, clear weather during the week allowed farmers to make good progress with tillage and combining. Many reporters statewide noted that grain elevators were full and storage space was a major limiting factor in finishing up the corn harvest. A cold front swept across the state Friday, bringing strong winds, plunging temperatures, and the first snows of the season. Daytime highs ranged from the 50s to low 70s early in the week but were in the 20s and 30s on Saturday and Sunday. Pockets of northern Wisconsin received up to 5 inches of snow, though most of the state received only trace amounts with no accumulation reported. Some reporters commented that the ground was starting to freeze, while others noted that wet spots continued to interfere with fieldwork. Farmers were spreading manure, baling corn stalks and cleaning up machinery for winter storage.

Topsoil moisture supplies were rated 0 percent very short, 3 percent short, 81 percent adequate and 16 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture supplies were rated 0 percent very short, 2 percent short, 83 percent adequate and 15 percent surplus.

As of November 20, 92 percent of the state’s corn for grain had been harvested, 2 days ahead of last year, and 11 days ahead of the 5 year average. The average moisture of corn harvested for grain this week was 17 percent, 1 percentage point down from last week. Soybeans were 98 percent harvested, even with the 5 year average.

Ninety-five percent of winter wheat had emerged, slightly behind last year. Winter wheat was rated 83 percent good to excellent. Fall tillage was 77 percent complete; 2 days behind last year, but 5 days ahead of average.
BAYFIELD/DOUGLAS-C.B.: About 3-5 inches of snowfall throughout the area. Only a trace of snowfall in areas close to Lake Superior. The heaviest snowfall was in the western part of the area.

BARRON-T.B.: Growers were rushing to finish harvest before deer season. Lots of corn harvested this week and most of the soybeans have been harvested. The winter wheat is greening up nicely and the cover crops are looking good as well. First extended period of sub-freezing temps has put some frost in the ground.

CLARK-R.H.: Another good week of weather. Corn was coming off the field, but some elevators are getting full and there are some delays as grain is getting moved to make room for the last of the 2016 crop. Fall field work is winding down on some farms and most of the manure pits have been emptied. Now would be a good time to think about pruning your fruit trees this fall while the weather is favorable.

SHAWANO-B.R.: Both corn and soybeans are now pretty much off for the season. Still have some tillage to do yet.

BUFFALO-S.M.: Good conditions for field work over the last few weeks have contributed to a timely harvest. The upcoming cold will be welcome to firm up wet subsoil. Good yields from harvest—especially on corn fields which had been rotated from soybeans the year before.

LA CROSSE-I.H.: Harvesting continued right up to the freeze on Saturday, then deer hunting took over. Many farmers are now cleaning their equipment and putting it away for the winter. There are a few fields left and corn that cows and beans left in the field at this time will remain there due to the wet fields and more than adequate rain this fall.

ADAMS/MARQUETTE/WAUSHARA-D.B.: Need some frozen ground to finish up the wet spots in fields.

WOOD-M.L.: It has been a good week. Fields were so saturated earlier that there are still wet areas to contend with. Yields have been great, grain elevators are full and it is a challenge to find storage for corn and soybeans.

FOND DU LAC-B.B.: Another great stretch of weather. The crops are harvested and attention has turned to baling up bedding, applying manure and tillage. By and by, field operations are wrapped up for the season. We did have about a half-inch of snow with the big change in weather the Friday overnight. The warmth was fun while it lasted.

VERNON-K.L.: Weather was above normal with a few windy days. Rain was minimal.

DODGE-R.J.: Fall harvest is wrapping up after a good week weather-wise.

ROCK-C.O.: Corn harvest would be complete if there was a place to go with the grain. Elevators have filled up.

OZAUKEE/WASHINGTON-G.S.: Only a few fields of corn left to harvest. Most producers have gotten their crops off and are winding down for the winter. Yields were above normal.

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**Wisconsin Weekly Weather, Selected Cities, Ending as of 7:00 a.m. on November 20, 2016**

City | Temperature | Growing degree days (modified base 50) | Precipitation |
---|---|---|---|
| Avg. max. | Avg. min. | High max. | Low min. | Avg. | Avg. dep. from normal | Mar. 1 to Nov. 19 | Mar. 1 to Nov. 19 normal | Last Week | Since Sep. 1 | Sep. 1 dep. from normal | Year to date | Year dep. from normal |
| Eau Claire | 54 | 32 | 64 | 21 | 43 | +11 | 3162 | 2598 | 0.04 | 10.96 | +3.71 | 38.02 | +7.61 |
| Green Bay | 58 | 38 | 68 | 26 | 48 | +14 | 3048 | 2456 | 0.07 | 7.12 | +0.41 | 28.74 | +1.89 |
| La Crosse | 59 | 36 | 70 | 24 | 48 | +12 | 3775 | 2952 | 0.03 | 12.72 | +5.81 | 43.56 | +13.10 |
| Madison | 57 | 36 | 70 | 24 | 47 | +11 | 3395 | 2922 | 0.00 | 13.67 | +6.94 | 46.05 | +15.56 |
| Milwaukee | 58 | 41 | 72 | 27 | 49 | +10 | 3513 | n.a. | 0.00 | 8.38 | +0.90 | 29.02 | +2.52 |

1/ Formula used: GDD = (daily maximum (86°F) + daily minimum (50°F))/2, where 86°F is used if the maximum exceeds 86°F and 50°F is used if the minimum falls below 50°F. Normal based on 1971-2000 data. n.a. = not available. T = trace. Source: NCEP/NOAA Climate Prediction Center; http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov.