Record Breaking April Blizzard

There was 1.0 day suitable for fieldwork for the week ending April 15, 2018, according to the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service. Farmers in southern Wisconsin did a limited amount of fieldwork this week, mostly manure and fertilizer applications, before wintry conditions halted progress. Starting Friday, a three day blizzard dumped yet another round of heavy, wet snow across the state, with high winds and whiteout conditions in some areas. Central and northeastern portions of the state were especially hard-hit with reporters noting up to two feet of new snow on top of the existing snowpack. The storm was the second largest snowstorm ever recorded at the NWS weather station in Green Bay, more than doubling the previous records for largest April snowstorm and snowiest April. There were a few reports of barn roofs collapsing due to the sheer weight of the snow. Overwintered crops remained largely dormant. Reporters commented that it will be a few weeks before fieldwork can begin across much of the state.

Topsoil moisture supplies were rated 1 percent very short, 6 percent short, 76 percent adequate and 17 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture supplies were rated 1 percent very short, 7 percent short, 81 percent adequate and 11 percent surplus.

As of April 15, spring tillage was 2 percent complete statewide, up 1 percentage point from last week, but 4 percentage points behind the 5 year average. Oats planted were reported as 2 percent complete, 9 percentage points behind last year and 6 points behind the 5 year average.

Winter wheat was 50 percent in good to excellent condition statewide, up 2 percentage points from last week.

The maple syrup season continued in some parts of the state but has slowed considerably over the past week.
CHIPEWA/EAU CLAIRE-J.C.: Winter is hanging on tight. Some pen pack manure being spread. Maple syrup yields are average with good sugar content.

RUSK-G.P.: A late winter storm dumped 10+ inches of snow on what was still on the ground. Spring activities are at a standstill and will be for some time yet. Maple syrup season continues to limp along but it will not be a good year. Too early to tell how alfalfa and wheat have made it through the winter.

ASHLAND/IRON-C.B.: No changes from previous week. No field activity due to low temps and snow cover.

CLARK/PRICE/TAYLOR-D.M.: With as much as 23 inches of snow dumped in Central WI over the weekend and more forecasted for mid-week, Spring has gone into hiding. Farmers are antsy to get in the fields, but still frost in the ground as much as 5 inches according to our more northern counties. Maple sap season has been steady and long with high sugar content being reported.

MARINETTE-L.B.: The blizzard has everything covered in snow. We were fortunate to not get the huge amounts others did.

SHAWANO-S.S.: Hard to run my planter through 30 inches of snow.

MONROE-B.H.: The area received 8 to 14 inches of snow over the weekend along with plenty of sleet. There will not be much field activity until fields get back into suitable condition after the storm.

TREMPEALEAU-L.N.: The snow from last week finally was starting to go away and we have a new snowstorm moving in tonight.

WAUPACA/OUTAGAMIE-D.L.H.: We've been gripped with a spring blizzard since Saturday. 24 inches of wet snow will halt any spring work for the next week.

WOOD-M.L.: We are not late yet but deep snow on the ground is unusual for this time of year.

FOND DU LAC/WASHINGTON-B.B.: Rain, sleet, snow and hail this past week. At least the topsoil will be well charged ahead of spring planting.

DOOR/KEWANEE-A.B.: Two feet of snow over the weekend is really going to push back the planting season. Right now operators are more concerned about removing snow off barn roofs, several collapses have been reported.

WINNEBAGO-D.M.: 16 inches of snow on Saturday and Sunday.


ROCK-B.K.: Anhydrous application was going well early in week until a late week snow and ice cover. Weekend snow and ice has brought everything to a halt.

Wisconsin Weekly Weather, Selected Cities, Ending as of 7:00 a.m. on April 15, 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Growing degree days (modified base 50)</th>
<th>Precipitation</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Avg. max.</td>
<td>Avg. min.</td>
<td>High max.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eau Claire</td>
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<td>Milwaukee</td>
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</tbody>
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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'.


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