Planting Starts, Stalls

There were 3.5 days suitable for fieldwork for the week ending May 6, 2018, according to the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service. Manure spreading, planting and tillage were going full tilt as this week opened, with many farmers reportedly working through the night. Widespread rain mid-week slowed or halted progress in many areas. Fieldwork resumed quickly in the northern portions of the state, where precipitation was light and scattered. The rains were much heavier across southern Wisconsin, particularly in a band from the Southwest to East-Central Districts. Reporters in these areas noted up to 6 inches of rain received, halting fieldwork and flooding low ground. Winter wheat, hay and pastures greened up rapidly in response to the warm, wet conditions.

Topsoil moisture supplies were rated 0 percent very short, 4 percent short, 73 percent adequate and 23 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture supplies were rated 1 percent very short, 6 percent short, 75 percent adequate and 18 percent surplus.

As of May 6, spring tillage was 30 percent complete statewide, 2 days behind last year and 5 days behind the 5 year average.

Corn planting was 15 percent complete, 1 day ahead of last year but 4 days behind the 5 year average.

Five percent of the state’s expected soybean acres have been planted, 3 days ahead of last year but 1 day behind the 5 year average.

Oats planting was reported as 29 percent complete, 8 days behind last year and 9 days behind the 5 year average. Eight percent of the oats had emerged, 11 days behind last year and 8 days behind the 5 year average.

Potato planting was reported as 18 percent complete, 12 days behind last year.

Winter wheat was 73 percent in good to excellent condition statewide, up 16 percentage points from last week.

Pasture condition was rated 48 percent in good to excellent condition, compared to 29 percent in good to excellent condition last week.
BAYFIELD/DOUGLAS-C.B.: Nice weather this week. Fields starting to dry up. Some field activity started in well drained and sandy loam fields. Much of the heavy clay soils are still too wet to work up.

SAWYER-K.S.: Winter has turned to summer this past week with very pleasant temperatures and sunshine. As a result, lots of field activities happening simultaneously. Corn planting will likely start in earnest this week where field conditions allow. Topsoil moistures are getting dry due to warm temps and wind. Fire danger is extreme in some areas. Pastures are greening up nicely. Rain is forecast this week which for the most part will be welcomed.

CLARK-R.H.: Finally farmers were able to scratch an itch. Some manure being applied on fields and some primary tillage. Talked to a few farmers that were concerned as manure pits were full and they needed to start hauling. Soil temperature this morning was 51 degrees in a tilled field, 52 degrees in a no-tilled field, air temperature was 53 degrees. Talking to farmers, money is tight but they are taking delivery of seed and fertilizer. About half inch of rain this week has really greened up hay fields and lawns. Winter small grains are looking good.

MARINETTE-L.B.: Manure is hauled, oats and new seeding planted. Starting to work corn ground and pick rocks

MONROE-B.H.: The area received between 3.5 and 6 inches of rain last week. That brought field activities to a halt on all but the lightest ground.

PIERCE/CROIX-A.M.: First full week of field work with tillage and manure hauling. Planters were actively in fields most of the week. Scattered showers did hinder some progress in areas. Pastures are becoming green. Preliminary indications appear to have minimal winterkill. Forecast looks good for fieldwork.

PORTAGE/WOOD-J.B.: Rained three different times last week for a total of 2.1 inches in my area. Varied a lot all over. Still reports of frost in the ground in areas last week. I saw a little oats on the high ground going in and the rest too wet to even spread manure on. Potatoes going in on the sands were even delayed a bit by the rains. There will be no fresh reds by the first of July in this area!

DOOR/KEWAUNEE-T.S.: Some limited manure application occurred this week.

WINNEBAGO-R.V.: Rain early this week greened up the winter wheat but the surplus of rain has since drowned out many fields and flooded areas. Corn planted early on in the week may already need to be replanted or will see reduced population.

VERNON-K.L.: Rain almost every day this last week, roughly 5 inches total with some localized heavier amounts. Temperatures are getting warmer each day.

DODGE-M.P.: The week started out great for field work and planting corn. With temperatures in the 70s, tractors were running around the clock trying to get crops in the ground. Tuesday night brought rain that continued until Thursday, some areas received close to 4 inches. This pretty much stopped all field activity. Wheat and alfalfa needed the rain however, and are now looking really good. Field work should resume this week.

ROCK-C.O.: Corn for the most part is planted. Still no lilacs blooming so spring is not here yet.

WASHINGTON/FOND DU LAC-B.B.: Just as field work went full speed ahead, 4.65 inches rain ground field operations to a halt. There was enough time to drill the oat crops at least. Pastures are growing at a good rate now. Winter wheat both improved and degraded dependent on site. Annual weeds are starting to germinate. A couple of weeks of dry weather would sure help.

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**Wisconsin Weekly Weather, Selected Cities, Ending as of 7:00 a.m. on May 6, 2018**

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<th>City</th>
<th>Avg. max.</th>
<th>Avg. min.</th>
<th>High max.</th>
<th>Low min.</th>
<th>Avg.</th>
<th>Avg. dep. from normal</th>
<th>Mar. 1 to May 5</th>
<th>Mar. 1 to May 5 normal*</th>
<th>Last Week</th>
<th>Since Mar. 1</th>
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**Notes:**

- Formula used: \( GDD = (\text{daily maximum (86}^\circ\text{F}) + \text{daily minimum (50}^\circ\text{F})/2 - 50) \), where 50\(^o\)F is used if the maximum exceeds 86\(^o\)F and 50\(^o\)F is used if the minimum falls below 50\(^o\)F.
