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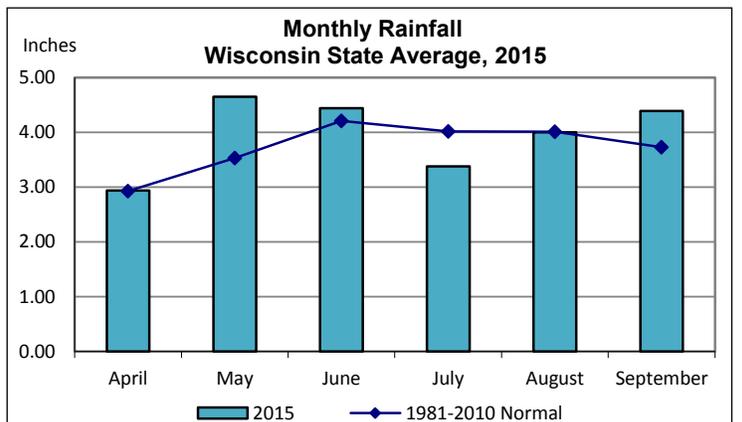
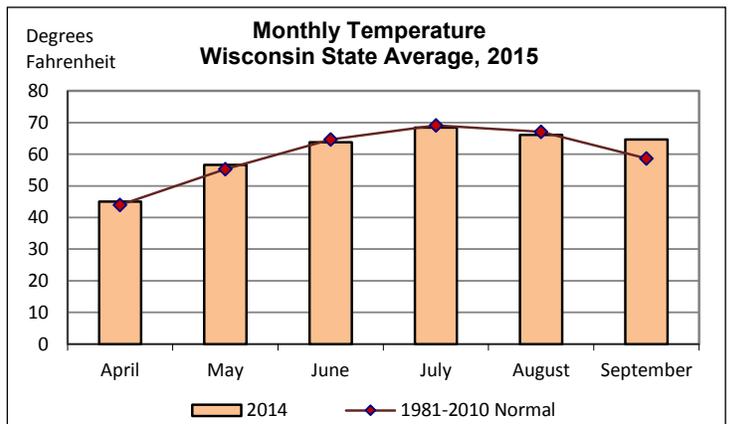
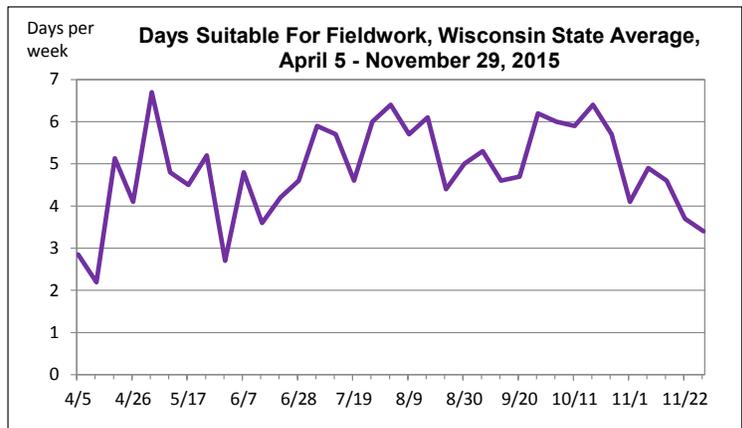
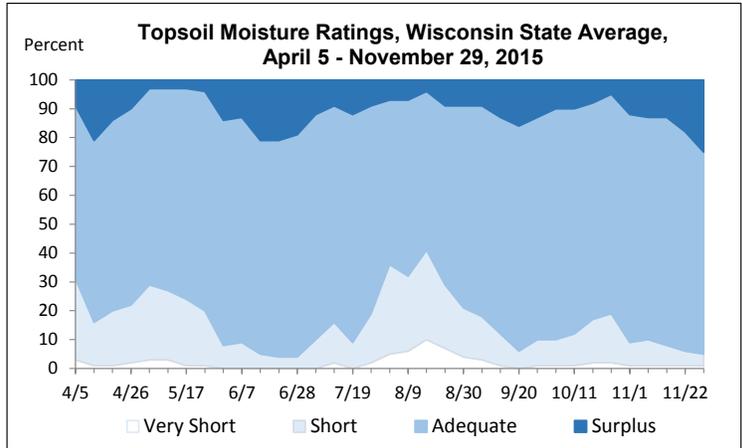
- Crop Progress Annual Review

The Crop Progress and Condition Report is made possible by the dedication of our volunteer Crop Progress Reporters. Thanks for your help!

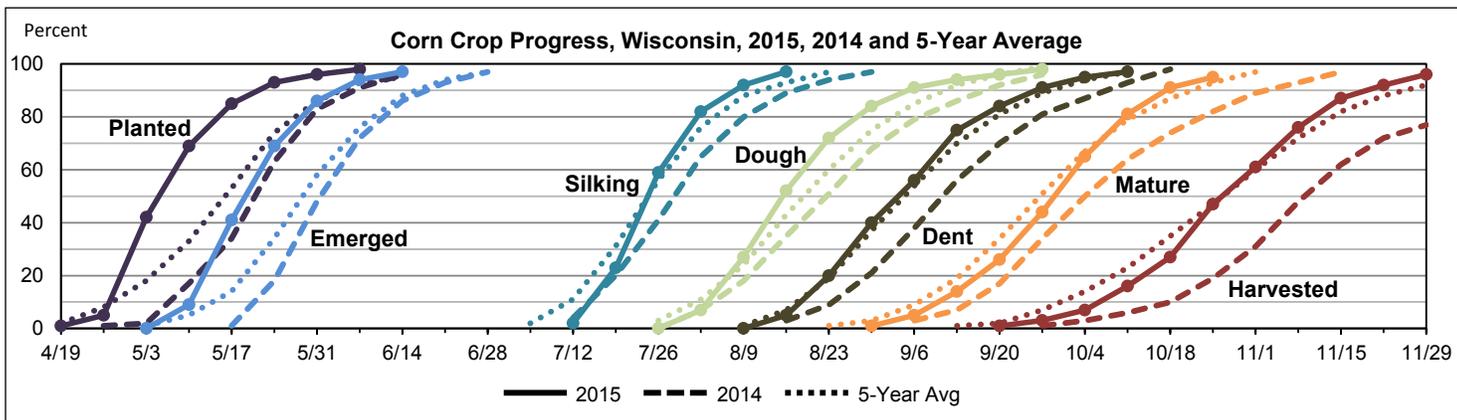
The 2015 planting season opened with limited snow cover and dry soil conditions due to below normal precipitation in January, February, and March. In early April, spring showers followed by unusually warm temperatures allowed tillage and planting to surge well ahead of average. Conditions throughout April and May alternated between summer-like warm spells favorable for fieldwork and cold snaps which impacted hay, pastures and emerging crops. Despite this, spring tillage, planting, and emergence for the major crops remained ahead of the five-year average. Heavy rains in late May and June alleviated dry soil conditions statewide, but brought excessive moisture to the north and east. Dry conditions then returned as the occasional showers received during July and August were not enough to sustain soil moisture levels. Topsoil moisture was 41 percent short to very short statewide on August 16, with all three of the southern districts reporting shortages of over 60 percent. Temperatures during the summer months hovered just below normal. This combination of dry and cool conditions slowed development of some crops but was favorable for hay and small grains harvest. Record warm temperatures during September allowed crops to mature before the first frosts of the season hit in early October. Low grain moistures and good field conditions helped harvest activities proceed in line with the five-year average throughout the autumn months. Tillage activities came to a halt in the third week of November, as a strong cold front brought a hard freeze to the northern half of the state and heavy snow to the south. On November 29, harvest activities were wrapping up statewide and 86 percent of fall tillage was complete, 22 percentage points more than the previous year.

Statewide, **temperatures** from April to September were 0.9 degrees above normal, compared to 1.0 degrees below normal in 2014. April and May, had temperatures 1.0 and 1.3 degrees above normal respectively. Temperatures in June, July and August ranged from 0.7 to 1.0 degrees below normal. With a statewide average of 64.7 degrees F, this September was the warmest in 121 years of climate records, beating the previous record set in 1931 by 0.3 degrees. This was 6.0 degrees above normal for September. October's temperatures were 2.0 degrees above normal and November's temperatures were 6.2 degrees above normal, making this the fourth warmest November since 1895.

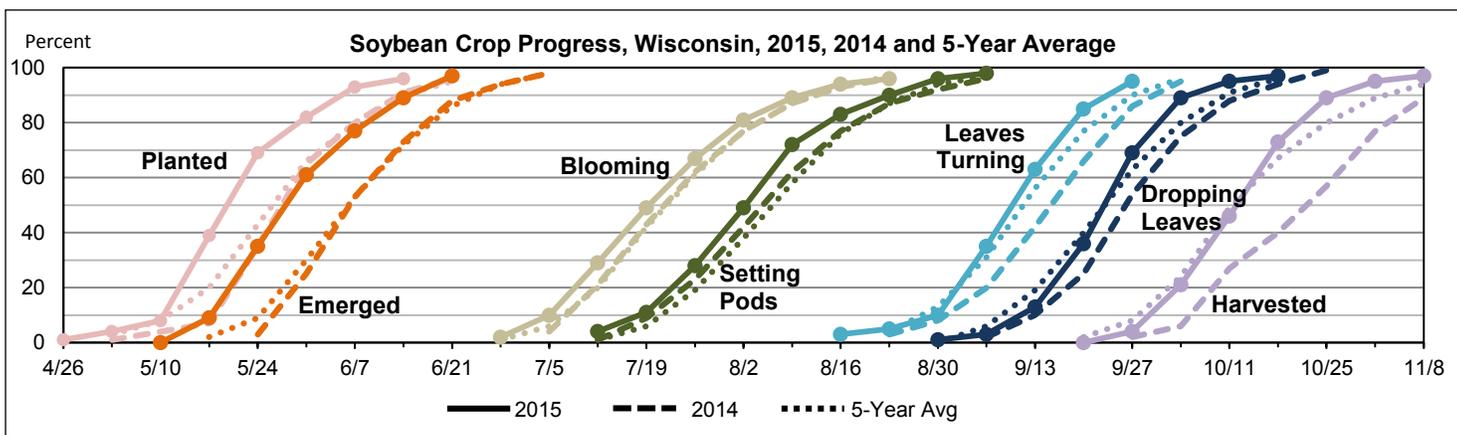
Precipitation totals for April through September averaged 23.80 inches statewide. This was 1.37 inches above normal and 3.32 inches below the total for 2014. This statewide average conceals a strong district-level variation in precipitation, however, with district departures from normal ranging from 2.08 inches below normal in the Southwestern District to 4.06 inches above normal in the West-Central District. Overall, the three northern districts averaged 1.23 inches above normal, the central districts averaged 2.57 inches above normal, and the southern districts averaged 0.08 inches above normal for April through September.



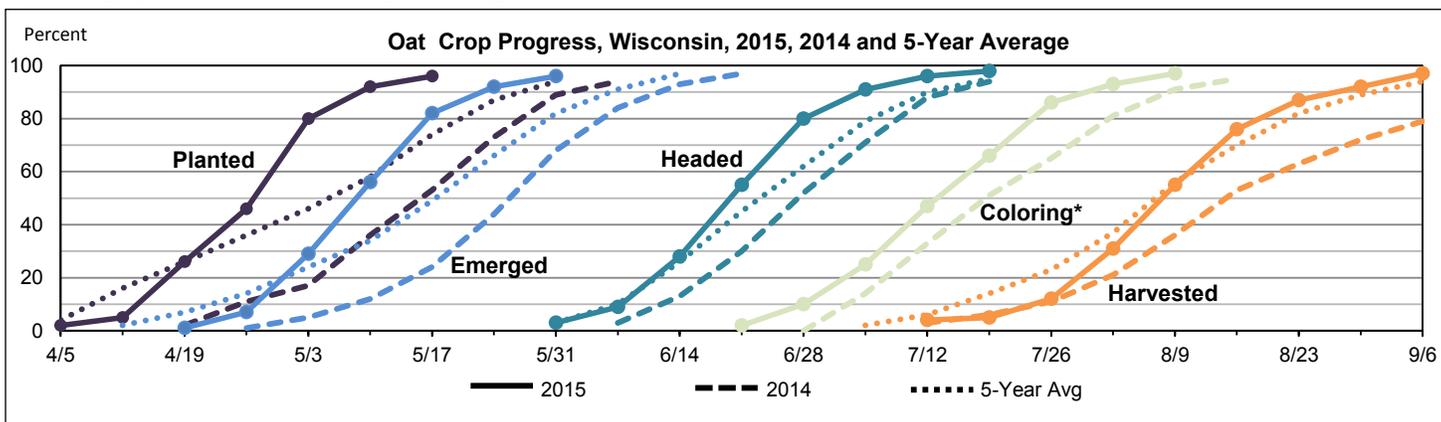
Corn planting kicked off in mid-April and wrapped up by the end of May, about two weeks ahead of both last year and the five-year average. Cool, dry weather in the summer months slowed the corn crop's growth after this early start, moving maturity into line with the five-year average. Corn condition averaged 80 percent good to excellent for the season, with the best conditions reported in June and a slight decline following the dry spell of July. Reporters commented that the unusually warm weather of September matured the crop before the first frost in many areas. Chopping silage got off to a slow start in early September but accelerated rapidly as the crop dried down, reaching 98 percent harvested on October 18. The grain harvest kept close to the five-year average as occasional rains in October and November interrupted fieldwork. Heavy snow received in mid-November fell mostly in areas where fields had already been harvested. Frozen soils helped combines reach the last of the standing corn as November drew to a close. Corn harvested for grain reached 96 percent complete on November 29, over 2 weeks earlier than the previous year.



Soybeans planting accelerated in mid-May, with both planting and emergence running a week ahead of the five-year average. Similarly to corn, soybean maturity was pushed back toward the five-year average due cool, dry weather during the summer months. Condition averaged 81 percent good to excellent for the growing season, with the best condition reported at the start of the year, a slight dip in condition during this summer's dry weather, and a recovery in the late summer and early fall. Soybeans harvest kicked off in mid-September and proceeded quickly as farmers took advantage of excellent weather for fieldwork. Ninety-five percent of the crop was harvested by November 1, well ahead of the 77 percent harvested on November 1, 2014.

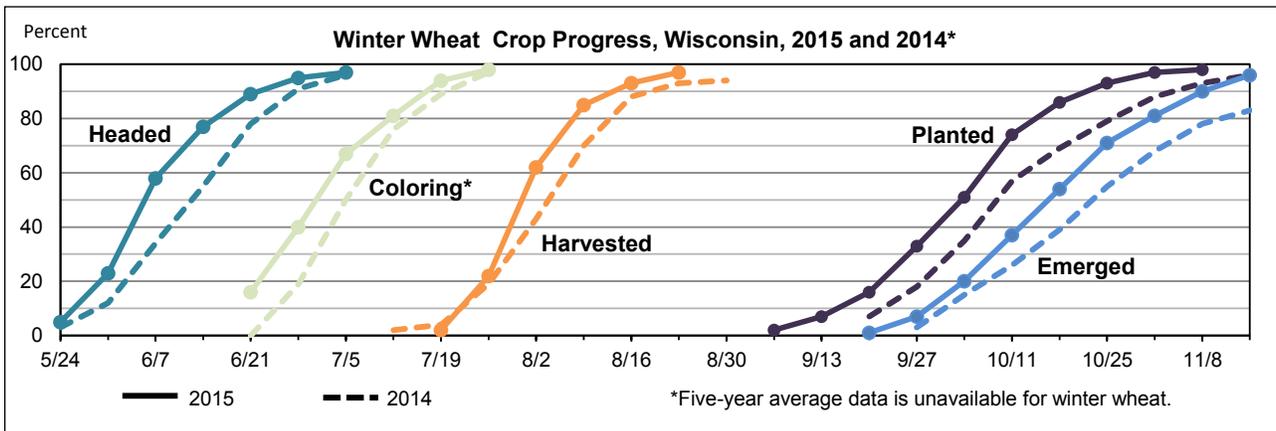


This year's early snow-melt allowed **oats** planting and emergence to proceed much more quickly than the five-year average, wrapping up nearly two weeks early. The heading stage showed similarly rapid progress throughout June, though it was only one week ahead of average. By mid-July, the oats harvest was slow to get started, with reports of severe thunderstorms damaging small grains during the week ending July 19. However, progress was rapid once combining got underway; oats reached 97 percent harvested on September 6, three percentage points ahead of the five-year average.

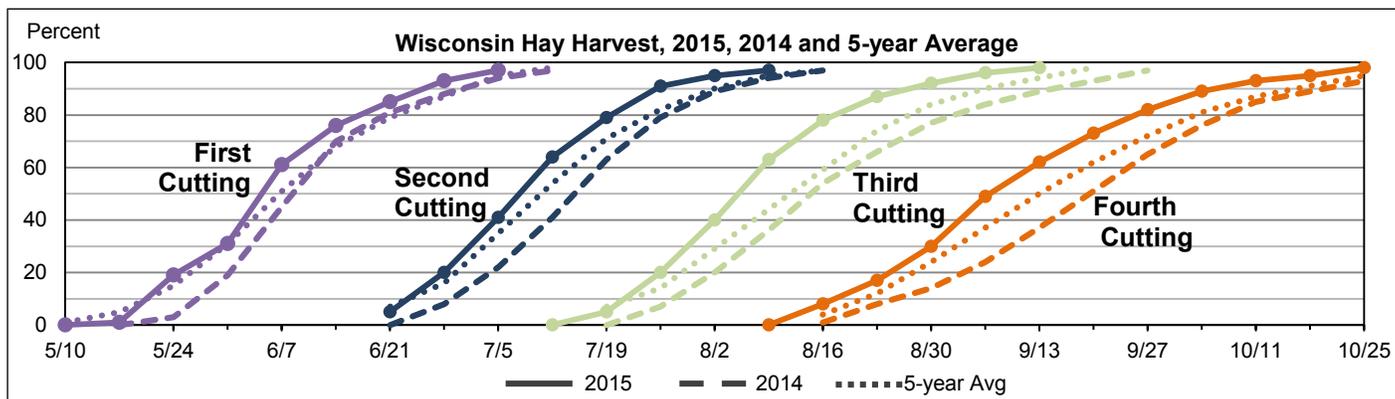


Late plantings the previous fall, limited snow cover, and severe cold in February all contributed to winterkill in the 2015 **winter wheat** crop, particularly in the northern portions of the state. Slightly above normal temperatures during March helped the crop to green up early, but a series of spring freeze events further damaged wheat fields in some areas. Despite these setbacks, winter wheat conditions showed steady improvement throughout the season, reaching 81 percent good to excellent in mid-July. Crop maturity measures were ahead of the previous year throughout the spring and summer. Harvest activities began the week ending July 19 and reached 97 percent complete on August 23.

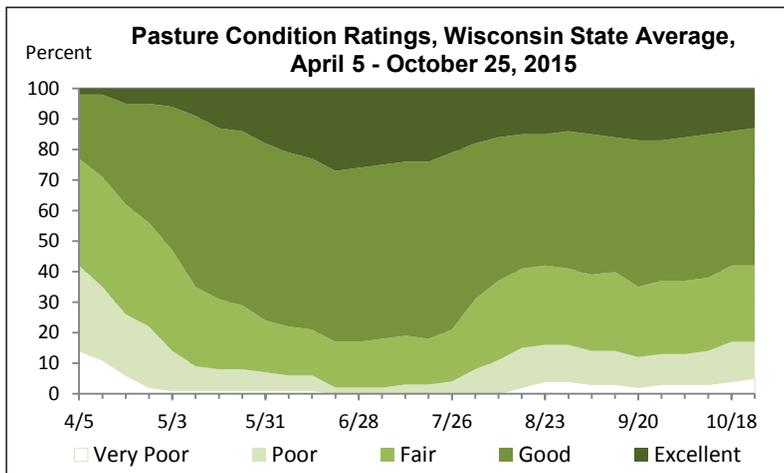
Fall planting and emergence of the 2016 crop proceeded about a week ahead of the previous year. On average, 85 percent of winter wheat was in good to excellent condition throughout November thanks to above normal temperatures and weekly rain showers.



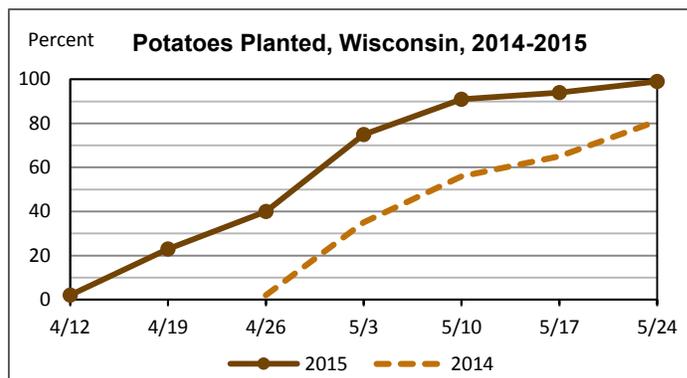
On May 10, winter freeze damage to **alfalfa** was rated 3 percent severe, 7 percent moderate and 18 percent light. There was no damage to the remaining 72 percent of hay stands, down from 82 percent undamaged the previous year. The lack of snow cover combined with a very cold February and several freezes in April and May contributed to the damage, particularly in the Northeastern district where only 21 percent of hay was undamaged. A cool summer and warm fall, plus an abundance of days suitable for fieldwork made 2015 a good year for haying. All four cuttings proceeded ahead of the five-year average, though the first cutting was slowed by frequent rains in June. The second, third, and fourth cuttings set the second fastest harvest pace in the last 35 years, trailing only the record-breaking 2012 haying season. The overall average for hay condition was 80 percent good to excellent, with 85 percent of all hay in good to excellent condition on July 26. Hay supplies were 1 percent short, 74 percent adequate and 25 percent surplus on November 1. Reporters noted that hay stands were in good condition for winter due to the warm fall temperatures.



Pasture condition improved throughout April and May, despite multiple spring freezes. Abundant moisture helped pasture condition peak for the season with 83 percent of pastures in good to excellent condition on June 21 and 28. Condition then declined due to a lack of rain in July and August, but held steady around 60 percent good to excellent from mid-August through mid-October. Overall, pasture condition averaged 69 percent good to excellent for May through October, the same as the previous year. Reporters commented that above normal temperatures in the autumn months kept pastures suitable for grazing much later in the season than usual.



Potato planting was underway about two weeks earlier in 2015 than in the previous year due to limited snow cover. Planting reached 99 percent complete on May 24. Potato condition averaged 93 percent good to excellent. Harvest of canning and storage potatoes began by the end of July. The harvest wrapped up with 97 percent harvested on October 18, in line with the previous year. There were some reports of fields going unharvested as very high yields led to a lack of storage space.



MONTHLY TEMPERATURES: 2015 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL¹, WISCONSIN DISTRICTS AND STATE AVERAGE

District	April		May		June		July		August		September	
	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal
	Degrees Fahrenheit											
NW	43.8	42.4	54.2	54.1	63.0	63.2	68.2	68.0	64.7	65.9	63.1	57.1
NC	42.6	41.6	54.3	53.4	61.5	62.5	66.5	66.8	63.5	64.9	62.5	56.4
NE	42.1	42.0	55.3	53.4	61.1	62.9	67.1	67.2	64.8	65.4	63.1	57.0
WC	47.2	45.7	58.1	56.8	66.3	66.2	69.9	70.6	67.3	68.3	66.1	59.7
C	46.3	45.2	58.5	56.3	65.0	65.7	69.1	69.9	67.4	67.8	65.8	59.4
EC	44.4	44.1	56.8	54.8	63.4	64.8	68.7	69.4	67.3	67.8	65.5	59.8
SW	48.2	46.9	59.6	57.7	66.4	67.3	69.8	71.4	68.3	69.3	67.2	61.1
SC	47.8	46.8	59.3	57.7	65.8	67.4	69.2	71.5	68.2	69.4	66.9	61.3
SE	46.5	46.1	57.8	56.6	64.3	66.6	68.8	71.2	68.2	69.6	66.7	61.7
STATE	45.0	44.0	56.6	55.3	63.8	64.7	68.4	69.1	66.1	67.1	64.7	58.7

1. Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1981-2010. Source: WI State Climatologist

MONTHLY RAINFALL: 2015 GROWING SEASON AND NORMAL¹, WISCONSIN DISTRICTS AND STATE AVERAGE

District	April		May		June		July		August		September	
	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal	2015	Normal
	Inches											
NW	2.18	2.65	4.24	3.36	3.92	4.09	4.56	4.08	5.22	4.01	4.21	3.97
NC	2.62	2.62	4.62	3.39	4.53	4.04	3.19	3.95	3.43	3.81	3.43	4.01
NE	2.59	2.57	4.77	3.23	3.94	3.77	2.46	3.68	3.85	3.46	4.46	3.61
WC	3.28	3.13	5.25	3.78	5.36	4.44	5.26	4.25	4.28	4.49	4.59	3.87
C	3.38	3.00	5.33	3.60	4.54	4.35	2.69	4.04	3.63	4.03	4.97	3.61
EC	2.67	2.86	4.27	3.26	3.65	3.87	1.96	3.67	4.03	3.59	5.12	3.38
SW	3.48	3.56	4.91	4.02	5.15	4.83	2.22	4.44	3.45	4.52	3.54	3.46
SC	3.58	3.37	4.37	3.71	4.82	4.63	3.52	4.09	3.74	4.18	5.55	3.50
SE	4.10	3.42	3.64	3.61	3.76	4.04	2.96	3.78	3.54	4.02	5.14	3.42
STATE	2.94	2.93	4.65	3.53	4.44	4.21	3.38	4.02	4.00	4.01	4.39	3.73

1. Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1981-2010. Source: WI State Climatologist

COMPARATIVE TEMPERATURE AND PRECIPITATION DATA, WISCONSIN DISTRICTS AND STATE AVERAGE

District	Average Temperature						Total Precipitation					
	June - September						April - September					
	Normal ¹	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Normal ¹	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	Degrees Fahrenheit						Inches					
NW	63.6	64.4	65.0	64.0	63.2	64.8	22.16	21.91	20.80	22.23	30.31	24.33
NC	62.7	63.5	64.0	63.0	62.0	63.5	21.82	21.98	19.10	25.44	27.92	21.82
NE	63.1	64.0	64.6	63.3	62.4	64.0	20.32	20.56	17.54	21.29	23.31	22.07
WC	66.2	67.1	68.2	67.1	66.3	67.4	23.96	22.39	18.86	23.55	30.55	28.02
C	65.7	66.5	68.0	66.4	65.7	66.8	22.63	22.34	16.96	21.16	25.88	24.54
EC	65.5	66.2	67.6	65.5	64.5	66.2	20.63	22.06	17.92	20.13	25.65	21.70
SW	67.3	68.3	69.3	67.9	67.0	67.9	24.83	21.80	15.26	28.66	25.36	22.75
SC	67.4	68.2	69.7	67.6	66.7	67.5	23.48	19.87	14.03	27.69	25.69	25.58
SE	67.3	67.9	69.6	66.9	65.9	67.0	22.29	21.88	14.52	25.47	23.56	23.14
STATE	64.9	65.8	66.7	65.3	64.5	65.8	22.43	21.71	17.86	23.83	27.12	23.80

1. Normal is defined as the 30-year average for the years 1981-2010. Source: WI State Climatologist