

# MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture  
**NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE**  
**MONTANA FIELD OFFICE**  
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 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION MONTH OF DECEMBER 2020

**AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY:** The month of December was exceptionally warm and dry for the state of Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Reporters across the state noted a lack of precipitation and high winds throughout the month of December. Temperatures across the state were higher than the daily historical averages for a majority of the month. High temperatures ranged from the high 20s to the mid-60s. Low temperatures ranged from the mid-40s to the teens. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, approximately 63 percent of Montana is in a current state of drought, with about 8 percent of the state in severe or extreme drought. Topsoil moisture conditions were 39 percent adequate to surplus, down from 46 percent in the previous report. Subsoil moisture conditions were 45 percent adequate to surplus, a slight improvement from 40 percent in the previous report. So far, winter freeze and wind damage to winter wheat remains low, but continued high winds and minimal snow cover could deplete conditions. Snow coverage for the state is minimal, with no coverage rated good to excellent, 56 percent of the state has poor snow coverage and 44 percent very poor coverage. Winter wheat condition is rated 65 percent good to excellent, declining from 74 percent in the previous report. Pasture and range conditions improved slightly from the last report with 58 percent rated good to excellent. Livestock producers are providing supplemental feed at a higher rate than normal, with 86 percent of cattle and calves and 85 percent of sheep and lambs being fed.

**Note:** Monthly reports will be released for January on Monday, January 25, 2021; for February on Monday, February 22, 2021; and for March on Monday, March 29, 2021.

### CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Cattle and calves				
Receiving supplemental feed .....	86	62	75	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Receiving supplemental feed .....	85	78	83	NA

NA – not available  
 (--) – zero

### SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Topsoil moisture				
Very short.....	15	18	--	NA
Short.....	46	36	14	NA
Adequate .....	39	46	73	NA
Surplus .....	--	--	13	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	13	20	--	NA
Short.....	42	40	7	NA
Adequate .....	45	40	79	NA
Surplus .....	--	--	14	NA

NA – not available  
 (--) – zero

**CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION**

Commodity	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Grazing accessibility				
Open .....	94	NA	55	NA
Difficult .....	6	NA	30	NA
Closed.....	--	NA	15	NA
Pasture and range				
Very poor.....	14	24	1	NA
Poor .....	28	25	3	NA
Fair .....	50	33	20	NA
Good.....	8	18	56	NA
Excellent.....	--	--	20	NA
Winter wheat				
Very poor.....	1	3	4	NA
Poor .....	4	7	12	NA
Fair .....	30	16	29	NA
Good.....	58	60	25	NA
Excellent.....	7	14	30	NA
Winter wheat – wind damage				
None .....	72	NA	70	NA
Light .....	14	NA	15	NA
Moderate.....	8	NA	13	NA
Heavy .....	6	NA	2	NA
Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage				
None .....	83	NA	61	NA
Light .....	13	NA	19	NA
Moderate.....	3	NA	16	NA
Heavy .....	1	NA	4	NA
Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover				
Very poor.....	44	NA	12	NA
Poor .....	56	NA	17	NA
Fair .....	--	NA	31	NA
Good.....	--	NA	25	NA
Excellent.....	--	NA	15	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero