

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 MARCH 2021

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: The month of March produced warmer winter conditions and minimal moisture across the state of Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Reporters across the state noted very little moisture was received in March and high winds have continued to dry out soil. Temperatures were unseasonably warm throughout the month, as temperatures stayed higher than the historical highs and lows for several days. Low temperatures ranged from the high teens to low 50s, while high temperatures ranged from the high 30s to mid-60s. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, approximately 80 percent of Montana is abnormally dry or in a current state of drought, with about 17 percent of the state in severe to exceptional drought. Topsoil moisture conditions were 24 percent adequate to surplus, down significantly from 47 percent in the previous report. Subsoil moisture conditions were 29 percent adequate to surplus, down from 49 percent in the previous report. Snow coverage for the state has declined from the previous month, with 2 percent rated good to excellent, compared to 57 percent rated good to excellent in the previous report. Winter wheat condition is rated 54 percent good to excellent, down from 69 percent in the previous report. Pasture and range conditions declined slightly from the last report with 9 percent rated good to excellent. Livestock producers are providing supplemental feed at a lower rate than the previous year, with 86 percent of cattle and calves and 89 sheep and lambs being fed. Overall, weather for calving and lambing has been excellent, but without moisture livestock reductions are likely due to drought conditions. An estimated 35 percent of calving and 26 percent lambing has been completed, compared to 30 percent and 25 percent, respectively, the previous year.

Note: The first weekly report will be released on Monday, April 5, 2021.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current report (percent)	Previous report (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy.....	18	NA	6	NA
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved.....	35	3	30	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	86	97	94	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambed.....	26	3	25	NA
Receiving supplemental feed.....	89	97	98	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero

SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current report	Previous report	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Topsoil moisture				
Very short.....	30	12	--	NA
Short.....	46	41	10	NA
Adequate.....	23	46	72	NA
Surplus.....	1	1	18	NA
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	27	11	1	NA
Short.....	44	40	5	NA
Adequate.....	29	48	71	NA
Surplus.....	--	1	23	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.....	71	41	47	NA
Difficult.....	9	24	16	NA
Closed.....	20	35	37	NA
Pasture and range				
Very poor.....	28	21	NA	NA
Poor.....	32	21	NA	NA
Fair.....	31	47	NA	NA
Good.....	7	9	NA	NA
Excellent.....	2	2	NA	NA
Winter wheat				
Very poor.....	6	2	--	NA
Poor.....	10	9	2	NA
Fair.....	30	20	48	NA
Good.....	48	61	48	NA
Excellent.....	6	8	2	NA
Winter wheat – wind damage				
None.....	53	57	23	NA
Light.....	21	26	53	NA
Moderate.....	18	10	20	NA
Heavy.....	8	7	4	NA
Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage				
None.....	65	71	33	NA
Light.....	17	20	42	NA
Moderate.....	15	7	25	NA
Heavy.....	3	2	--	NA
Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover				
Very poor.....	76	10	46	NA
Poor.....	17	9	31	NA
Fair.....	5	24	12	NA
Good.....	2	46	9	NA
Excellent.....	--	11	2	NA

NA – not available

(--) – zero