

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
 April 25, 2022

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CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION WEEK ENDING APRIL 24, 2022

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: This week brought another spring blizzard with varying snow totals and freezing temperatures to Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Precipitation totals varied greatly this week across the State. Dawson and Wibaux Counties reported roughly 18 inches of snow from the most recent blizzard. Parts of Valley County recorded less than one tenth of an inch of snowfall, while other areas in the county reported significant moisture. Sheridan County reported 0.3 inches of rainfall. Musselshell and Golden Valley Counties reported half an inch of rainfall, along with high winds. Despite the precipitation received during the last 2 weeks, precipitation totals for the year are 3 inches below average. The spring storms, however, have improved snowpack. According to the National Resources Conservation Service in Montana, most areas now have 80 to 99 percent of average snowpack present – compared to 70 to 89 percent of average snowpack present reported on April 10. The northwest corner of the State and Bitterroot Basin continue to have above normal snowpack – ranging from 108 to 122 percent of average snowpack present. Temperatures this week were unseasonably cold due to the storm. The northeastern corner of the State recorded temperatures 6 to 10 degrees below average. Temperatures in the central and southwestern portions of the State were 2 to 6 degrees below average. Drought conditions remain mostly unchanged. According to the United States Drought Monitor for April 21, 2022, 90.6 percent of the State continues to experience drought conditions. The amount of land rated as abnormally dry remained at 5.2 percent and moderate drought conditions also remained unchanged at 2.9 percent. Severe drought conditions increased to cover 32.1 percent of the State, compared to 30.0 percent last week. Extreme drought conditions decreased to cover 50.4 percent of the State, compared to 52.5 percent last week.

Toole County received minimal moisture from the storm and reported very dry conditions. Comments from Valley County were mixed this week. Reports from the portions of Valley County that received much needed moisture from the storm indicated grass is beginning to green up and producers are starting to plant spring crops. Areas of the county that received minimal moisture from the storm reported slow grass growth and producers running very low on hay. Reports from Valley County also indicated that the drought is stressing green ash trees which are being attacked and killed by bark beetles. Reservoirs in the southern part of the county are still very dry and producers remain concerned about the availability and quality of water for livestock. Roosevelt, Dawson, Wibaux, and Custer Counties reported calves lost due to the storm. Portions of Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties received welcome snowfall from the storm; however, high winds quickly dried up any moisture from snow melt. Producers are preparing to send livestock to summer pastures earlier than normal due to lack of hay. Topsoil moisture levels were reported as 49 percent very short, 31 percent short, and 20 percent adequate, compared with 51 percent very short, 34 percent short, and 15 percent adequate last week. Subsoil moisture levels were reported as 50 percent very short, 36 percent short, and 14 percent adequate, compared with 52 percent very short, 39 percent short, and 9 percent adequate last week.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous week (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Barley				
Planted	25	20	27	18
Canola				
Planted	5	2	9	8
Dry edible beans (includes Chickpeas)				
Planted	5	1	4	3
Dry edible peas				
Planted	20	15	21	21
Emerged	3	NA	NA	NA
Durum wheat				
Planted	5	3	7	6
Flaxseed				
Planted	4	2	11	7
Lentils				
Planted	18	3	16	12
Mustard seed				
Planted	8	1	8	3
Oats				
Planted	9	5	9	6
Safflower				
Planted	3	1	1	1
Spring wheat				
Planted	18	10	19	14
Emerged	1	NA	1	--
Winter wheat				
Breaking dormancy	79	73	75	NA
Cattle and calves				
Cows calved	78	69	77	78
Moved to Pasture	5	NA	NA	NA
Receiving supplemental feed	92	95	78	70
Sheep and lambs				
Ewes lambed	64	61	65	71
Moved to Pasture	3	NA	NA	NA
Receiving supplemental feed	96	97	79	75

NA – not available
 (--) – zero

DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK AND SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
Days suitable for field work	3.3	1.8	4.5	4.7
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short	49	51	27	8
Short	31	34	30	13
Adequate	20	15	37	65
Surplus	--	--	6	14
Subsoil moisture				
Very short	50	52	22	8
Short	36	39	35	16
Adequate	14	9	42	65
Surplus	--	--	1	11

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, LIVESTOCK, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Grazing accessibility				
Open	63	63	80	78
Difficult	17	20	9	13
Closed	20	17	11	9
Pasture and range				
Very poor	78	69	24	8
Poor	15	22	32	13
Fair	6	7	40	41
Good	1	2	3	28
Excellent	--	--	1	10
Winter wheat				
Very poor	21	15	2	2
Poor	20	15	13	6
Fair	40	54	32	28
Good	17	14	43	42
Excellent	2	2	10	22

NA – not available

(--) – zero