

# 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 WEEK ENDING SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

**AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY:** It was a week of varying temperatures and mixed precipitation according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Much of Montana received at or above average amounts of precipitation according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). The highest amounts of moisture were received in central portions of the State. Some outlying areas in the north, southwest, and southeast received at or below normal amounts of moisture. The week was also marked with variable temperatures. Readings ran as low as 6 degrees below average in parts of the west, and as high as 8 degrees above average in eastern sections of the State. Minimal changes were seen in drought conditions according to the U.S. Drought Monitor report released September 21, 2023. The amount of land rated drought free increased by one percentage point to 53 percent. Abnormal dryness fell by the same amount to 8 percent. Moderate drought was found in 14 percent of Montana, compared with 13 percent last week. Severe drought was found in 15 percent of the State, down from 16 percent last week. Extreme drought conditions were unchanged at 10 percent. Fields were too dry for field activity in Dawson County, and operators refrained from seeding winter wheat. Farmers were eager for precipitation to improve soil conditions. The fall season was well underway in Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties with the falling temperatures. Frost had already occurred in some areas, and snow had fallen at higher elevations. Harvests for pumpkins, apples, other mixed fruits, and vegetables moved forward. There was abundant hay in Ravalli County with good prices depending on type of hay. Small square bales of grass hay were selling at a premium.

### CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous week (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Alfalfa hay				
2 <sup>nd</sup> cutting harvested .....	95	90	NA	NA
Barley				
Harvested .....	95	92	99	96
Canola				
Harvested .....	77	75	NA	NA
Corn				
Harvested for silage .....	44	34	46	48
Harvested for grain .....	17	8	17	8
Dry edible beans (includes Chickpeas)				
Harvested .....	95	88	NA	NA
Durum wheat				
Harvested .....	95	93	NA	NA
Flaxseed				
Harvested .....	95	89	NA	NA
Oats				
Harvested .....	80	78	NA	NA
Other hay				
2 <sup>nd</sup> cutting harvested .....	80	76	94	NA
Safflower				
Turning color .....	82	78	NA	NA
Harvested .....	32	29	88	53
Spring wheat				
Harvested .....	95	94	100	95
Winter wheat				
Planted .....	37	17	55	31
Cattle and calves				
Moved from pasture .....	36	31	29	NA
Sheep and lambs				
Moved from pasture .....	34	27	34	NA

NA – not available

(-) – zero

### DAYS SUITABLE FOR FIELDWORK AND SOIL MOISTURE CONDITION

	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
Days suitable for fieldwork .....	5.1	6.9	6.5	5.7
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short .....	38	38	53	28
Short .....	39	44	42	33
Adequate .....	23	18	5	35
Surplus .....	--	--	--	4
Subsoil moisture				
Very short .....	56	48	50	32
Short .....	29	31	45	32
Adequate .....	15	21	5	33
Surplus .....	--	--	--	3

NA – not available

(-) – zero

**CROP, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION**

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous week (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
<b>Corn</b>				
Very poor .....	1	1	3	4
Poor .....	13	7	9	9
Fair .....	20	15	23	22
Good .....	57	66	62	55
Excellent .....	9	11	3	10
<b>Pasture and range</b>				
Very poor .....	10	15	36	26
Poor .....	15	20	25	21
Fair .....	27	28	19	24
Good .....	41	32	20	23
Excellent .....	7	5	--	6
<b>Safflower</b>				
Very poor .....	--	--	NA	NA
Poor .....	--	--	NA	NA
Fair .....	32	23	NA	NA
Good .....	68	77	NA	NA
Excellent .....	--	--	NA	NA

Current conditions for Sugarbeets are available using the QuickStats on-line database at: [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick\\_Stats/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/)

NA – not available

(--) – zero