

MONTANA CROP PROGRESS



United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
MONTANA FIELD OFFICE
 P.O. BOX 150969 · Lakewood, CO 80215-0969
 Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Eric Sommer
 (800) 392-3202

CROP PROGRESS AND CONDITION WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 29, 2023

AGRICULTURAL SUMMARY: Moisture levels were above normal for the majority of Montana, according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Much of the State received about 0.3 to 0.9 inches of moisture, according to data from the High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC). In various other areas, totals approached about 2 inches. Exceptions were in the far northwest, and in a few other outlying locales, where levels ran below normal. Temperatures ran well below average for almost all of Montana. The bulk of the State experienced temperatures running 12 to 18 degrees below normal. Some central and northern parts of the state experienced temperatures as much as 24 degrees colder than average. Changes in drought conditions were once again minimal according to the U.S. Drought Monitor report released October 26, 2023. The amount of land rated drought free increased by two percentage points from last week to 58 percent. Abnormal dryness was unchanged, at 9 percent. Moderate and severe drought conditions both fell by one percentage point to 13 and 19 percent, respectively. Extreme drought conditions were unchanged, at 1 percent. Potato harvest was complete in Broadwater County, and most farmers were able to finish a third cutting of hay before the storms hit. Most of Chouteau County received snow ranging from 4 to 10 inches, with nighttime temperatures in the single digits. Winter wheat planting came to an end, even for farmers who had intentions to plant more. Golden Valley and Musselshell Counties also received snow, with totals reaching 6 inches. With the arctic blast in Mineral, Missoula, and Ravalli Counties, enough snow covered grounds that livestock producers began feeding hay to their herds. Temperatures were expected to be above freezing for the new week, which would open up fall grazing areas again. Harvests and planting efforts came to a halt in Prairie County with the onslaught of the early snow and extremely cold weather.

CROP AND LIVESTOCK PROGRESS

Commodity	Current week (percent)	Previous week (percent)	Previous year (percent)	5-year average (percent)
Corn				
Harvested for silage	94	86	NA	NA
Harvested for grain	72	68	64	50
Other hay				
2 nd cutting harvested	96	93	NA	NA
Safflower				
Harvested	85	82	NA	NA
Sugarbeets				
Harvested	61	46	67	66
Winter wheat				
Planted	96	78	97	93
Emerged	78	62	83	72
Cattle and calves				
Moved from pasture	69	52	50	62
Receiving supplemental feed	44	23	40	33
Sheep and lambs				
Moved from pasture	61	45	58	64
Receiving supplemental feed	34	11	27	35

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	2.5	6.8	5.5	4.9
Topsoil moisture	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	18	24	32	22
Short	32	37	39	29
Adequate.....	48	39	26	43
Surplus.....	2	--	3	6
Subsoil moisture				
Very short.....	31	40	44	25
Short	29	31	40	32
Adequate.....	38	29	16	39
Surplus.....	2	--	--	4

NA – not available

(--) – zero

CROP, PASTURE AND RANGE CONDITION

Commodity	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	5-year average
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Winter wheat				
Very poor	1	1	10	7
Poor	1	7	15	11
Fair.....	22	31	43	32
Good	26	20	21	39
Excellent	50	41	11	11
Pasture and range				
Very poor	15	18	20	24
Poor	15	19	20	18
Fair.....	24	27	32	25
Good	43	34	27	28
Excellent	3	2	1	5

Current conditions for Sugarbeets are available using the QuickStats on-line database at: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Quick_Stats/

NA – not available

(--) – zero