



# Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup



Cooperating with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture  
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Week Ending August 31, 2008

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*This report can be found on the Internet at [www.nass.usda.gov/pa](http://www.nass.usda.gov/pa) and click on "Pennsylvania Publications."*

**Good week for Field Work:** Five days were suitable for field work last week. Principal farm activities included mowing weeds, making hay, fall plowing, spreading manure and lime, planting alfalfa, picking fruit, as well as harvesting corn for silage, sweet corn, tobacco, potatoes, tomatoes and other vegetables. Farmers are also preparing for fall harvest. Fall plowing continues and shows to be 17 % completed.

### PA Topsoil Moisture for Week Ending August 31, 2008

Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
21	40	38	1

**Crops:** Last week's rain seemed to slightly improve corn condition for Pennsylvania. Corn condition was estimated as 67 percent good or excellent condition compared with 65% last week. Nine percent of the corn is estimated as poor or very poor. The state's corn is 86% at the dough stage, 50% dented, and 18% mature, compared with the average of 73%, 39%, and 12% respectively. Soybean condition declined again last week as 64% of the soybeans were rated as good or excellent. This is compared with last week's 69%. Corn silage harvest continues and shows to be 22% completed. The potato harvest is estimated to be 24% complete. The tobacco harvest shows to be 64% harvested. Alfalfa third cutting is nearing completion at 96% completed. The fourth cutting continued and is 32% complete. The second cutting of timothy clover is 90% completed, compared with the average of 77%. The rain seemed to cause a slight decline in the quality of hay. Seventy-two percent good or excellent represents the hay quality, with 2 percent rated as poor or very poor. The peach harvest is 90 percent completed, which is 7 points better than last year and the average. The apple condition declined and is estimated at 66 percent good or excellent. The apple harvest shows to be 29% complete, compared with last year's 35% and the average of 33%.

**Livestock:** Pasture conditions declined again last week. Thirty percent of the state's pastures were estimated to be in good or excellent condition, which is down 13 points from last week. Thirty percent of the pastures were rated as poor or very poor, compared to last week's 19 percent. Overall, the state's pasture condition was estimated as follows: 9% very poor, 21% poor, 40% fair, 27% good, and 3% excellent.

**U.S. as of August 24, 2008:** Highlights: Tropical Storm Fay made four landfalls in Florida between August 18 and 23, resulting in a prolonged period of gusty winds and torrential rainfall. Cities in Florida particularly hard hit by flooding included Melbourne, Jacksonville, and Tallahassee. In addition, tropical storm-force winds buffeted much of southern Florida on August 19 and the southern Atlantic Coast (north of Fay's center) on August 21-22. Nevertheless, Florida's major citrus and

sugarcane areas escaped Fay's passage with only minor wind and flood damage, because maximum sustained winds never topped 65 M.P.H. and flooding rains fell largely outside major agricultural regions. At week's end, Fay weakened to a tropical depression over western Florida and southern Alabama, but continued to produce locally heavy rainfall. In contrast, intensifying short-term dryness adversely affected pastures and late-developing summer crops in the eastern Corn Belt and the Mid-Atlantic States. Unfavorable dryness also persisted in parts of the upper Midwest, including Minnesota and areas along the Iowa-Nebraska border. However, late week showers in the central Corn Belt were heaviest in parts of Missouri, Illinois, and Michigan. Farther west, heavy precipitation subsided across the south-central U.S. by midweek, but not before additional rainfall totaled 4 inches or more in parts of central Oklahoma and southern and eastern Texas. On the southern Plains, rain hampered fieldwork but boosted soil moisture in preparation for winter wheat planting. Elsewhere, hot, dry weather prevailed in the West, except for isolated showers in the Four Corners region and occasional precipitation from the Pacific Northwest to the northern Rockies. In general, Western conditions favored fieldwork and crop development, including the opening of cotton bolls in California and Arizona. Extreme heat continued early in the week in the Northwest.

**Corn:** Throughout the week, weather across the Corn Belt was mostly dry with temperatures within 3 degrees of normal, except in isolated southern portions of the region. Acreage at or beyond the dough stage reached 68 percent, 20 points behind last year and 14 points behind the 5-year average. Acreage in Pennsylvania and Texas reached the dough stage ahead of last year. Development in Colorado, Michigan, and Pennsylvania was ahead of the average pace. Elsewhere, progress was delayed. Twenty-six percent of the corn acreage reached denting, 32 and 21 points behind last year and the 5-year average, respectively. In Colorado and Pennsylvania, denting occurred ahead of normal, while elsewhere, progress was delayed. Condition of the corn crop was rated 64 percent good to excellent, a 3 point decline from last week and the first weekly decline since mid-June.

**Soybeans:** Weather conditions were mostly dry with normal temperatures throughout the growing region, except in the South and isolated areas along the Mississippi River where needed rainfall was received. Condition of the soybean crop was rated 61 percent good to excellent, 1 point lower than last week's rating.

**Oats:** Oat harvest, at 88 percent complete, was 7 points behind last year and 3 points behind the 5-year average. Harvest was complete in Ohio and Texas, and was at or behind the normal pace except in Ohio and Pennsylvania.

### Weather Data For Week Ending August 31, 2008

Station	Last Week Weather Summary						April 1 - August 31, 2008					
	Temperature				Precipitation		Precipitation			GDD Base 50F		Base 40F
	High	Low	Average	DFN	Total	Days	Total	DFN	Days	Total	DFN	Total
Northwest												
Erie	87	56	70	2	0.09	3	16.30	-2.01	65	2,372	305	3,790
Franklin	87	48	66	-1	0.36	3	20.22	-0.70	75	2,035	87	3,452
Meadville	84	48	66	1	0.59	5	17.97	-2.79	69	2,036	251	3,452
Mercer	88	49	66	-1	1.32	3	20.68	0.93	78	2,000	73	3,424
Springboro	85	45	64	-5	0.53	4	24.02	5.82	72	1,870	-181	3,259
Warren	88	47	64	-2	0.64	3	21.79	0.97	79	1,914	20	3,299
North Central												
Bradford Region	81	40	61	-1	0.54	5	18.75	-2.13	87	1,469	76	2,778
Emporium	89	46	65	2	1.60	3	16.49	-4.48	77	1,982	422	3,391
Kane	83	39	60	-1	0.94	3	19.49	-1.66	73	1,447	79	2,756
Laporte	80	46	62	-5	0.49	3	21.43	2.18	77	1,738	-206	3,097
Lock Haven	89	48	66	-2	0.79	4	15.91	-3.09	66	2,229	175	3,674
Port Allegany	85	43	62	0	0.84	4	15.09	-4.60	75	1,615	82	2,956
Renovo	90	48	65	-3	0.91	4	16.36	-2.64	63	2,178	124	3,614
Ridgway	84	42	63	-1	1.10	3	18.71	-2.26	74	1,612	52	2,967
Stevenson Dam	89	47	65	3	0.18	3	14.28	-6.69	65	2,007	447	3,411
Towanda	87	45	64	-4	0.40	3	18.22	2.27	67	2,019	59	3,422
Wellsboro	85	43	61	-2	1.24	3	16.75	0.69	75	1,605	127	2,945
Williamsport	87	49	68	-2	0.12	3	17.21	-1.58	66	2,428	164	3,897
Northeast												
Hawley	84	43	63	-2	0.38	3	16.81	-1.40	61	1,844	163	3,216
Wilkes-Barre/Sc	86	49	67	-1	0.05	2	15.75	-1.98	66	2,261	109	3,683
Susquehanna	84	46	64	2	0.69	3	19.44	-0.05	76	1,924	319	3,320
West Central												
Butler	87	49	67	-1	0.74	3	15.36	-4.51	84	1,968	-47	3,404
New Castle	89	47	69	2	0.81	2	16.44	-1.53	74	2,287	271	3,743
Slippery Rock	89	51	66	2	1.30	3	19.26	-0.06	68	1,989	169	3,446
Central												
Altoona/Blair	87	51	67	-1	1.46	3	16.73	-0.49	73	2,187	34	3,619
DuBois	85	47	65	1	2.00	5	19.70	-0.24	82	1,901	28	3,286
Lewistown	90	51	68	-3	0.77	4	18.13	-0.52	63	2,353	-4	3,793
Middletown	90	56	72	1	0.80	3	16.77	-1.50	55	2,789	135	4,273
Prince Gallitzi	88	44	64	-2	1.90	3	19.06	-3.09	67	1,810	78	3,203
Selinsgrove	87	51	66	-2	0.13	3	16.39	-2.65	60	2,286	76	3,725
State College	88	54	68	2	0.67	3	16.76	-0.62	61	2,315	184	3,758
East Central												
Allentown-Bethel	87	49	70	-1	0.13	1	17.50	-2.42	53	2,448	14	3,898
Lehighton	85	46	66	-3	0.27	2	15.97	-3.80	65	2,228	-127	3,663
Matamoras	85	47	66	-3	0.09	1	16.32	-3.76	67	2,038	-95	3,432
Mt_Pocono	79	48	64	2	0.15	2	16.30	-4.94	71	1,737	259	3,092
Southwest												
Pittsburgh/Alle	88	56	70	3	0.92	2	17.44	-1.02	65	2,445	287	3,919
Derry	86	51	67	1	0.66	3	22.54	3.35	76	2,119	80	3,565
Myersdale	84	48	64	-4	1.18	3	23.77	2.86	70	1,589	-413	2,958
Mount Pleasant	87	48	67	2	0.68	2	21.19	-0.63	70	2,091	271	3,550
Pittsburgh Intl	89	55	70	2	1.08	3	17.92	0.52	66	2,404	147	3,876
Connellsville	89	53	70	2	0.32	3	23.79	3.21	73	2,355	59	3,828
Waynesburg	88	53	69	2	0.84	3	22.53	3.40	62	2,124	29	3,584
South Central												
Biglerville	89	51	70	-2	1.58	3	21.19	4.17	57	2,537	-55	4,000
Everett	88	50	67	-2	1.56	3	21.71	4.91	63	2,016	-121	3,438
Hanover	88	50	69	-3	1.50	5	18.75	1.73	62	2,510	-82	3,968
Harrisburg_AP	89	53	72	0	0.75	2	14.43	-3.84	44	2,721	60	4,208
South Mountain	83	48	65	-3	1.14	3	25.45	8.23	73	1,997	-149	3,407
York	87	47	69	-3	1.80	2	22.77	4.17	63	2,545	-34	4,024
Southeast												
Green Lane	86	52	70	1	0.35	3	21.19	1.82	62	2,569	246	4,039
Hamburg	88	51	70	3	0.41	1	15.17	-7.26	58	2,581	448	4,051
West_Chester	86	50	70	-3	0.34	1	16.42	-4.53	48	2,491	-78	3,948
Lancaster	87	51	70	-1	0.83	3	16.62	-3.02	56	2,488	35	3,951
Neshaminy Falls	84	51	70	1	0.49	1	17.17	-5.36	49	2,576	150	4,048
New Holland	88	53	71	1	1.19	2	19.35	-0.29	55	2,637	184	4,107
Philadelphia	86	58	74	1	0.02	1	15.21	-3.98	47	3,069	268	4,574
Philadelphia NE	88	57	75	2	0.36	1	13.50	-5.69	52	3,170	369	4,678
Reading	90	53	71	2	0.41	2	14.28	-6.57	59	2,694	280	4,166
Valley Forge Na	86	50	70	-3	0.43	2	20.49	0.37	54	2,461	-263	3,939
Willow Grove	85	54	71	2	0.42	2	15.91	-6.62	58	2,743	317	4,227

DFN = Departure from normal (using 1961-90 normals period).

Precipitation (rainfall or melted snow or ice) and pan evaporation in inches.

Precipitation days = days with precipitation of .01 inch or more.

Air temperatures in degrees fahrenheit.

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# Internet Reporters Comments, By County:

Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Conservation District (CD), farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.

**ADAMS COUNTY, Judy A Behney (FSA)** - Adams County had a nice week of weather conditions. We started off with a 5 minute shower on Monday. Tuesday and Wednesday were sunny and in the 70's. On Thursday, most areas had about 1/2 inch of rain. Friday had 1.5 inches throughout the whole county. The rainfall came at a nice pace. Saturday through Monday was and nice and sunny, with the temperatures ranging from the 70's into the 80's. Our County Committee met last week. They heard of multiple hailstorms throughout the summer that caused damage to apples, peaches, corn and soybeans. Good wheat yields were reported this year, with some quality issues due to lower test weight. Hay yields are higher than last year. Corn and soybeans continue to grow at different stages throughout the county. The corn stalks were already starting to dry before last weeks rains. Corn silage harvest will start this week. Soybeans are still green, and pods are noticeable now. Hay continues to be made. Peaches are still being harvested and are in good overall condition. Apples are doing okay, however there are quality issues due to hail and scab conditions. Apple quantity seems fairly decent as of now. Vegetables continue to be harvested. Because of the dry weather, they aren't as plentiful as normal. Irrigated sweet corn continues to be harvested. Overall, Adams County's crops are hanging in there. Some crop insurance claims are being reported on apples, peaches, sweet corn, and corn crops due to weather conditions.

**ADAMS COUNTY, Lee Showalter** - Most of the fruit areas received 0.75 to 1.5 inches of rain over the last few days. Unseasonably cool temperatures have had the effect of promoting good coloring on the apples crop.

**CAMBRIA COUNTY, Dolly Little (FSA)** - Cambria County saw much needed rain on Thursday.

**CENTRE COUNTY, Dick Decker** - Last week was a good week for field work with 1/2 inch of rainfall.

**CHESTER COUNTY, Hollis Baker (FSA)** - The silage corn harvest is well underway. The fourth cutting alfalfa and grass has been cut and tilled. Crop conditions are very good.

**COLUMBIA COUNTY, John O Yocum** - We only got 0.2 inches of rain over two days. It was mostly drizzle. Corn leaves are dried up to the ear. Soybeans are wilting in many fields during the day. Even some trees and shrubs are wilting.

**CRAWFORD COUNTY, Ron McCorkle (NRCS)** - The weekend was beautiful for mowing hay. Dry weather is forecasted for the upcoming week. This will give producers a great opportunity to finish hay before the corn silage chopping starts. Pastures are declining rapidly with the continuing dry conditions.

**FOREST COUNTY, Thomas Tanner (FSA)** - The counties need rain for the crops. Wheat and oats are harvested. Farmers are cleaning out animal waste facilities, preparing for the soybean and corn harvest, getting fields ready for fall wheat, and finishing new seeding plantings.

**FRANKLIN COUNTY, Thomas Kerr** - Finally, there was a little more respectable rain. Most areas got around one inch. Corn is drying rapidly, with silage harvest started in the southern part of the county. The dry weather in August has taken its toll on expected corn and soybean yields as well as late season alfalfa cuttings. What looked like a good season at the end of July is now looking like average or slightly less average in much of western Franklin County.

**LACKAWANNA COUNTY, John Esslinger (EXT)** - Vegetable crops are showing moisture stress for the first time this season. Yields are fair to good, with maturity coming slowly. Downy mildew has made a significant impact on cucumber plantings. Pumpkins appear to be maturing nicely, with their harvest to start in the next two weeks.

**LANCASTER COUNTY, Burell Whitworth Jr. (NRCS)** - Heavy rains came on Friday and slowed silage harvest a bit. I expect silage harvest to be in full swing this week since corn is drying so fast.

**POTTER COUNTY, Dave Stratton (FSA)** - Last week was another dry week in Potter County. A little rain at the end of the week provided needed precipitation. Some nice later cutting alfalfa is being harvested.

**SNYDER COUNTY, William C. Sheaffer** - The very light rain during the later part of the week did nothing to alleviate the dry soil conditions. The corn, soybeans, and fourth cutting of alfalfa continue to suffer. The overcast sky has not helped much. Pasture conditions are very poor in some locations. The main activities for the week were haymaking, silo filling, and spreading lime.

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY, John Lohr (FSA)** - Most areas received between one half and one inch of rain last week. For some farms, this was the first significant rainfall this month. Early-planted corn is maturing rapidly. Corn silage harvest will soon begin. Soybean yields have been reduced by this month's extended dry period.

**PA Crop Progress for Week Ending August 31, 2008**

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Fall plowing	17	22	17
Corn, dough	86	83	81
Corn, dent	50	53	49
Corn, mature	18	21	14
Corn silage, harvested	22	21	19
Tobacco, harvested	64	47	46
Potatoes, harvested	24	11	22
Alfalfa, 3rd cutting	96	88	80
Alfalfa, 4th cutting	32	28	20
Timothy clover, 2nd cutting	90	83	77
Peaches, harvested	90	83	83
Apples, harvested	29	35	33

**PA Crop Condition for Week Ending August 31, 2008**

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Corn	1	8	24	47	20
Soybeans	1	6	29	49	15
Quality of hay made	0	2	26	51	21
Pasture	9	21	40	27	3
Apples	0	6	28	43	23

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