

ALBERTA CROP CONDITIONS REPORT #1
As of May 7, 2009

Provincial

The 2009 crop production season is underway with seeding being reported in all areas of the province. Cool spring weather has slowed or delayed seeding operations in all areas but surface moisture is reported as adequate to good throughout the province which will benefit germination. Surface moisture is rated 11% poor/ 31% fair/ 38% good/ 19% excellent/ 1% excessive. The area of greatest concern is sub soil moisture. Currently, with the exception of southern Alberta, most areas are indicating a need for precipitation of varying degrees. Sub soil moisture is rated 18% poor/ 33% fair/ 39% good/ 9% excellent/ 1% excessive. When southern Alberta is excluded from the sub soil moisture calculation, the rating declines to 23% poor/ 34% fair/ 32% good/ 10% excellent/ 1% excessive.

Seeding progress is reported at 13% completed. Very little emergence has occurred due to the cool soils.

Crop	% Seeded by Region					Provincial Seeding %
	South	Central	North East	North West	Peace	
Spring Wheat	30.6%	10.9%	6.6%	11.0%	0.8%	10.8%
Durum Wheat	35.0%	15.8%	5.0%	---	---	32.2%
Barley	19.6%	8.5%	0.2%	0.4%	0%	8.8%
Oats	11.0%	1.4%	0%	0.1%	0%	1.2%
Canola	27.9%	14.0%	2.5%	4.0%	0.8%	7.3%
Flax	4.4%	1.7%	0%	0%	0%	2.1%
Mustards	23.2%	16.7%	0%	---	---	20.4%
Field Peas	63.4%	30.4%	7.5%	10.6%	0.6%	28.3%
Chickpeas	54.0%	10.0%	---	---	---	49.2%
Lentils	57.5%	55.0%	0%	0%	0%	56.9%
Dry Beans	0%	0%	---	---	---	0%
Sugar Beets	75.0%	---	---	---	---	75.0%
Potatoes	58.0%	0%	0%	4.3%	0%	51.6%
2009 To Date	29.53%	11.06%	3.65%	4.63%	0.66%	12.79%
2008 (May 8)	31.9%	7.0%	1.4%	0.7%	0%	11.46%

Hay and pasture ratings are showing the effects of the cool spring at 27% poor/ 35% fair/ 35% good/ 3% excellent.

Southern Alberta

Late April snow across much of southern Alberta enhanced soil moisture conditions with close to 80% of the region rated good/excellent for surface moisture and 65% rated good/excellent for sub soil moisture. There are no areas indicating soil moisture concerns at this time. The snow caused seeding delays and the cool temperatures have slowed soil warming. Overall, it is estimated that seeding progress is 10 – 14 days behind the long term average at 30% completed with very little emergence reported.

81% of fall seed crops have emerged from dormancy rated in good/excellent condition. Hay and pastures are rated 3% poor/ 29% fair/ 55% good/ 13% excellent.

Central Alberta

The region has experienced cool, dry conditions this spring which has slowed soil warming in all areas, soil drying in the extreme western areas along the foothills and delayed hay/pasture growth. Most areas are reporting soil moisture conditions as dry but adequate for germination. Surface moisture is rated 17% poor/ 42% fair/ 35% good/ 6% excellent. Sub soil moisture is rated 17% poor/ 33% fair/ 42% good/ 8% excellent.

Seeding progress is estimated at 11% completed which is modestly ahead of 2008. Fall seeded crops have exited the winter rated 11% poor/ 41% fair/ 46% good/ 2% excellent.

The effects of the cool spring weather are reflected in the low ratings for hay and pasture crops at 23% poor/ 49% fair/ 27% good/ 1% excellent.

North East Alberta

Seeding is just getting started as the cool spring has delayed snow melt in some areas and soil warming. Soil moisture is rated as dry across the region but adequate for germination. Surface moisture is rated 15% poor/ 43% fair/ 28% good/ 12% excellent/ 2% excessive. Sub soil moisture ratings are lower at 27% poor/ 34% fair/ 28% good/ 9% excellent/ 2% excessive. Seeding progress is estimated at less than 4% with no emergence reported to date. Fall seeded crops have emerged poorly from the winter and are rated 40% poor/ 32% fair/ 28% good.

Forage crops are suffering from the cool spring temperatures with wide spread reports of visible frost damage on alfalfa. Hay and pasture conditions are rated 54% poor/ 32% fair/ 14% good.

North West Alberta

Seeding is just getting underway with less than 5% of the region completed, principally wheat and field peas. Soil moisture is generally fair to good in most areas with the exception of the extreme western portion of the region bringing down the ratings. Surface moisture is rated 18% poor/ 33% fair/ 23% good/ 23% excellent/ 3% excessive. Sub soil moisture is rated 26% poor/ 27% fair/ 20% good/ 23% excellent/ 4% excessive. Fall seeded crops have emerged with significant winter damage and are rated 18% poor/ 40% fair/ 39% good/ 3% excellent.

Hay and pastures are off to a slow start due to the cool temperatures and rated 48% poor/ 29% fair/ 21% good/ 2% excellent.

Peace River District

Little seeding has occurred to date with less than 1% completed. Surface moisture is very good and rated 0% poor/ 15% fair/ 42% good/ 41% excellent/ 2% excessive. Sub soil moisture levels are more concerning with ratings at 32% poor/ 45% fair/ 19% good/ 4% excellent. Fall seeded crops have emerged in fair to good condition at 9% poor/ 35% fair/ 56% good.

Hay and pasture crops are beginning the season from a more average perspective with ratings of 6% poor/ 34% fair/ 60% good.

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