ALABAMA: The state experienced varied weather conditions in March. Too much rain, not enough rain, a late freeze about sums up the states’ weather conditions. Wet soils delayed fieldwork, while cold weather slowed growth of pasture grasses. Most soils are dry enough for plowing, but some farmers are waiting for warmer soil temperatures before planting. Cover crop burn down for cotton has begun. Most pastures are in good condition.

ARIZONA: Lack of precipitation throughout the month of March caused severe deterioration of range and pasture conditions for most of the state. Small grain emergence was completed and heading is well underway.

ARKANSAS: February ended with the entire state having 50% to 70% above normal precipitation totals. March weather added to these amounts. The crop moisture index is over 3 inches (excessively wet) throughout the state. The average temperature was 4 to 6°F below normal. There was no severe weather, yet the excessive moisture brought severe conditions to the central, southern, eastern regions of the state, leaving 11 counties under continual flood alert. Due to these weather conditions, farmer’s average days in the field remained under two days per week. Activities: Equipment preparation, preparing land for spring planting. There were limited opportunities for fertilizing, planting, with only a small percentage of corn having been planted. Livestock is in good to excellent condition.

CALIFORNIA: Throughout the month of March, cotton growers were preparing fields for planting. By month’s end planting was underway in a few areas, field preparation continued elsewhere. Alfalfa hay, seed fields were thriving. Alfalfa hay was being cut, windrowed, dried, baled. Rain, the arrival of warm weather late in the month, stimulated growth, development of grain, silage crops. Wheat, barley, oats made good progress; irrigation, weed control continued. Robust growth of sugar beets continued. Stubble from 2001 crop was burned, ground was being prepared for planting rice. Corn for grain, silage was planted. As April approached, safflower planting was underway in a few areas. Spring’s cultural activities: Such as weed control, cultivation, irrigation continued in orchards, vineyards. New orchards, vineyards were planted where older ones had been removed. Peaches, plums, nectarines were in full bloom. My month’s end most stone fruit trees were already leafing. San Joaquin County cherry orchards were past the mid-blossom stage as April began. Apple blossoming continued throughout the month. Grapevine bud break continued as growers irrigated, mowed cover crops, cultivated, applied herbicides. Strong spring growth was noted in citrus orchards. Navel, Valencia orange harvesting continued. Grapefruit picking was ongoing in the desert, in the San Joaquin Valley. Lemons were also picked. Strawberry fields were weeded, irrigated; by month’s end most plants were spreading, blooming. Nut growers performed spring cultural activities such as pruning, irrigating, spraying trees. As April neared, most almond orchards were fully leafed, developing well. However, in some parts of the state a mid March freeze damaged developing almonds. Walnut, pecan trees were pushing buds. Brush removal, shredding continued. Early March asparagus harvest was lagging, but by month’s end the warm weather had dramatically accelerated the rate of harvest. Vegetable crops were developing well. Melons were planted. Field preparation, planting of fresh market, processing tomato transplants continued. Garlic, onions were progressing well. Lettuce harvesting improved after the early month delays attributed to cool temperatures. The following vegetables were also harvested in March: Basil, cabbage, carrots, celery, cilantro, green onions, mustard greens, collard greens, leeks, daikon, mint, parsley, radishes, radicchio, turnips, squash. Late month rainfall improved grazing conditions on foothill, rangeland pastures. Cattle continued to exhibit good weight gains. Turkey production continued; young hatchlings were thriving. Throughout March bees were actively pollinating orchards; as April neared, out-of-state hives were headed home.

COLORADO: March temperatures were slightly below average. Moisture received during the month was again below average. March mountain snowpack was only 52% of average, statewide. The Eastern Plains remain very dry. Winter wheat remains in mostly fair condition as it begins to break dormancy. Lambing, calving continue under mostly ideal conditions. Activities: Care feeding of livestock, planting spring crops.

DELAWARE: DATA NOT AVAILABLE:

FLORIDA: March 2002. Cold, rainy weather during early March brought hard freezes to some northern areas and dumped from five to nine inches of rain over some Big Bend localities. The freezing temperatures burned some clover, rye, oats in the Panhandle, northern areas. The heavy rains flooded, damaged some pine plantings in low areas of the northern Peninsula. The freezing temperatures killed some early watermelon transplants, singed some cole crops, damaged the tops of potatoes in the Hastings area with older plants suffering the most harm. The damage to potatoes lowered yield expectations. Temperatures warmed by mid month. Mostly light showers kept the danger of wildfires high during the month, especially over central Peninsula areas. Picking of Valencia oranges gained momentum during the month as the harvest of early, mid-season oranges neared the end. Grove caretakers ran irrigation during most of the month to keep trees in good condition for the final stages of the blooming. Vegetable planting, harvesting continued at a normal pace for most of the month. Sugarcane harvesting slowed by the end of the month with some mills closing during the last two weeks. Tobacco transplanting got underway during the last two weeks. Temperatures again plunged during late month bringing lows in the 30s to some Panhandle, northern Peninsula localities and lows in the 40s to many central Peninsula areas. This cold caused no significant damage to tomatoes around Quincy but killed some very young watermelon transplants with producers replanting as needed. Temperatures remained mostly normal during the last week of the month when daily afternoon storms returned to many Peninsula localities.

GEORGIA: March temperatures were near normal, while rainfall was slightly below normal throughout most of the state. A cold snap the first part of March, the latter part of the month brought minimal damage to row crops. Pasture feeds were mostly fair to good. Warm season forages have started to green up. Small grains were in mostly fair to good condition. Carrot harvesting was active. Tobacco transplanting was just
getting under way. Onion condition was good. Land preparation for spring planting was active. Feeding hay to livestock continues. Cattle are continuing to calve.

**HAWAII:** DATA NOT AVAILABLE:

**IDAHO:** Temperatures during March were well below normal, especially during the first half of the month. Precipitation totals were near normal for March with accumulations ranging from less than a tenth of an inch in areas of Eastern state to nearly two inches in North state. Planting progress in lower elevations has been delayed by the cool, wet weather. At the end of March, snow was beginning to melt off fields in higher elevations. Activities for March: Preparing fields, equipment for spring planting, applying fertilizer, calving, lambing, feeding livestock.

**ILLINOIS:** Farmers in some areas of far northern states were able to spread dry fertilizer, apply anhydrous, seed oats later in the month. Fields in the rest of the state were too wet for virtually any fieldwork to be accomplished. The cooler than normal weather during the month of March, above average precipitation in the south has kept fields saturated to the point where application of nitrogen to the winter wheat crop has been delayed. Some reports indicated that farmers would begin having nitrogen applied by airplane soon if soil conditions did not improve. The condition of the wheat crop continues to improve as it comes out of dormancy.

**INDIANA:** Topsoil moisture is mostly adequate to surplus Snow, rain, ice last week halted field activities around the state. Most central, northern areas received heavy snow amounts. Damaging winds in some areas during March. Wet field conditions prevented fieldwork during most of the month. Topsoil moisture is mostly adequate to surplus. Some tillage took place in early March where soils were dry enough to support heavy equipment. Spreading fertilizer, lime took place on some farms. Amish farmers have plowed some fields intended for oats, corn. Farmers were busy preparing equipment, purchasing supplies for spring planting of crops. Pastures, forage crops are in mostly fair to good condition. Winter wheat is in mostly good condition, breaking dormancy in most fields. Livestock are in mostly good condition. Feedlots are muddy. New born calves, lambs were under stress last week. Calving, lambing active. Activities: Hauling manure, moving grain to market, top dressing wheat, marketing tobacco, building fence, purchasing seed, chemicals, ditching, attending FSA offices, clearing fence rows, caring for livestock.

**IOWA:** Summary for March 2002. Soil very 10% short, 43% short, 46% adequate, 1% surplus. Continued mild weather in March caused increased concern over the state’s lack of soil moisture. Snow cover disappeared by the end of March, while frost penetration fell to 1 inch, compared to 4 inches for both last month, last year. Each region of the state has shown at least some shortage of moisture. Grain movement 12% none, 39% light, 43% moderate, 6% heavy. Availability of hay, roughage supplies for livestock feed 5% short, 76% adequate,19% surplus. Quality of hay, roughage 6% poor, 46% fair, 48% good. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing 42% none, 20% light, 26% moderate, 12% extensive. Cattle deaths fell slightly from the previous month, were below the losses suffered 2001. Cattle, Calf losses 26% below avg.; 71% avg.; 3% above avg. Hog deaths increased slightly from last month but were slightly lower than those in March, 2001. Hog, Pig losses 14% below avg.; 83% avg.; 3% above avg. Rapidly changing temperatures have caused some problems with livestock.

**KANSAS:** Topsoil 31% very short, 44% short, 25% adequate. Subsoil 30% very short, 50% short, 20% adequate. Very little moisture received in the State during the month of March. Wheat 17% very poor, 27% poor, 33% fair, 21% good, 2% excellent. Wheat condition has continued to decline due to drought stress, is in desperate need of moisture. Damage from wind, freeze damage has been light. Wheat 9% jointed, 1% 2001, 12% avg. Oats 75% planted, 17% 2001, 58% avg. Spring calving is nearing completion. Because of moderate, dry weather, few weather related calving problems. Stockmen providing supplemental feed to livestock. Hauling water to cattle necessary some areas. Stock water supplies 11% very short, 31% short, 58% adequate. Hay, forage supplies 1% very short, 12% short, 84% adequate, 3% surplus. Feed grain supplies 5% short, 93% adequate, 4% surplus.

**KENTUCKY:** March began very cold with below normal precipitation. Stockwater ponds were unusually low, soil moisture needed replenishing. Warmer temperatures returned at mid-month with periods of widespread rain. Heavy rain late in the month replenished soil moisture but caused extensive flooding in most low lying areas of the State. Warmer temperatures with increased soil moisture stimulated early growth of winter wheat, pasture. Fruit trees began to bud in many areas by late March. Wet field conditions slowed lime spreading, small grain fertilizing, most producers used the period to mend fences, clear flood debris, prepare equipment for spring planting. Farmers continued to provide hay to livestock while pastures showed some limited early spring growth. Cattle remained in mostly good condition due to the mild winter weather. Greenhouse growers prepared to seed flats for float bed produced tobacco plants, while other tobacco farmers prepared ground for seeding traditional plant beds.

**LOUISIANA:** Cooler temperatures and wet conditions slowed field activities. Corn producers began to plant in some areas where soil moisture levels would allow it. Sugarcane farmers were applying herbicides, destroying old stubble, draining fields. Rice farmers began planting. Wheat fields continued to look good after some unreasonably cold temperatures earlier in the month. Crawfish producers were running traps on a regular basis, production was doing well. Cattlemen were fertilizing winter pastures, cutting ryegrass for hay. State has received almost 4 inches (3.89 inches) of rain over the last four weeks.

**MARYLAND:** DATA NOT AVAILABLE:

**MICHIGAN:** There was very little snow cover for the month but the weather was cold enough for frost on the ground. The high winds, cold weather brought down many trees, branches. Wheat conditions were not favorable, were very spotty. Activities: Repairing equipment, buildings, pruning fruit trees, spreading, hauling manure, tree trimming, attending meetings. Conditions for livestock were good. Some beef cattle herds were calving. Hay supplies were more than adequate but there were reports of corn supply shortages.

**MINNESOTA:** After one of the warmest winters on record, March temperatures were below normal. A snow storm passed across the central part of the state on March 14 which brought record snowfall amounts. Parts of southern state received freezing rain which resulted in scattered power outages. The snow, rain received added much needed water to the soil profile. However, additional water will be needed to meet next seasons growing needs. Wind erosion has been a problem due to lack of snow cover for the majority of the winter. Livestock producers are busy with calving; feed supplies are adequate.

**MISSISSIPPI:** March 1, 2002 Soil moisture 4% short, 37% adequate, 59% surplus. Hay supply 1% short, 60% adequate, 39% surplus. Most parts of the state have received plentiful amount of rainfall during the month of March. Planting of spring row crops has been delayed in many areas of the state due to the frequent rains. Reports indicate that pasture, cattle are looking good at this time of year. Farmers are spreading fertilizer on the winter wheat crop, are hoping for some dry weather to allow them to finish.

**MISSOURI:** March rainfall varied considerably, ranging from less than an inch in some northwestern, north-central counties to more than 5 inches in many south-central and southeastern counties. With the exception of a few southwestern counties, fieldwork has generally not yet begun. The Bootheel has been too wet, the cold weather of the past 2 weeks over most of the State has not been conducive to tillage, planting. Winter wheat is mostly in fair to good condition, although some excessively wet areas of the southeast may cause some small acreage losses. Cool weather may delay availability of pasture feed, but hay supplies are adequate in most areas.
MONTANA: March stated dry, but brought much needed precipitation to the state during the second half of the month. For the month of March, Topsoil 22% very short, 36% short, 40% adequate, 2% surplus. Subsoil 52% very short, 35% short, 13% adequate, 0% surplus. Wind damage to winter wheat 15% none, 38% light, 25% moderate, 22% heavy. Freeze, drought damage to winter wheat 8% none, 19% light, 37% moderate, 36% heavy, 30% very poor, 31% poor, 29% fair, 9% good, 1% excellent. Grazing 63% open, 10% difficult, 27% closed. While grazing was mostly open, little grass is available. Livestock receiving supplemental feed 98% for cattle, calves, 96% for sheep, lambs. Calving, lambing is underway with 58% of the calves, 28% of lambs born.

NEBRASKA: Statewide, moisture was minimal with the exception of local weekly snow storms. Wheat 2% very poor, 13% poor, 53% fair, 31% good, 1% excellent. Oat planting 15% seeded, 5% 2001, 24% avg. Hay, forage supplies were mostly adequate to surplus statewide. Cattle, calves 1% poor, 16% fair, 63% good, 20% excellent. Calving 64% complete with most producers reporting calf losses at average to below average.

NEVADA: March was somewhat dry across the State, continuing the trend of January, February. Precipitation was slightly above normal in Winnemucca, but generally below normal elsewhere. Water content of the winter snow pack for primary watersheds ranged from 79 to 101% of normal of state, was below normal for all watersheds. Temperatures averaged above a few degrees below normal for the month, but warmed appreciably toward the end of the month. Calving continued in full swing. Farm flock lambing was underway with range flocks to follow. Marketing of cattle remained active. Shipping of baled, cubed hay continued. Potato processing was ongoing. Fall seeded grains, garlic were in good condition. Field preparations, spring grain planting were underway. Onions were planted, sprinkler irrigation was underway. Activities: Calving, field preparation, spring grain seeding, onion planting, equipment maintenance, livestock feeding, fence repairs, crop marketing, ditch burning, irrigation.

NEW ENGLAND: Warmer than normal temperatures continued throughout March in state, along with the occasional cold spell. Some precipitation was received during the month, but drought conditions have not yet been alleviated. All 14 counties in Vermont have recently been designated as disaster areas by Secretary of Agriculture Veneman. Maple tapping is well underway at this point and producers are optimistic that the drought conditions will not greatly affect their production. Activities: Nursery/greenhouse work, tending livestock, tapping maple trees, performing general maintenance, preparing for the spring planting season.

NEW JERSEY: March brought mild temperatures, much needed rainfall across the state. Precipitation totals ranged from 3.0 to 4.5 inches for the month, with the heaviest 24 hour total of 1.59 inches reported from March 21 to March 22. Although the rains brought some relief, a drought emergency was declared March 4, mandating restrictions on water usage throughout the state. Temperatures averaged at or above normal for the month of March. The average daytime temperature was 53° and the average nighttime temperature was 33°. The highest reported temperature was 77° on March 16, the lowest reported temperature was 14° on March 5.

NEW MEXICO: DATA NOT AVAILABLE:

NEW YORK: DATA NOT AVAILABLE:

NORTH CAROLINA: As of March 24th, Soil 3% very short, 16% short, 62% adequate, 19% surplus. March brought mixed temperatures which is normal for the month. Most areas welcomed significant precipitation the last three weeks of the month. The rainfall supplied partial relief to many areas that have been rain deficient since last September. Ground water, low stream flow are still real concerns for many communities. Small grains, specifically wheat, are in mostly good condition. Corn planting is set to begin next week with no delays foreseen.

NORTH DAKOTA: Strong winds coupled with a lack of snowfall during the month of March caused severe erosion in some fields. Colder than normal temperatures during the month of March have caused above normal calf losses in some areas. Some producers may begin field work in 2-3 weeks if dry conditions continue. Calving, lambing is progressing with very little difficulty.

OHIO: March 2002 was 0.9° colder than normal in state, with temperatures averaging 37.9° across the state. Precipitation averaged 3.45 inches, 0.78 inches above normal. The South Central district received the most precipitation with 5.61 inches while the Northeast district received the least with 2.36 inches.

OKLAHOMA: Cool, dry conditions hampered the State for much of March limiting wheat development. Seedbed preparation began, but was running behind normal for most crops. Hay supplies were short, without any measurable precipitation cool season grass growth was a concern for livestock producers. Ranges, pastures were rated in mostly poor to very poor shape the entire month.


PENNSYLVANIA: Days suitable for fieldwork 2.1. Soil 6% very short, 22% short, 49% adequate, 23% surplus. Spring 26% plowing complete, 7% 2001, 8% avg. Wheat crop 28% fair, 48% good, 24% excellent. Oats 10% planted, 1% 2001, 4% avg.; 2% very poor, 2% poor, 64% fair, 32% good. Pasture feeds 9% very poor, 29% poor, 40% fair, 21% good, 1% excellent. Activities: Spring plowing; planting oats; fixing fences; machinery maintenance; ordering supplies; storing equipment; cleaning barns; spreading lime, fertilizers; hauling, spreading manure; caring for livestock; spraying herbicides.

SOUTH CAROLINA: The weather for March began with scattered showers statewide, several days of near freezing temperatures. All reporting counties are recording below average rainfall amounts. A warm front moved through state mid-month providing several days of springlike temperatures. The increase in the temperatures caused an increase in pollen counts from flowering plants, trees. Temperatures ranged from 3° below normal to 6° above normal. Farmers were busy with corn planting, land preparation, pruning fruit trees, tending to livestock.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Average snow depth 0.80 inch. Feed supplies 2% very short, 8% short, 82% adequate, 8% surplus. Stock water supplies 6% very short, 12% short, 76% adequate, 6% surplus. Cattle death losses for March, 34% below normal, 65% normal, 1% above normal. Calf deaths for March, 29% below avg.; 69% avg.; 2% above avg. Calving 34% complete. Cattle moved to pasture 1% complete. Lambing 54% complete. Sheep, lamb deaths for March, 30% below avg.; 69% avg.; 1% above avg. The month of March brought below normal temperatures, precipitation in the form of snow. Farmers, producers kept busy fixing machinery, hauling grain, calving, lambing, feeding cattle.

TENNESSEE: During the first half of March, an arctic cold front passed through the Volunteer State, bringing some of the coldest air of the season. A hard freeze damaged a few acres of the winter wheat crop during the first week of the month, but the majority of the crop escaped harm. About mid-month, a storm system brought heavy rainfall across the state. Flooding was a major concern in some areas. Temperatures on average were seasonable to above normal, typical for this time of year. Temperature deviations were as large as 84° in Chattanooga to 20° in Bristol with precipitation well above normal in every section of state. Cattle were in good condition and hay stocks plentiful.
TEXAS: Conditions in March were somewhat cooler, drier than normal. In early month two arctic cold fronts crossed the state, bringing freezing temperatures, high winds. Some early planted crops in southern locations were injured or destroyed by the unexpected cold temperatures. Some wheat, oat crops were also injured across portions of the Plains, Central state. Many portions of the state remained dry, however heavy rains, some storms crossed many portions of Central, East state as well as portions of the Edwards Plateau. Spring planting continued in Central, Southern locations but, was stalled at times due to the wet conditions in some areas while pre-watering was in progress in other locations. Supplemental feeding remained necessary for most producers, herd reduction, liquidation was also necessary in some of the drier locations.

UTAH: The past winter has been colder than recent winters. Snow pack is around 70 to 80% of normal in most of the state. The cold weather has caused below average crop growth and has damaged peach buds. Some snow mold in winter wheat has been found. The problem does not appear to be as bad as anticipated because most of the wheat was planted rather late due to limited fall moisture. Calving, lambing are in full swing. Livestock are in good to fair condition.

VIRGINIA: Topsoil ratings increased nicely, but surface water levels remained generally low. Subsoil remained low due to the earlier extended periods of dryness. Farmers prepared for planting throughout the month. Damage to fruits, small grains was reported in some areas as a result of dry weather conditions. Tobacco farmers were busy seeding their greenhouses, plantbeds. Potato producers began planting, should complete their planting soon. February’s dry conditions continued into early March in the Commonwealth. The month ended on a better note, as rains fell across the state. Some flooding was reported in southwestern state.

WASHINGTON: The month of March brought more snow, colder temperatures across the state. While March snow is not unusual, some areas were surprised to find significant accumulation all the way up to the coastal waters. The largest increase was on the western side of the state, which brought precipitation levels well above normal.

WEST VIRGINIA: For the week ending March 31, Topsoil 2% very short, 11% short, 73% adequate, 14% surplus, 7% short, 82% adequate, 11% surplus at this time 2001. Wheat 4% very poor, 14% poor, 54% fair, 28% good, 20% poor, 63% fair, 17% good 2001. Small grains have been slowed due to dry weather. Cattle, calves reported in poor to good condition, sheep, lambs were reported in fair to good condition. The absence of freezing weather during most of the month was very important to livestock having access to limited water supplies. Below normal rainfall throughout most of the fall has required earlier feeding of livestock, hauling water in some areas. Dry conditions have been an aid for calving, lambing. Hay, feed grain supplies are adequate. Activities: Feeding livestock, general maintenance. Major rains on the 20th and 31st have reduced the short term effects of the dry, warm winter. Drought, near drought conditions that existed over much of the State may be broken if precipitation continues at recent levels.

WISCONSIN: March began with the largest single snowfall accumulation, coldest temperatures seen all winter. The week following the snowfall, temperatures reached 40°, remained above normal for the rest of the month.

WYOMING: Days suitable for fieldwork 2.8. Topsoil 23% very short, 45% short, 32% adequate, improved 21 points for the month. Stock water 20% very short, 32% short, 48% adequate. Winter wheat 1% very poor, 11% poor, 25% fair, 63% good, nearly unchanged for the month. Wind damage 32% none, 55% light, 10% moderate, 3% severe. Natrona, Goshen county had the most severe 15%-25% wind damage. Winter wheat freeze damage 82% none, 15% light, 3% moderate. Barley 9% planted, 28% 2001, 39% avg. No spring wheat planted, 4% 2001, 10% avg. No oats planted, 0% 2001, 6% avg. Cattle, calf 70% good to excellent. Sheep, lamb 60% good to excellent. Pasture, range 24% very poor, 26% poor, 40% fair, 10% good. Temperatures, precipitation during the month averaged below normal.