ALABAMA: Farmers across the state are seeding fall forages, fescue pastures, and small grains. Most cotton farmers believed they would have a bumper crop earlier in the season but, late season rains began to fall and seemed as though they were not going to stop. State received so much rain that moisture caused irreparable damage to some crops still in fields. Cotton dropped from its bolls, seeds began to sprout. Routine farm activities during the period included general care of livestock, poultry, catfish.

ARIZONA: Temperatures for most of the State were above average for the week. Cotton harvest was virtually complete, with 99% harvested statewide. Alfalfa conditions were mostly good. Sheep continued to graze on alfalfa fields for winter pasture. With increase precipitation for the month, 8 of 17 reporting stations ended the year above 50% of normal precipitation levels.

ARKANSAS: Temperatures were near normal and rainfall was above normal in December. The average temperature for December 44.5°, 1.1° above normal. Temperatures averaged above normal on 15 days, below normal on 15 days, at normal on 1 day. There were no daily record temperatures broken or tied during December. Measurable precipitation fell on 12 days, and it was the 8th wettest December on record since 1879. With very little harvesting going on in December, the weather had little effect on field crops. However, it did eliminate the idea of any further wheat planting. However, the moisture was considered helpful to wheat that had already been planted. The ice storm across the northern counties was more difficult on livestock, especially dairy cattle. However, livestock in general were reported in good conditions.

CALIFORNIA: Wet conditions limited field work but contributed to vigorous crop growth. Sweet potato fields underwent pre-plant fumigation. New grain fields were planted by aircraft. Sugar beets planted and irrigated. Planting of winter forage, oats, wheat continued, including some fields seeded by aircraft. Cotton harvesting was completed as the month drew to a close. Most harvested fields had been shredded and disced in compliance with pink bollworm blow-down requirements. Dry bean harvesting wound down early in the month. Alfalfa hay was cut as green chop for dairy feed. Fruit crops heavy with rain during the latter half of December delayed field work, particularly in Northern areas. Vineyard, orchard removal and ground preparation for future plantings continued. Trees, vines were piled for burning or chipping. Stone fruit orchards were treated for dormant season pest control. Some table grape harvesting took place in early December. Strawberries were harvested in the San Joaquin Valley for sale at local roadside stands. Olives were harvested for oil production. Early December rains and cool nights helped to enhance the fruit size, exterior color, and maturity of the Navel orange crop. Harvesting of Navel oranges, grapefruit, mandarins, pummelos, and lemons continued through most of December, but was hindered late in the month by rain and wet conditions. Nut crops strong winds, rain in mid and late December resulted in the loss of some trees in northern areas. Walnut orchards were treated for weed control. Almond stockblock hulling was completed. Pistachios from the fall harvest were sorted and packed. Pecans were harvested in the San Joaquin Valley. Vegetable crops fields were prepared for the spring crop. Late in the month, wet soil conditions hindered field operations in most districts.

Garlic, onion planting wound down by mid-December. Cold weather slowed the development of some garlic, onion plantings. In early December warm weather accelerated lettuce harvesting in the desert region. Freezer broccoli and cauliflower were harvested in Merced County. Lettuce and cantaloupe harvesting was completed in the San Joaquin Valley. Year-round carrot harvesting continued in Kern County. The following vegetables were also harvested: cabbage, cilantro, eggplant, garlic, mustard greens, kale, green onions, parsley, radicchio, radishes, squash. Livestock pasture conditions were mixed at the beginning of December due to a lack of moisture. Later in the month, heavy rainfall greatly improved the condition of winter pastures. Supplemental feeding of cattle continued in areas that were very dry before the rains. In other areas, supplemental feeding declined substantially. Stocker cattle were moved onto foothill pastures in the central and northern parts of the State. Fall calving was virtually complete by the end of December. Fall lambing was winding down. Sheep grazed on foothill pastures and a few alfalfa fields in central areas. Lambs grazed on alfalfa pastures in the southern desert area. Beekeepers performed cold season hive maintenance. Some hives were moved to protected locations for overwintering. Late in the month, out-of-state beehives were trucked into central areas in preparation for the February and March almond pollination.

COLORADO: December temperatures were slightly above normal while precipitation stayed well below normal. Snowfall was limited primarily to the mountain areas with very limited moisture in the lower elevations, across the Eastern Plains. Mountain snow pack is at 86% of normal, which is slightly higher than last year, but reservoirs are at record low levels. Water officials are holding meetings concerning water allocations for spring and summer, 2003. Winter wheat continues dormant in mostly fair to good condition, but vulnerable to blowout and freezing temperatures without snow cover. Major activities continue to center around feed and care of livestock, preparation for the upcoming lambing and calving activities.

DELWARE: Field activity was limited by rainy weather in December. Consequently, wet field, prevented the completion of harvest in some soybean fields. Also, some small grain fields were not planted due to the wet conditions. Hay supplies are adequate to somewhat limited at this time. However, it may be necessary to purchase feed by the end of winter since pasture conditions are poor. Winter activities include equipment maintenance and attending educational programs.

FLORIDA: Cool temperatures prevailed over most localities during December. Freezes, frosts arrived in many localities, except for the southern Peninsula, beginning with some Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas during the first week. Most temperatures averaged from one to seven degrees below normal in the major cities. Cool temperatures aided the development of strawberries and placed most citrus trees in a quasi-dormant condition. In early December, permanent pasture was in seasonal decline in the northern and central areas due to the cooler weather. Planting of small grains for winter forage was active but behind schedule due to wet weather during November and the increased cost of seed. In the southwest the pasture condition was poor to good. Statewide, the condition of cattle was mostly good. Storms crossing over the Panhandle and Peninsula nearly every week of December brought
abundant moisture to many Panhandle and northern and central Peninsula localities. Some pastures in southern areas were in poor condition due to standing water from the heavier rains. Some southern Peninsula areas, especially those along the southeastern coast, remained dry. A few citrus caretakers irrigated groves during early December before the rains came. After the heavy showers began some caretakers deep plowed grove middles to drain water away from tree roots. The rainfall delayed cotton and soybean harvesting, interrupted vegetable planting and picking. The rainfall in the Panhandle left most of the oldest cotton in poor condition with growers picking most to satisfy insurance requirements. Stronger storms lowered the quality of some vegetables growing in the central and southern Peninsula. Heavy rains leached fertilizer from some small grain acreage in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula which slowed growth and development of the crops. Clearer conditions over the southern Peninsula allowed sugarcane planting and harvesting to proceed at a normal pace although some activity was slowed slightly by mid month showers. Citrus harvesting remained active throughout the month with juice plants and fresh fruit packing houses extremely busy at the end of the month. Grove caretakers in older pockets fueled and placed heaters in groves during early December. Other citrus field activities included mowing, chopping and discing of cover crops, pushing out and burning of dead trees, hedging and topping of live trees, and applying sprays and making reservoirs as needed. At month’s end, pastures were in poor to good condition, with most in good condition. In the Panhandle and northern and central areas, freezing temperatures and frost limited grass growth during the month but growth of most cool season forages was normal. Hay feeding remained active throughout the month. Cottonseed for cattle feed was limited due to the poor cotton harvest. Winter forage planting continued between the storms. Stock ponds filled from the heavy rains and some pastures had standing water. Statewide, cattle were in poor to fair condition with most in good condition at the end of the month.

**GEORGIA:** Constant December rains slowed most farming activities for the State. According to David Stockbury, State Climatologist, the long-term drought that has affected the State since 1998 is all but over. State ended the year with more than 90% of normal yearly rainfall. Some areas experienced damage due to high winds and extreme cold weather. Wet soil conditions delayed small grain, wheat, planting and cotton harvesting. Onion planting was behind schedule due to weather. Ryegrass, small grains, wheat were damaged from cold weather in some areas. Rains had replenished ponds, streams, added to soil moisture levels. Cotton harvesting approached competition. Rye, wheat, oat planting progressed nicely. Mild temperatures toward the end of the month improved grazing conditions. In other activities, growers continued winter grazing, routine care of livestock, poultry continued.

**HAWAII:** Lack of trade winds produced dry, sunny weather throughout the State. Light rainfall was still limited to windward and mountain areas. East area banana harvest remained active. Papaya orchards were in fair to good condition, but cool, dry conditions have hindered fruit development. Vegetables remained in generally fair to good condition with heavy irrigation.

**IDAHO:** Topsoil 12% very short, 29% short, 50% adequate, 9% surplus. Winter Wheat 6% poor, 30% fair, 62% good, 2% excellent. Hay, roughage supply 3% short, 69% adequate, 28% surplus. Surface water irrigators extremely anxious in eastern areas after a dry December. Mild temperatures, moisture in North areas helped winter wheat emerge.

**ILLINOIS:** Mild temperatures earlier last month allowed farmers to finish anhydrous applications, fall tillage across most of the State. Along with December equipment maintenance, repairs many farmers made time to study the new farm programs. Late December snow cover has left many pastures and feedlots a muddy mess. Average topsoil moisture levels across the state are four percent very short, 28% short, 61% adequate, 7% surplus. Temperatures have not been cold enough to put a great deal of stress on cattle or winter wheat. Winter wheat is reportedly short in some areas but well germinated and no problems with winter kill were reported last month. Other farm activities included conservation work on waterways, preparing beef cattle for sales and spreading manure on pastures.

**INDIANA:** Temperatures were about normal during most of December with the statewide averaging 0.6° above normal. Statewide precipitation averaged 0.16 in. below normal with most of the rain, snow coming toward the end of the month. Drier conditions existed in the northern regions, conditions were wetter in the southern areas. Field activities were halted recently by showers, snow, wet soil conditions. Some fieldwork was accomplished early in the month, mostly chopping corn stalks, spreading fertilizer, tillage of soils. Farmers are working on taxes and prepping for their next year’s farm program. Winter wheat is in mostly good condition, dry conditions slowed growth early in the northern areas. Pastures were in mostly good condition during the month, are now snow covered in most areas. Livestock remain in mostly good condition. Feedlots are wet, muddy. Good quality hay is in short supply, most areas. Hay prices remain high. Major activities: Hauling grain to market, cleaning up and repairing equipment, attending FSA offices, purchasing supplies, soil testing, hauling manure, stripping tobacco, spreading lime and taking care of livestock.

**IOWA:** Mild, dry were two recurring themes for the weather during the month of December. Lack of precipitation has reduced soil moisture availability to 58% of the State being short to very short on soil moisture. At the end of December, the average depth of snow cover across State was visibly zero inches, compared to 5.00 in. at the same time last year. Movement of grain for the State was 25% none, 46% light, 27% moderate, and 2% heavy. Hog, pig losses in December were below last year’s State averages at 52% below average, 65% average, 3% above average. Cattle, calf losses were also below last year’s State averages at 42% below average, 57% average, 1% above average.

**KANSAS:** No weather data available.

**KENTUCKY:** Temperatures averaged 37° across the State which was near normal. Cooler temperatures the first two weeks of December were offset by very mild weather during the latter half of the month especially during the third week when temperatures surged into the low to mid 60’s. Baring the very mild week, December 2002 felt more like colder winter’s of the past with morning low temperatures falling below freezing 15 to 20 times and into the teens several times. The high temperatures failed to warm above 32° on 3 to 5 days statewide. It was also a wet month with field operations stalled most of the month. December’s above normal rainfall continued the wet spell that started in September. December precipitation resulted in the 15th wettest September thru December in the past 108 years. December 2002 was the 27th wettest and 51st coolest December in the past century. In addition, unlike past Decembers several snow and freezing precipitation events occurred. Snowfall totals were generally 4 to 6 in. for the Northern half of the State and 1.00 to 3.00 in. for the Southern half with some locally heavier snowfall totals of up to 8.00 in. West. Precipitation (liq. eq.) for the period totaled 5.02 in. statewide which was 0.74 in. above normal. By station, rainfall totals ranged from a low of 3.62 in. at Cumberland Gap to a high of 7.62 in. at Louisville. Wet cool weather limited fieldwork and caused livestock stress due to muddy conditions and fluctuating temperatures. Hay supplies remain adequate in all areas but shortages are expected by winters end. Winter wheat condition generally good to fair. Tobacco producers had favorable humidity to strip their crop in preparation for the reopening of auctions after the holidays. Burley tobacco auctions recessed for the Christmas holidays on December 19 and contract centers did likewise following sales on Friday, December 20. Both are scheduled to resume on January 6, 2003. KY Gross burley sales for the season through 12/20 was 166.5 million lbs. for an average price of $198.42 per cwt. Gross Belt-wide auction and contract sales for the season through 12/19 were 217.7 million pounds and averaged $197.91 per cwt. Resales amounted to 2.51 million pounds for the season. The Burley Cooperatives received 31.7% of gross belt auction sales for the season to date. This compares with 6.8% after 19 sales days last year.

**LOUISIANA:** Sugarcane producers continued harvesting as weather and field conditions permitted. Louisiana has received over 5.00 in. of rain in the last 4 weeks, which has caused field conditions to remain extremely muddy. Many producers are now racing to get the remainder of their crop out of the fields before a hard freeze hits the state. Citrus producers were spraying to control diseases. Strawberries were being harvested. Livestock producers were fertilizing winter pastures, feeding hay. Crawfish producers were putting out traps. Early reports have
indicated that this will be a very good year for crawfish producers. Other activities included repairing, cleaning equipment.

MARYLAND: Snow, rainy conditions in December limited field activity for the month. Wet conditions reduced pasturing ability in some areas, causing shortages in hay supply. Livestock appear to be in good condition. Snow also prevented the harvest completion of some soybean, corn fields. Small grains that were planted on time are in mostly fair to good condition. Late planted small grains, however, are not fairing as well. Winter activities include repairing equipment, livestock feeding, spreading manure and lime, record keeping.

MICHIGAN: Dairy farmers have benefitted from the mild weather conditions for most of December. Farm activities included hauling manure, chisel plowing, chopping corn stalks, storing and repairing equipment, and completing the harvesting of corn. All livestock were doing well and in good health. Feed supplies were mostly adequate, though there were a few reports of hay shortages. Snowfall has been minimal for most of the month.

MINNESOTA: Most of State ended December with less than an inch of snow cover. Depths over 4.00 in. were confined to northern halves of the Northwest, North Central, Northeast Districts. The lack of precipitation in November and December, plus the freezing of mucky ground, generally allowed the harvest to be completed even in areas which had experienced the most severe harvest delays during October. Scattered fields of corn remain to be harvested, mainly in the East Central District. Temperatures were above average in November and December, so widespread damage to alfalfa stands is not certain yet, but is likely if the open winter continues with normal or low temperatures. Soil-blowing is a concern also if the state does not get more snow. Livestock are wintering well, with above normal temperatures reducing stress and allowing good feed conversion. Grazing in stubble fields has been possible throughout the period. Forage supplies are adequate in most areas, but since a lot of locally-produced hay was rained on, there is a shortage of good quality hay. Farmers are busy applying for loans and planning farm program participation.

MISSISSIPPI: Soil moisture 14% adequate, 86% surplus. Wheat emerged 98%. Hay supply 2% short, 74% adequate, 24% surplus. Feed Grain 2% short, 94% adequate, 4% surplus. Saturated ground conditions continue to be a concern. Winter grazing has suffered, producers are still trying to clean up their fields from harvesting activities.

MISSOURI: Precipitation during December averaged about 1.93 in., slightly above normal, but amounts in the northern third of the State, the west-central district were sharply below normal while the southern districts were sharply above normal. Most of the snow cover of late December is gone but the mostly moderate temperatures have permitted the wheat crop to stay in generally fair to good condition. Stock pond water levels improved in the southern counties but more run-off is needed in many areas. Farmers remain busy with care of livestock, planning for the new crop season.

MONTANA: During the month of December weather conditions in Montana have been warm, extremely dry with a few exceptions in localized areas. Soil moisture 37% very short, 44% short, 19% adequate compared to last year which was rated 38% very short, 53% short, 9% adequate. Subsoil moisture 40% very short, 46% short, 14% adequate contrasted to last year during which subsoil moisture 49% very short, 45% short, 6% adequate. Winter wheat 1% very poor, 25% poor, 55% fair, 18% good, 1% excellent. This is lower than last month’s rating of 2% very poor, 2% poor, 35% fair, 56% good, 3% excellent. This year’s winter wheat crop is still rated better than last year’s crop which was rated 8% very poor, 41% poor, 40% fair, 2% good. Wind damage to the winter wheat crop is currently minimal and is rated at the following levels: 34% none, 28% light, 35% moderate, 3% heavy. Freeze and drought damage for the crop is rated 26% none, 52% light, 19% moderate, and 3% heavy. Snow cover for winter wheat 97% very poor, 2% poor, 1% fair, 0% good, and 0% excellent due to the lack of moisture throughout the State. Livestock grazing 89% open, 6% difficult, 5% closed, compared to last year when 72% open, 16% difficult, 11% closed. Currently, 84% of the cattle are received supplemental feed and 86% of sheep.

NEBRASKA: Temperatures averaged above normals for the month with highest readings 10 to 15° above normals during the second week. Precipitation for the month was minimal. At the end of December, wheat 11% very poor, 11% poor, 40% fair, 35% good, 9% excellent. Hay, forage supplies were mostly adequate to short. Some fieldwork with fertilizer applications occurred during the month. Cattle were grazing stalk fields.

NEVADA: December was warmer and drier than normal for most parts of the State. North-central, northeastern regions received less than half of normal precipitation. Several storms did, however, pass over the northwest bringing high winds and much needed precipitation. Reno recorded 2.20 in. of rainfall compared with a norm of 1.32 in. Storms also contributed heavy snowfall to the Sierra Nevada. Snow pack in the Sierra now exceeds 150% of normal. Cattle, call sales continued, as did the marketing of cut cattle continued. Hay marketing, shipping was active with high demand. Shipment of onions from storage continued. Potato processing remained active. Fall seeded grains, garlic were in generally good condition. Winter livestock feeding was underway, but open weather over most of the State reduced needs. Main farm, ranch activities: Equipment maintenance, livestock care, fence repairs, crop and livestock marketing, industry meetings.

NEW ENGLAND: Farmers active digging out from multiple snow storms which hit during December. Accumulations of over one foot of snow at some locations helping to replenish tight water supplies. Farmers sold crops from storage, tobacco was taken down and bundled for buyer inspection, tended livestock and attended meetings.

NEW JERSEY: Drought emergency remains in effect, although precipitation was at or near normal for the month of December. Reservoir levels throughout the State have returned to normal, although ground water levels in the south coastal, southwestern areas of the State remain below normal. Snowfall on December 5th ranged from 5.00 in. to 9.00 in. across State. December 25th snowfall was 8.00 to 12.00 in. northwest area, 4.00 to 8.00 in. northern central portion of the State, less than 4.00 in. central, southwest areas. Average temperatures were below normal for the month, with a low of 13° and a high of 58° for the month of December.

NEW MEXICO: December started out with two winter storms that brought precipitation to most of the State. Areas in the south received as much as 1.60 in. of moisture. Statewide average 2” below normal, with amounts ranging in the north 8” above average. In the northwestern part of the State the second week of December was dry, with no major storms affecting the state. Temperatures varied, with extremes ranging from 2° at Red River on the 9th to 72° at Roswell on the 15th. The third week was more eventful, bringing rain, snow to the far north, southwest. Cool temperatures dominated the northern and central counties, but the eastern plains experienced warmer than normal readings, despite some chilly nights. A winter storm brought holiday snow during the last week of December. Southern New Mexico received the greatest precipitation, with water equivalents of 0.74 in. at Las Cruces, 0.70 in. at Ruidoso. Temperatures for the week averaged between 5 and 6° below normal. Overall, most areas of the State reported above normal accumulations of precipitation for the month of December. Despite the wet weather, the chile, cotton, sorghum harvests were completed, pecan harvest is near completion. Winter wheat crop is emerging and seed beds for other crops are being prepared. Supplemental feeding of livestock continues.

NEW YORK: Near record amounts of snow fell on December 25 across State. Several other snow events occurred during the early and mid-month periods. Many areas were already approaching normal snowfall amounts for the entire season. Outside activities limited due to coldness and excessive snow. Major activities: Tending livestock, snow removal, finishing up grain corn harvest, grading and packing apples and onions, attending grower meetings, machinery repair and maintenance, making plans for 2003 growing season.

NORTH CAROLINA: Many farmers were glad to see 2002 come to an end as growing conditions have not been favorable for most late season
The adequate moisture in the early fall was too late to offset the impact of the summer drought on crop yields. Excessive moisture during the last two months delayed harvest, further deteriorated crop quality and yields. Soggy field conditions continued to impede cover crop plantings in the State. Excessive moisture has caused some small grains to yellow or drown in low spots. Wheat 27% poor or very poor. Statewide, soil moisture 2%-very short, 1%-short, 34%-adequate, 63%-surplus. Activities for the week included: Harvesting cotton and soybeans and planting winter rye and other crops. Other activities included stripping burley tobacco, equipment repair, record preparations, and feeding livestock.

**NORTH DAKOTA:** Below normal snowfall during the month of December left many fields bare and susceptible to wind erosion. Average snow cover for the State was 3.2 in. as of January 5th. Snow cover protection for alfalfa 48% poor, 47%-adequate, 5%-excellent. Hay and forage 4%-very short, 21%-short, 71%-adequate, 4%-surplus. Cattle, cow conditions 3%-poor, 25%-fair, 63%-good, 9%-excellent while sheep conditions were rated 2%-very poor, 3%-poor, 25%-fair, 58%-good, 12%-excellent. Roads for traveling 93%-open, 6%-difficult, 1%-closed. Road conditions 6%-drifted, 18%-icy, 1%-muddy, 75%-dry. Some producers are reporting insect problems in stored grain due to mild temperatures.

**OHIO:** December 2002 was 0.9 degrees colder than normal in State, with temperatures averaging 30.8 across the State. Precipitation 2.83 in., 0.08 in. below normal. Livestock remains in good condition. Some producers reported plenty of hay on hand, while others began purchasing hay from the mid-west. Dairy producers reported dwindling silage stocks due to hay shortages.

**OKLAHOMA:** Days suitable for fieldwork 2. Subsoil 1% very short, 13%-short, 77%-adequate, 9%-surplus. Topsoil 4%-short, 78%-adequate, 18%-surplus. Winter wheat 1%-very poor, 3%-poor, 24%-fair, 50%-good, 22%-excellent; ry e 1%-very poor, 2%-poor, 24%-fair, 41%-good, 32%-excellent; oats 0%-very poor, 2%-poor, 41%-fair, 52%-good, 15%-excellent; wheat grazed 48% this year, 33%-last year, 35%-avg.; ry e grazed 60% this year, 27%-last year, 16%-avg. Oats Grazed 35% this year, 27%-last year, 25% avg.; livestock 0%-very poor, 3%-poor, 45%-fair, 61%-good, 4%-excellent; pasture & range 4%-very poor, 13%-poor, 38%-fair, 43%-good, 2%-excellent. Livestock were rated in mostly good condition. Most producers are feeding hay but not to extent as they have been in past years. Prospects for hay supplies in most of the State are adequate for the remainder of the season. In the South Central and Southeast districts cattle are showing signs of stress related to the weather, short pasture.

**OREGON:** Activities: Winter care of livestock ongoing across State. Supplemental feed continued. Shipments of wheat, barley, oats, corn, potatoes, dry onions continued. Nurseries are digging bare root plant materials, preparing for shipping season. Some cranberry producers continued harvest through mid-December. Christmas tree harvest went very smooth, due in part, to lack of precipitation. Low precipitation levels continue to be a concern statewide. According to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), as of December 9, all river basin sites less than 50% of average snow water equivalent. Values ranged from 4% for Malheur to 44% for Owyhee. Strong storms hit towards end of month, bringing high winds & rain along coast, as well as snow in Cascades.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** During the first half of December State experienced below average temperatures, while temperatures observed in the second half were more mild. Overall, the average high temperature was approximately 36.7° 3° below normal. The average low temperature was 22.7°, again about 3° below normal. Even with two snowfalls and rain, the western part of the State’s precipitation levels were below normal. The middle part of the State’s precipitation levels were at or slightly above normal. Eastern Pennsylvania’s precipitation levels were 50 to 75% above normal. Major activities included fall plowing, soybean and corn harvesting, caring for livestock, hauling and spreading manure, cutting firewood, maintaining machinery and winterizing barns.

**SOUTH CAROLINA:** During the first week of December, an ice storm covered over half of the state spreading from the mountains down to North Charleston. Upstate and the northern Midlands took the brunt of the storm. Cold, wintry temperatures were prevalent throughout the rest of the week. Winter temperatures continued during the second week along with some scattered showers throughout the State. Clear skies and cool temperatures began the third week with a cold front passing through midweek. Scattered showers were prevalent toward the end of the week. Sunny, windy conditions marked the start of winter. Mild conditions began the last week with high temperatures in 60 degree range. Heavy showers on Tuesday swelled several rivers to near or above flood stage level. Christmas Day consisted of clear skies and heavy winds. Cool temperatures hung around the rest of the week with Sunday bringing warm temperatures. Farmers were to the deer stands and duck blinds after a disappointing crop year. Farmers were also busy tending to livestock, winter grazing pastures. Some early plowing and land preparation is occurring in dryer areas around the State. Small grains are in good condition with some planting delayed due to showers.

**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Feed supplies 25% very short, 31% short, 42% adequate, 2% surplus. Stock water supplies 29% very short, 30% short, 40% adequate, 1% surplus. Winter rye 1% very poor, 9%-poor, 44%-fair, 33%-good, 13%-excellent. Winter wheat 8%-very poor, 14%-poor, 42%-fair, 31%-good, 5%-excellent. Cattle 1%-very poor, 3%-poor, 28%-fair, 56%-good, 15%-excellent. Sheep 2%-poor, 26%-fair, 65%-good, 7%-excellent. Road conditions—county 100%-open. Road conditions—towship 100%-open. Average snow depth 1 inch. Alfalfa snow cover 90%-poor, 9%-adequate, 1%-excellent. Winter wheat snow cover 98%-poor, 2%-adequate. Winter rye snow cover 84%-poor, 15%-adequate, 1%-excellent. Calf deaths 39%-below average, 60%-average, 1%-above average. Sheep and lamb deaths 32%-below average, 68%-average. December has brought above normal temperatures and trace amounts of snowfall. The small amount of snow has lead to the low ratings on snow cover for crops, concern for potential damage. Major farm activities included caring for livestock, repairing machinery, selling grain, planning for the coming year.

**TEXAS:** Conditions across the State were constantly changing, ranged from extremely cold to extremely warm. Moisture levels were adequate for most of the month, as mostly dry storms brought precipitation to many parts of the State. In early month, snowfall and freezing rain covered many parts of the Plains. Other areas of the State received adequate amounts of rainfall from passing Pacific storms. Warm and open weather was also common and was enjoyed for several days during the month. Harvest of remaining cotton, peanuts, sorghum, pecans was still ongoing and progressed as weather conditions allowed. Most cotton had already been harvested but many modules were still visible in fields and gin lots by month’s end. Virtually all wheat and oats had been planted by mid-month. Small grains were progressing well as moisture had been adequate in most areas. Range, pastures were mostly in fair to good condition but most had become dormant with colder temperatures. Forages, hay supplies were adequate and livestock were mostly in good conditions. Some sickness in livestock was attributed to the wide swings in temperatures. Supplemental feeding was active in many locations.

**UTAH:** Water problems are still the major concern for farmers and ranchers throughout the State. Farmers are worried about getting enough snow pack in the mountains over the winter months. The summer drought severely damaged winter range. Fall precipitation helped replenish topsoil and subsoil moisture levels. In northern area, winter wheat is reported to be in excellent condition due to adequate fall moisture. November and December temperatures have been above normal throughout the state.

**VIRGINIA:** Pasture 4%-very poor, 18%-poor, 42%-fair, 31%-good, 5%-excellent. Livestock 3%-poor, 21%-fair, 68%-good, 8%-excellent. Small Grain and Winter Grazing Crops 1%-very poor, 11%-poor, 30%-fair, 45%-good, 13%-excellent. State experienced large amounts of rainfall, much cooler temperatures during the month of December. Many counties reported extreme moisture in the form of rain, snow, making field
conditions very muddy. During the first week of December, most of State was hit by a snow, ice storm, prompting the start of winter feeding on several farms. Some of the crops were left standing in the fields as the precipitation hindered, even stopped harvesting activities. Several farmers are still waiting to harvest the rest of their crops if they can get in their fields. Some producers have abandoned their corn, cotton, and soybeans. Small grain acreage is down due to the inability of farmers to plant in the wet fields. However, the small grains that were seeded before December appear to be doing well. Colder weather has slowed their development. Pasture and winter grazing crop conditions are not bad, but the saturated soils coupled with snow cover has increased the amount of stored feed fed to livestock. However, livestock are still in good shape. Hay supplies are getting tight early this season as many farmers are trying to locate hay for the rest of the winter. Most counties are reporting full ponds, running springs due to the rainfall keeping hopes high for adequate irrigation in the spring. Other farm activities included feeding livestock, looking for hay, repairing equipment, applying fertilizer to small grains, applying lime, sampling soils, attending winter meetings, getting and renewing certifications, preparing for the farm bill sign up, working on records, deer hunting. Temperatures for the month of December were cooler than normal. A snow, ice storm came through Virginia during the first week in December dumping anywhere from 3.00 to 6.00 in. of snow. Rainfall was plentiful during the month making up for the drought conditions the State was facing.

WASHINGTON: State experienced a return to near normal conditions during the second half of December with a significant accumulation of rain and snowfall. Most major rivers and streams were at record low levels which prevented any major flooding. A windstorm on December 27 resulted in some damage to farm structures. Winter wheat condition improved during the month with precipitation, but more is needed to advance beyond fair. Some wheat in the southeastern part of the State emerged due to the warm temperatures, leaving it vulnerable to winter damage. Rangeland has yet to significantly recover, however the CRP grazing option during November and December was beneficial. Livestock are doing well in what is starting out as a mild winter. Christmas tree growers reported sales to be about the same as last year in both number of trees sold and price received. Swelling buds on native Indian peach and red and blue elderberries validates that another growing season is on the way.

WEST VIRGINIA: Topsoil moisture 1% short, 54% adequate, 45% surplus; Winter wheat was reported in fair to good condition. Cattle, calves 2% poor, 22% fair, 72% good, 4% excellent. Sheep, Lambs, 1% poor, 12% fair, 85% good, 2% excellent. December was characterized by seasonal temperatures and wet conditions. Farm activities included harvesting of corn and soybeans, livestock marketing, and winter preparations. Measurable snowfall has occurred across the State. Hay, roughage supplies were 6% very short, 14 % short, 78% adequate and 2% surplus. Feed grain supplies were reported as 1% very short, 6% short, and 93% adequate. Some concerns in some areas as feeding was begun slightly early. With the continued moisture, mud has become a concern voiced in several areas.

WISCONSIN: The month of December in State was warmer than normal by 4 to 6°. Temperatures ranged from low single digits to mid-50’s as El Nino kept temperatures above normals. Precipitation for December was below normal statewide. State experienced very light snowfalls for the month with most areas of the State having no snow to trace amounts for the holidays.

WYOMING: Winter wheat 17% poor, 48% fair, 35% good; wind damage 40% none, 45% light,15% moderate; freeze damage 90% none, 10% light. Topsoil 26% very short,59% short,15% adequate. Subsoil 37% very short, 55% short, 8% adequate. Avg snow cover depth 1.63 in. Cattle 3% poor, 40% fair, 57% good. Sheep 3% poor, 41% fair, 56% good. Hay, roughage supplies 18% very short, 43% short, 39% adequate. Stockwater 2% very short, 43% short, 33% adequate. Monthly temperatures 5° below normal in Wheatland to 10° above normal in Gillette. Most areas received some precipitation for the month, totals were below normal. Heaviest moisture fell in Afton at 1.18 in., Jackson 0.50 in., Saratoga 0.46 in., Rock Springs 0.32 in. Yearly totals fell further behind normal ranging from 2.00 to almost 7.00 in. behind across stations.