ALABAMA: Darrell Rankins, Extension Specialist, Auburn University: The recent warm weather has certainly jump-started the forage growth on most beef cattle farms across the state. In the southern portion of the state winter annuals are in peak production, the northern part of the state has seen fescue begin to really grow. One of the biggest problems for forage production on beef farms continues to be the high prices for N fertilizer. Ha consumption is beginning to decline a good bit, in a few more weeks many producers will be finished with the hay feeding season. Cattle prices continue to be good, moisture levels are adequate across much of the state. Warm ground temperatures prevented accumulation. The following week ended with an ice storm throughout much of the state. Cold temperatures allowed the ice to stay visible for several days. The month ended with warm, mild conditions. Farm activity is underway in several counties with farmers putting out fertilizer on small grains, getting the land ready to plant crops. High fertilizer, fuel prices have decreased the normal rate of farm activity for this time of year. Small grain crops are in mostly fair condition. Pastures throughout much of the state are in poor condition making hay a valuable commodity.

CALIFORNIA: Warm weather encouraged growth of small grains. Sugar beets were growing well, as were forage crops, wheat, oat and barley crops. Safflower fields were emerging in the San Joaquin Valley. Applications of herbicides occurred in many fields. Field work continued in preparation for spring planting. Citrus harvest continued with good yields. Growers made applications to control fungus. Citrus growers ran water and wind machines when temperatures dropped below freezing. Buds were swelling in many orchards and some trees were blooming. Maintenance activities were underway in many vineyards. Many almond trees began to bloom. Wind machines and sprinklers were utilized to combat frost in almond orchards. Bees were beginning to pollinate almond trees, though the cool temperatures slowed their progress. Ground preparation began in vegetable fields. Late winter vegetables were harvested, as were cool season Asian vegetables. Onions for processing were planted as were tomato transplants. Winter radicchio harvest was complete. Squash did not appear to be damaged by the cooler temperatures. Pasture conditions were excellent. Stocking of foothill pastures with cattle was complete, though some supplemental feeding of cattle was necessary in some locations. Branding of fall calves was winding down. Dairies were drying out. Ewes with lambs were grazing on retired crop land. Many sellers were retaining ownership of lambs due to poor market conditions.

COLORADO: Temperatures along the Front Range were again above average for February. Precipitation levels continue to be below normal for the month. Although winter wheat is maintaining a good stand, high winds and lack of moisture are beginning to take its toll throughout the Eastern Plains. The mountain snowpack is reported above normal for February. Snowpack levels for the central, northern sections of the Rockies continue to be above normal, while the southern section continue to fall behind. After seeing record levels of snow in early winter, Colorado is beginning to return to normal levels of snow fall in the mountains, however the Eastern Plains continue to stay relatively dry. Lambing, calving is progressing under good conditions with death losses being rated at below average for both. Activities center around care, feeding of livestock and planting spring crops.

DELAWARE: The area received a large amount of snow during the month of February, but so far it’s been a mild winter. Small grains are in good condition. Livestock are in fair condition. Activities included: Snow removal, feeding livestock, working on farm equipment. Farming activities include: Spreading manure, going to winter meetings, and repairing equipment.

FLORIDA: Timely rains fell over the Panhandle and across the Peninsula at the beginning of February. Growers in Gadsden County prepared land for spring crop plantings. Suwannee County producers prepared land for spring crop watermelons. Record cool temperatures by mid-month slowed crop development over the central and southern
Pennsylvania. Several areas experienced heavy frost as well as hard freezes. Some vegetable producers either covered plants with freeze cloths or ran overhead sprinklers for cold protection. The record low temperatures burned the snap beans and sweet corn as well as turned the leaves brown around Okeechobee and Palm Beach. Strong winds in some areas blew sand over drier fields causing some loss of fruit quality. Pine tree planting was active in Taylor County. Warmer temperatures, by the end of the month, increased crop growth and fruit development in all vegetable areas. Most of the clear days in the central and southern Peninsula allowed planting and picking to remain on schedule. Producers began to till land for crop plantings in Washington and Jackson county. Pears, plums, azaleas, Japanese magnolias and camellias were beginning to bloom in Jefferson County with growers hoping to escape a late hard freeze. Harvesting of sugarcane in the Everglades region was active throughout February. Producers marketed snap beans, celery, cucumber, bell peppers, squash, and many types of lettuce, kale, green, and romaine lettuce, parsley, peppers, tomatoes, squash, strawberries, sweet corn and tomatoes throughout the month.

The month of February was brought in by much needed rainfall in citrus producing areas. Monthly rain totals were over six inches in the north, and at least two and a half inches in the rest the State. Cooler than normal seasonal temperatures were recorded during the month, dropping down to 29 degrees in four of the seven routinely monitored areas. Other reports recorded lows of 24 to 29 degrees in the Immokalee area (Hendry and Collier counties), and temperatures on the Ridge (including Polk, Highlands, Hardee and DeSoto counties), as low as 25 degrees but mostly between 29-32. Durations below 28 were mostly only a few hours in a few spots. No fruit damage was reported from the cold weather. Trees began to form small bloom buds close to the end of the month in all areas. Growers increased fertilizing frequency, brush removal, and hedging and topping after harvest. Maturity levels in all varieties lagged behind normal, for the month. Limited Valencia harvesting was conducted, with the main focus being on the early-midseason fruit. Grapefruit harvesting continued to be around six-hundred thousand boxes weekly, with a larger percentage going to processing. Honey tangerine harvest gained some momentum, reaching close to one-hundred fifty thousand boxes the last week, while Temple harvest was nominal. All major citrus processing plants that had plans to be opened finally did so during the month. Range, pasture mostly fair throughout February. Heavy frost, cold weather, slowed small grain forage growth in the north, Panhandle. Southwest range condition poor to good due to drought. Supplemental hay feeding active Panhandle, north, central areas. Cattle condition fair to good throughout February.

**GEORGIA:** Soil moisture levels were reported high at the beginning of the month, fell moderately in the middle, then rose again as the rain returned toward the end of the month. Variable temperatures, rainfall characterized the month of February, according to the USDA, NASS, Georgia Field Office. Average temperatures ranged from the high 30's to low 50's. Although February was considerably dryer than January, most areas of the state still received above average rainfall each week. Wet field conditions continued to be the main cause of concern for most farmers. Wet field conditions limited work in the fields, and mud in the pastures presented a problem at many dairy, beef cattle farms. Wet soil also delayed field preparation in some areas. Pasture conditions improved slightly during the second half of February, in light of the colder temperatures helping combat insect infestations. Small grain conditions continued improvement. Growers of small grains began to focus attention on the condition of the lower 50 percent of the crop. In Jefferson County with growers hoping to escape a late hard freeze. Harvesting of sugarcane in the Everglades region was active throughout February. Producers marketed snap beans, celery, cucumber, bell peppers, squash, and many types of lettuce, kale, green, and romaine lettuce, parsley, peppers, tomatoes, squash, strawberries, sweet corn and tomatoes throughout the month. The average depth of frost penetration for the state was 4 inches, compared to last year's 7 inches. Quality of hay, roughage supplies 7% short, 72% adequate, 21% surplus. Most areas of Iowa reported above average temperatures with below normal precipitation during February. Consequently, concerns about future pest populations remain. Lack of moisture remains a concern with Spring arriving soon. Some reports of manure hauling were received. Corn continues to move, especially to local ethanol plants. Warm, Dry Conditions. At the end of February, the average depth of snow cover across Iowa was visibly zero inches, equivalent to the same time last year. The average depth of frost penetration for the state was 4 inches, compared to last year's 7 inches. Quality of hay, roughage supplies 5% poor, 36% fair, 59% good. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing 32% none, 25% limited, 28% moderate, 15% extensive. Hog, pig losses in Iowa were about the same as last year's state averages at 25 percent below average, 69 percent average, and 6% above average. Cattle, calf losses were below last year's state averages at 52% below average; 65% avg.; 3% above average. Generally, the warm, dry weather has been favorable for stock products. Groups/crops/weather/cw_coverage/narrative_mar6.wpd.

**HAWAII:** DATA NOT AVAILABLE

**IDAHO:** Topsoil 4% short, 70% adequate, 26% surplus. During the past week, temperatures recorded for the state were above average, most weather stations received precipitation. Winter wheat condition 10% fair, 86% good, 4% excellent. Hay, roughage supply 4% short, 94% adequate, 2% surplus. Lambing 25% complete. Calving 33% complete 2006.

**IOWA:** Agricultural Summary: Soil 25% very short, 38% short, 35% adequate, 2% surplus. Movement of grain for the state 24% none, 43% light, 30% moderate, 3% heavy. Availability of hay, roughage supplies 7% short, 72% adequate, 21% surplus. Most areas of Iowa reported above average temperatures with below normal precipitation during February. Consequently, concerns about future pest populations remain. Lack of moisture remains a concern with Spring arriving soon. Some reports of manure hauling were received. Corn continues to move, especially to local ethanol plants. Warm, Dry Conditions. At the end of February, the average depth of snow cover across Iowa was visibly zero inches, equivalent to the same time last year. The average depth of frost penetration for the state was 4 inches, compared to last year's 7 inches. Quality of hay, roughage supplies 5% poor, 36% fair, 59% good. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing 32% none, 25% limited, 28% moderate, 15% extensive. Hog, pig losses in Iowa were about the same as last year's state averages at 25 percent below average, 69 percent average, and 6% above average. Cattle, calf losses were below last year's state averages at 52% below average; 65% avg.; 3% above average. Generally, the warm, dry weather has been favorable for stock products. Groups/crops/weather/cw_coverage/narrative_mar6.wpd.

**ILLINOIS:** Topsoil 20% very short, 47% short, 32% adequate, 1% surplus. Winter wheat 1% very poor, 7% poor, 18% fair, 63% good, 11% excellent. February temperatures averaged near normal for the state, while precipitation averaged 1.93 inches, nearly an inch below normal for the month. The biggest concern around the state was the lack of subsoil moisture. Many farmers are hauling water for livestock and wells since frozen conditions were very low temperatures and deep snow cover. More rainfall will be needed this spring to improve subsoil moisture conditions. Farmers have started applying fertilizer, anhydrous, doing other spring tillage work in some parts of the state. There was some concern that the very cold conditions during the middle of the month may have caused some damage to the winter wheat. Livestock are in good shape, mainly due to the dry conditions, as calfing season is nearing full swing. Activities Included: Hauling grain, spreading manure, completing income taxes, machinery preparation, fixing fence, and visiting the FSA office.

**INDIANA:** Winter wheat is reported to be in mostly good condition. However, there is some concern over possible damage caused by a brief cold snap earlier in February with no snow cover to protect the wheat. The wheat has not broken dormancy yet in most parts of the state. Nitrogen has been applied to some winter wheat fields. Livestock are in mostly good condition. Calving, lambing are active on many livestock operations. Feedlots, pastures are in good condition with the drier weather. Hay supplies are mostly adequate due to the mild weather conditions during most of January and February. The average state temperature during February was 31.1° which was 7° above normal. The average precipitation was 1.74 inches which was .54 inches below normal. Some farmers are concerned about the very dry conditions. Activities Included: Tax preparation, ordering supplies, hauling grain to market, attending farm meetings, cleaning fence rows, spreading fertilizer, some tilling, financial planning, cleaning, repairing equipment, and taking care of livestock.

**KANSAS:** Topsoil 50% very short, 45% short, 5% adequate. The State experienced normal to above normal temperatures most of February. Precipitation was very light throughout the State during the month. Wheat condition 7% very poor, 20% poor, 46% fair, 24% good, 3% excellent; wind damage 79% none, 17% light, 4% moderate, freeze damage 81% none, 14% light, 5% moderate. Hay, forage supplies 3% very short, 15% short, 78% adequate, 2% surplus. Feed grain supplies 1% very short, 5% short, 90% adequate, 4% surplus.

**KENTUCKY:** After a very mild January, February 2006 weather was back to reality with several weekends of very cold weather, several weeks with above normal temperatures during the workweek and all but one Saturday with snowfall. Except for the first week of February, which received above normal temperatures, most weeks’ average temperatures
were below normal. Yet, daily high temperatures soared into the 60s and low 70s several times throughout the month. Extreme high temperatures were in the low 70s and extreme low temperatures were in the single digits. For the entire State, only 63% of normal precipitation (liquid equiv.) was received. Temperatures for February 2006 averaged 35.6°F across the State which was 1.6°F below normal. High temperatures averaged from 47 in the West to 46 in the East. Departure from normal high temperatures ranged from 4°F below normal in the West to 2°F above normal in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 28°F in the West to above normal in the West to 2°F above normal in the East. Precipitation (liquid equiv.) for the period totaled 2.36 in. statewide, 1.38 in. below normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 2.84 in., Central 2.92 in., Bluegrass 1.83 in. and East 1.96 in., which was 1.20, 1.20, 1.60 and 1.20, 1.20, 1.60 and 1.20, 1.20, 1.60 and 1.20, 1.20, 1.60 respectively below normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.80 in. at Cape Girardeau to a high of 2.70 in. at Nashville. Snowfall totals ranged from Paducah 7.3, Louisville 3.1, Bowling Green 8.3, Lexington 8.1, and Jackson 9.4 in. Below normal temperatures with wide swings in temperature extremes caused some livestock stress but most herds were in good condition. Below normal precipitation improved the muddy pasture condition and allowed farmers to complete routine chores. Drier condition at months end had producers thinking about preparing fields for corn planting in southern portions of the State. Producers continued to take grains and tobacco to market. Farmers attended the many winter commodity meetings and the National Farm Machinery Show.

LOUISIANA: Has received a total of 9.33 inches of rain during the first 2 months of 2006, which was just short of the state average of 10.23 inches. Field crop producers were beginning to prepare land for spring planting. Producers were also getting equipment ready for the upcoming season. Strawberry producers continued harvesting, selling their crop. Due to lack of rain, hurricane damage, this year’s crawfish production will be lower than previous years. Livestock producers were fertilizing winter pastures and feeding hay.

MARYLAND: The area received a significant snow in February, but in general it’s been a mild winter. Small grains are in good condition. Livestock are in fair condition. Activities Included: Snow removal, feeding livestock, working on farm equipment. Farmers are purchasing seed, fertilizer, chemicals and are finalizing decisions on what to plant.

MICHIGAN: February temperatures were above normal, normal, below normal at various times of the month. Winter did return to most of the State with snow still on the ground by month’s end. Mid-Michigan was hit by an ice storm during the middle of the month with an icy coating to the snow on the ground. There were some reports concerning the lack of snow cover, rain could hurt soil moisture conditions this spring and summer. Other reports mentioned adequate rainfall, which were soaking into the soil due to a lack of frost. Still other areas were seeing pooling of water on the fields from too much rain. Overall, reports from around the State were generally positive that there will be minimal winter damage to winter wheat and alfalfa stands, but it may be too early to properly assess if there was any damage. Lambs was in full swing for many sheep farms. There were reports that the big changes in temperature brought on some health problems in smaller cattle. Activities Included: Hauling manure, hauling crops to market, mending fences, trimming fruit trees, caring for livestock, lambing, calving, and preparing taxes.

MINNESOTA: Above average temperatures, below average precipitation, in February, left snow cover inconsistent throughout most of the state. Northern areas reported coverage of 12 inches or more, while central, southern areas reported very little snow cover. Farmers continue to make preparations for the 2006 growing season. Some farmers are concerned about harvesting the last few fields of corn, the ability for alfalfa to survive the frost. The weather, however, has helped the livestock producers. Some producers are still grazing corn stubble, feed availability is good. Livestock conditions are generally good leading into the Spring calving season.

MISSISSIPPI: Soil 3% short, 85% adequate, 12% surplus. Hay supply 32% short, 66% adequate, 2% surplus. Feed grain 1% short, 99% adequate. On average, February temperatures were about four degrees below normal. State rainfall averages were approximately one inch above normal, with rainfall of over two inches above average in east-central parts of the state. Coastal areas of the state were about 3 inches below normal. Soil moisture improved due to rainfall, and pre-planting activities such as burndown applications continue. Farmers will begin spring planting within a month or two, are hopeful that conditions will be favorable for timely planting. Winter wheat conditions, grass growth improved during the month. The demand for hay showed a slight decline over the previous month’s report due to additional grass growth and increased grazing time. Winter wheat is reported to be in the early stages of jointing in some fields.

MISSOURI: Weather during February was dry in nearly all areas with precipitation averaging 0.50 inch, well below the 30-year normal of 1.90 inches. Pastures are particularly in need of rain to begin spring growth, many stock ponds have low water levels or are dry, particularly in the west-central and southern counties. Some farmers in the driest areas have been culling their cattle herds more than usual due to shortages of both hay and water. The wheat crop appears to be in good condition in the Bootheel, mostly fair to good elsewhere although more moisture is also needed in most areas to stimulate growth. Farmers have been spreading fertilizer, doing early tillage in preparation for spring planting. Planting is expected to begin earlier than normal in the southeastern counties if warm, dry conditions continue.

MONTANA: Topsoil 2% surplus, 1% 2005, 50% adequate, 14% 2005, 38% short, 32% 2005, 10% very short, 53% 2005. Subsoil 1% surplus, For the month of February, Montana experienced light to moderate precipitation, in the form of rain, snow. Roundup, Billings, and Rapelje tied for the high temperature of 69 degrees. Wisdom had the lowest temperature of –43 degrees. West Glacier received the most moisture at 2.43 inches. 0% 2005, 34% adequate, 9% 2005, 44% short, 30% 2005, 21% very short. 61% 2005. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 1% 2005, 12% poor, 11% 2005, 50% fair, 40% 2005, 32% good, 45% 2005, 6% excellent, 3% 2005. Winter wheat wind damage is 42% none, 39% 2005, 44% light, 35% 2005, 12% moderate, 22% 2005, 2% heavy, 4% 2005., freeze, drought damage is 49% none, 31% 2005, 26% light, 46% 2005, 24% moderate, 20% 2005, 1% heavy, 3% 2005, wheat spring stand are 96% still dormant, 67% 2005, 4% greening, 33% 2005, 0% green, growing, 0% 2005, protectiveness of snow cover is 58% very poor, 91% 2005, 25% poor, 8% 2005, 5% fair, 1% 2005, 12% good, 0% 2005, 0% excellent, 0% 2005. Ranchers are providing supplemental feed to 97% of cattle, calves, 97% 2005, 5 96% of sheep, lambs, 96% 2005. Livestock grazing is 65% open, 82% 2005, 14% difficult, 10% 2005, 21% closed, 8% 2005. Calving, lambing are under way with calving at 29%, 34% 2005, and lambing at 19%, 18% 2005.

NEBRASKA: For the month of February 2006, precipitation averaged less than 50% of normal with the exception of the Northwest which was near normal. Temperatures averaged below zero for most of the month ending well above normal. Winter wheat conditions declined during the month as concerns grew about soil moisture levels. Soil temperatures were well above normal, signaling an early green-up. Early calving was going well in most areas, with some losses reported in the Northwest due to heavy snow, below zero temperatures during mid-month. Producers were marketing grain, preparing for spring planting, in some parts of the state applying fertilizer. At the end of February, snow was absent from the majority of the state, with only the northern Panhandle counties reporting snow cover. February precipitation was light with an exception of a heavy snowstorm in the northern Panhandle. Since September 1, accumulated precipitation is below normal for all districts. Wheat conditions were below month ago levels 4% very poor, 9% 45 fair, 40%, 2 excellent. This is also below last year’s condition of 60% good or excellent. Declines from last month were noted in all major growing districts with poor growing conditions in the Southwest. Hay, forage supplies rated as adequate or surplus across the majority of the state. Cattle, Calves condition 8% fair, 73% good, 19% excellent, equal to year ago levels. Calving has progressed to 32% complete with calf losses reported as average or below.

NEVADA: The weather was mild early in the month, but stormy weather arrived at mid-month. Snow fell in the mountains and rain in the valleys. Accumulated mountain snow pack exceeded normal in most watersheds. River, stream levels rose significantly toward the end of the month, but no widespread flooding was noted. Southern Nevada remained mostly dry. Calving was underway in the lower elevations. Good soil moisture supplies benefited early range conditions, greening was
NEW ENGLAND: The month of February started the way January ended, with warmer than normal temperatures and heavy rains which caused flooding along low lying riverbeds. On the 12th, a Nor’easter dumped up to 20 inches of snow along the coastal region of Massachusetts. On the 17th, winds as high as 56 mph were reported in parts of the region that caused damage, outages. At month's end, temperatures dipped into single digits during the evenings. The month provided unfavorable sap flow conditions for northern maple sugar producers. However, southern maple sugar producers have started boiling. Activities Included: Nursery, greenhouse work, tending livestock, and preparing for the spring planting season.

NEW JERSEY: Temperatures were up to 20° above normal the first week of February in most state localities. During mid-February temperatures became variable, falling to below normal, rising to above normal again, across most of the state. By the end of February, temperatures fell to below normal in most areas. There were measurable amounts of precipitation in many areas during the month. Total precipitation for the month was below normal in most localities. The Atlantic City weather station reported a little over 4.0 inches of snow on February 12, 2006. There was no measurable snowfall for the month in many parts of the state. Agricultural producers continued field preparation for spring crops as weather permitted. Activities Included: Greenhouse work, equipment repair, and feeding stored hay to livestock.

NEW YORK: Above average temperatures were recorded in the Capital Region. Moderate snow fall totals were recorded for the Eastern region but heavier snow fall totals for the Western region. A mid-month snow storm system tracked across northern Mexico, southern New Mexico, bringing some locations over southern New Mexico their first measurable precipitation in months. Carlsbad broke a string of 15 consecutive days without measurable precipitation. Meanwhile, no precipitation was reported over the northern half of the state. Temperatures for the week were generally near normal to a few degrees above normal. Farmers were continuing ground preparation for spring planting. The onion crop has emerged, appeared in good condition. Some alfalfa fertilization had started as some early irrigation to combat the dryness. Dryland wheat was reported in extremely poor condition with some farmers stating that even a good rain may be too late to salvage the crop. Ranchers are well into calving, supplemental feeding was reported as heavy due to pastures being dry and short.

NEW MEXICO: The month began and continued to be dry until the final week in February. A weak, but slow-moving storm system tracked across northern Mexico, southern New Mexico, bringing some locations over southern New Mexico their first measurable precipitation in months. Carlsbad broke a string of 15 consecutive days without measurable precipitation. Meanwhile, no precipitation was reported over the northern half of the state. Temperatures for the week were generally near normal to a few degrees above normal. Farmers were continuing ground preparation for spring planting. The onion crop has emerged, appeared in good condition. Some alfalfa fertilization had started as some early irrigation to combat the dryness. Dryland wheat was reported in extremely poor condition with some farmers stating that even a good rain may be too late to salvage the crop. Ranchers are well into calving, supplemental feeding was reported as heavy due to pastures being dry and short.

NEW YORK: Above average temperatures were recorded in the Capital Region. Moderate snow fall totals were recorded for the Eastern region but heavier snow fall totals for the Western region. A mid-month snow storm blanketed the southeast region, marked the weather highlight of the month. Farmers were busy attending producer association meetings, repairing machinery, grading, packing onions, potatoes, and apples. Activities Included: Orchard clean-up, and preparing facilities for the upcoming growing season.

NORTH CAROLINA: Days suitable for field work 5.9. Soil 2% very short, 25% short, 69% adequate, 4% surplus. February brought dry weather to North Carolina. As of February 28, current year precipitation totals are below normal with ranges from -13 to -3.12 inches. Warmer weather was experienced in most areas with highs ranging from 61-75° for the month of February. Currently, small grain crop conditions are rated mostly fair to good. Activities Included: Feeding, tending livestock, tax preparation, topdressing small grains, crop planning and winter farm maintenance.

NORTH DAKOTA: Weather conditions during February were colder than January, but near normal levels. Average statewide snow cover was 6.0 inches on March 5, compared to 0.9 inches a year ago. The northeast, east central districts had the most snow cover with 15.7 and 13.8 inches, respectively. The south central district had no snow cover and only 0.1 inch was in the southwest. Hay, forage supplies 0% very short, 6% short, 82% adequate, 12% surplus. Snow cover protection for alfalfa 68% poor, 25% adequate, 7% excellent. Calving was 12% complete with lambing 20% complete. Shearing was 43% complete. Cattle conditions 0% very poor, 1% poor, 16% fair, 69% good, 14% excellent. Sheep conditions 0% very poor, 1% poor, 12% fair, 74% good, 13% excellent. Percent of feed obtained from pasture, range ± 5% for cattle, 4% for sheep. County, secondary roads 82% open, 14% difficult, 4% closed. Road conditions 12% drifted, 23% icy, 4% muddy, 61% dry.

OHIO: The February 2006 average temperature for Ohio was 30.9°, 0.9° above normal. Precipitation for the state averaged 2.26 inches, 0.57 inches below normal. Several winter wheat producing counties reported current winter wheat conditions are good to excellent. Cattle conditions are excellent because of the mild temperatures. Hay inventories for cattle operations seem fine for overwintering cattle.

OKLAHOMA: Topsoil 87% very short, 12% short, 1% adequate. Subsoil 73% very short, 25% short, 2% adequate. Wheat 35% very poor, 35% poor, 26% fair, 4% good; Rye 34% very poor, 39% poor, 27% fair; Oats 60% very poor, 36% poor, 4% fair; Livestock 10% very poor, 40% poor, 38% fair, 10% good, 2% excellent; Pasture, range 45% very poor, 30% poor, 20% fair, 5% good. Livestock conditions also declined in response to the poor wheat, pasture conditions. Ponds remained dry across the State. Some producers were selling cattle as feed supplies were depleted. Other producers had to move cattle off of wheat pasture as wheat conditions worsened. Livestock conditions 10% very poor, 40% poor, 38% fair, 10% good, 2% excellent. The death loss of cattle was mostly light to average. Hay supplies were rated as mostly below average.

OREGON: All stations received precipitation during the month of February. Areas along the coast received more than five inches of rainfall last month, while six additional stations reported rainfall exceedances of three inches. Those stations include Astoria/Clatsop, Bandon, Eugene, Grants Pass, Parkdale, & Roseburg. High temperatures were very similar to January highs, mainly in the 50’s & 60’s, while overnight lows ranged from -9°F Fahrenheit in Joseph (northeast) to 25°F Fahrenheit in North Bend (coastal area). A high temperature of 70° was recorded in Medford, which is located in the southwestern part of the State. There were five cranberry frost events recorded at Bandon during the week ending February 19th; seven events were recorded during the week ending February 26th. Farmers in the Willamette Valley continue to struggle with standing water, soaked fields. Some potato growers were purchasing seed for the upcoming year, while onion growers are preparing for the upcoming planting season, which is what most producers are doing at this point. The Oregon Department of Agriculture’s Story the first of February introduced a new value added pear project that was expected to begin the production phase in the near future. The new product is an alternative to the canned pear. The peel remains on the finished product of the fruit, will be packaged in a glass container as opposed to a can.

PENNSYLVANIA: Principal farm activities for the month of February included milking cows, tax preparation, and planning for this year’s crop season. February started where January left off as the final week of nationwide warmth maintained significantly above-normal temperatures. An abundance of rain fell early in the month, which maintained soggy conditions for some livestock. The rain, however, changed to snow, ending a 6-week spell of mild but frequently rainy weather. For the first time since mid-December, cooler-than-normal weather prevailed. The Erie area was hit hard with snow during the second first week of February. Heavier snow arrived across Pennsylvania on February 11-12. Snow accumulation differed in many parts of the state. Some reported less than 5 inches of snow while other areas, such as Allentown and Philadelphia, received up to 10 inches and more on the ground. Winter wheat, oat conditions remain very poor for the most part. High winds have been reported throughout the state. Several areas of the state were without power and heat after extremely high winds blew over telephone poles. These winds were reported up to 60 mph and higher. On February 17-18, temperatures plunged threatening unprotected winter wheat. Overall, after a warm beginning for the month of February, Pennsylvania went back to normal temperatures and even cooler in other parts of the state.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Temperatures averaged as much as 10 to 12° above normal during the first week of February. The second week temperatures averaged as much as 10 to 12° below normal. During 100 hours of daylight hours, scattered showers were reported throughout the State on Tuesday. Temperatures continued cooler that normal until the end of the third week when winds brought unseasonably warm weather to the area. By the end
of the month temperatures had returned to normal. 3.18 inches of rain were reported through the State. The high temperatures for the period was 73° the low was 24 degrees. Farmers are busy in preparation for the upcoming planting season by servicing their equipment and tilling the land. The high fuel prices may encourage some farmers to pursue the option of no-till planting this year. Farmers are also using winter grazing pastures to supplement their winter hay supply.

SOUTH DAKOTA:  Feed supplies 2% very short, 4% short, 86% adequate, 8% surplus. Stock water supplies 16% very short, 16% short, 66% adequate, 2% surplus. Winter wheat condition 5% very poor, 16% poor, 42% fair, 34% good, 3% excellent. Cattle condition 1% poor, 11% fair, 70% good, 3% excellent. Sheep condition 18% poor, 46% fair, 36% good, 2% excellent. Accessible livestock feed supplies 98% readily available, 2% difficult. Accessible stock water supplies 90% readily available, 7% difficult, 3% inaccessible. Road conditions, county 99% open, 1% difficult. Road conditions, township 97% open, 3% difficult. Average snow depth 0.5 inch. Alfalfa snow cover 93% poor, 6% adequate, 1% excellent. Winter wheat snow cover 99% poor, 1% adequate. Calf deaths since February 1st 34% below average, 65% average, 1% above average. Sheep, lamb deaths since February 1st 40% below avg., 59% avg., 1% above average. Cattle death losses since February 1st 38% below normal, 65% normal, 1% above normal. Calving 13% complete, 11% complete 2005. Lambing 20% complete, 26% complete 2005. A few February cold temperatures above average. Cattle death losses since February 1st 38% below average, 65% average, 1% above average. Cattle body conditions were mostly good to fair, little by late month. Hay supplies were very short statewide and were being imported from neighboring states. Cattle body conditions were showing signs of poor grazing opportunities. Due to the lack of adequate forage, many cattlemen were thinning out herds at a rapid pace. Auctions were very active.

UTAH:  Temperatures have been seasonably warm this time of year, snow pack in the mountains is at 50%-70% of normal. A few snow storms moved through during the middle of the month and dropped a large amount of snow, but most producers are looking forward to more.Livestock are in good condition with farm activities have been limited to feeding livestock. Crop Summary Northern counties have enjoyed a rather mild winter, but have adequate snow in the mountains. There is currently very little snow on the ground in the eastern and southern counties. Some of the heavy snow storms of late winter has been near normal thus far. There are some concerns of winter kill in the spring when plants break dormancy, due to cold temperatures, lack of adequate snow cover in the valley. Growers are still very concerned about the price of fuel, fertilizer. No major agricultural activities reported. Livestock Summary Lambing, calving have started in farm flocks, both are doing well. Some sheep producers are also sheering at the current time. Sheep producers in the higher elevations will be bringing their sheep off of the winter ranges soon to continue lambing activities.

WISCONSIN:  Temperatures averaged mostly below normal throughout the month of February with highs reaching the low 70s, lows dipping into the teens. Rainfall averages were above normal for the first week of the month, but fell below normal for the remainder of February. The State’s winter wheat crop was rated in mostly good condition with insect, disease pressure rated light to none. Generally dry weather allowed producers to make good progress with field activities which included fertilizing wheat, pasture spraying, fruit tree maintenance. Pastures were rated in mostly fair to good condition. The mild, late winter conditions helped to ease the stress on livestock producers with dwindling hay stocks. Overall, hay stock levels were mostly adequate to short. Cattle conditions were rated as mostly good-to-fair.

TEXAS:  In the month of February, the drought continued in Texas. It was not until the last week of the month that any considerable rainfall accumulated were recorded. Most of the precipitation fell in Northeast Central and East Texas. Rain gauge readings ranged from ½ to 3 inches for the month. The heaviest of that rain was in an area stretching from around Fort Worth to Texarkana. In other regions, accumulations were light with totals generally under ½ inch. Temperatures were well above normal early in the month and in late month with many regions reporting highs in the 90’s. A mid-month cold front blew through, dropping temperatures into the single digits on the Plains and into the 30’s in coastal areas. Wildfires burned thousands of acres of grasslands that have been left bone dry after several months of drought. The winter wheat crop was in bad shape. Most dryland fields have been grazed out on the Plains and mostly only irrigated fields remained. By the end of the month, fields in areas that received rain were coming out of dormancy. Many fields in drier locations were showing very poor stands and the possibility of a grain crop was looking doubtful. Cotton growers were preparing fields for planting. Pre-watering along with fertilizer and herbicide applications was active. Planting had begun in the Rio Grande Valley. Producers on the Blacklands took advantage of the rainfall late in the month and began to plant corn. Corn and Sorghum was also being planted in the Rio Grande Valley, Coastal Bend, Upper Coast, and South Texas. Rice growers along the Upper Coast were concerned with irrigation costs and high salinity levels. Some wheat and cabbage in the Western Garden area. Citrus was picked in the Rio Grande Valley. In East Texas, vegetables were planted and sweet potato fields were plowed. Range and pasture was in very poor condition, especially in drought stricken western areas. Eastern regions that received moisture had begun to green-up a little by late month. Hay supplies were very short statewide and were being imported from neighboring states. Cattle body conditions were the most adequate this time period since last year. Calving, lambing, feeding, plowing, and working on equipment are progressing. Growers are still very concerned about the price of fuel, fertilizer. No major agricultural activities reported. West Texas tree growth at Grant County due to extremely low temperatures. Christmas tree growers took advantage of a few nice days to plant trees.

WASHINGTON:  Heavy rain was reported throughout the state. Mild to moderate flooding occurred in the western part of the state along the Chehalis, Black, Nisqually Rivers due to the excessive moisture. Temperatures were warmer than usual in eastern Washington, some wind was reported throughout the state. Winter wheat, fall vegetable seed crop damage was reported in Grant county due to extremely low temperatures. Christmas tree growers took advantage of a few nice days to plant trees.

WISCONSIN:  Topsoil 19% short, 77% adequate, 4% surplus compared with 1% short, 49% adequate, 50% surplus last year. Hay, roughage supplies 1% very short, 10% short, 86% adequate, 3% surplus. Feed grain supplies 1% very short, 4% short, 94% adequate, 1% surplus. Winter Wheat conditions 18% fair, 82% good. Cattle, calves 2% poor, 22% fair, 72% good, 4% excellent. Calving 31% complete, compared to 41% last year. Sheep, lambs 2% poor, 14% fair, 81% good, 3% excellent. Lambing 31% complete, compared to 40% last year. Activities Included: Calving, lambing, feeding, plowing, and working on equipment.

WISCONSIN:  Temperatures averaged 2°F below to 1°F above normal during February. Average high temperatures ranged from the upper 20s to low 30s. Low temperatures averaged from 10 to 20 degrees. Precipitation in northern areas was between 0.37 inches in Eau Claire, 1.24 inches in Green Bay. Southern parts of the state received 0.70 inches in La Crosse to 0.91 inches in Milwaukee. Many areas are experiencing below normal precipitation for the winter season. Snow cover was present in northern counties during most of February. Storms during the middle of February brought snow cover to central and southern counties.

WYOMING:  Topsoil 10% very short, 43% short, 38% adequate, 9% surplus. Subsoil 22% very short, 35% short, 37% adequate, 6% surplus. Temperatures during the four weeks ending Friday, March 3rd, turned
frigid mid-month driving averages below normal across all stations. Averages ranged from 1.1° below normal in Laramie and Riverton to 8.1° below normal in Afton. The high temperature was 73° in Torrington, the low was minus 41 in Redbird. Precipitation was mostly below normal. The most precipitation was reported in Chugwater with 0.94 inches, Lander with 0.89 inches, and Afton with 0.75 inches. The average depth of snow cover 1.6 inches. A few Western counties averaged 9 inches of snow while most counties had no snowcover. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 8% poor, 46% fair, 45% good; damage 21% none, 61% light, 14% moderate, 4% severe, freeze damage 79% none, 19% light, 1% moderate, 1% severe. Spring calves born 26%, 2005 21%, 5-year average 23%. Farm flock ewes lambed 35%, 2005 26%, 5-year average 29%. Farm flock sheep shorn 39%, 2005 29%, 5-year average 31%. Cattle condition 1% poor, 18% fair, 74% good, 7% excellent. Sheep condition 3% poor, 18% fair, 77% good, 2% excellent. Calf, lamb losses mostly normal with reports of heavy losses in two Southeast counties. Hay, roughage supplies 2% short, 79% adequate, 19% surplus. Stock water supplies 7% very short, 23% short, 70% adequate