**ALABAMA:** A wet weather pattern brought hydrological drought relief to most of the state, leaving a swath of area representing 30 percent of Alabama and stretching from the southwestern corner to the northeastern corner, categorized as suffering from abnormally dry conditions, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor released for December 30, 2008. Most peach-growing locations around the state have received more chilling and growing degree hours than during the previous year. Beef cattle were reported in relatively good condition. Mild temperatures over the past few weeks enabled substantial growth in winter pastures. Most producers had an adequate supply of hay on hand. There was also a large quantity of hay for sale across the state. Feed prices decreased slightly during the past two weeks.

**ARKANSAS:** Temperatures across the State were above normal for the first half of December and mostly below normal for the second half. Precipitation in the form of rain or snow had fallen throughout the month. Six of the twenty-two weather stations have above normal precipitation for the year. Cotton harvesting continued through December. Alfalfa condition remained mostly fair to good for the month. Small grain planting started at the beginning of the month. Range and pasture conditions remained unchanged for the month with conditions varying from mostly poor to good. Alfalfa harvesting and shearing off continued for Arizona. The winter vegetable harvest remained active throughout December along with the citrus harvest.

**COLORADO:** Most of Colorado received above normal amounts of precipitation. Temperatures also were above average for most of the state throughout December. This allowed the winter wheat crop to develop well-above average. Overall, mountain snowpack is currently 117% of average at this time.

**DELAWARE:** Top soil moisture 8% very short, 42% short, 43% adequate, 7% surplus. Sub soil moisture 8% very short, 31% short, 55% adequate, 6% surplus. Hay supplies 3% very short, 11% short, 86% adequate. Feed Supplies 3% very short, 7% short, 90% adequate. Winter wheat condition 1% poor, 10% fair, 77% good, 12% excellent. Barley condition 1% poor, 8% fair, 79% good, 12% excellent. Barley planted 100%. Barley emerged 98%. Winter wheat planted 100%. Winter wheat emerged 91%. Wheat and barley crops are in good condition. Farmers getting ready for Ag Week starting this week.

**FLORIDA:** Wheat was planted in the Panhandle. Most cotton harvesting wrapped up. In mid-December the Panhandle received over 4 inches of rain which helped most fields, but may have damaged some late cotton in Okaloosa and Walton counties. The end of December was mostly dry, but pest and disease concerns remained. Sugarcane was harvested in south Florida. Pecan harvest was nearly finished with yields lower than expected. Some potato growers were preparing land, while others had already begun planting. Union County had stress on crops due to inadequate rains. Some broccoli and cabbage crops were damaged by frost and worms. Tomatoes, beans, squash, eggplant, greens, and radishes were harvested, but cold weather put some behind schedule. Other vegetables marketed were cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, lettuce, peppers, endive, and escarole. Avocados and okra were still being marketed, but shipments declined seasonally. Strawberries looked good in Bradford County, but harvest was somewhat delayed in Hillsborough County due to

**ARIZONA:** Temperatures during the month of December were varied and ranged from as low as 8 degrees below normal at the first of the month to as high as 10 degrees above normal by the end of the month. December was a wet month as rainfall was recorded at almost every reporting station for all four weeks. Weekly rainfall amounts as high as 3.74 and 3.77 inches were observed in some areas. Despite excessive rainfall, the 2009 winter wheat crop was reported in mostly good condition. Field preparations for spring plantings were delayed due to the wet weather. Livestock were rated in fair to good condition. Producers were feeding hay to cattle, and there were reports of high feed costs restricting supplemental programs. Throughout the month, Arizona producers were attending meetings and making plans for the 2009 crop year.

**CALIFORNIA:** Field work continued with ground preparation, cultivation, irrigation and weed control in alfalfa, wheat, barley and rye fields. New alfalfa fields continued to be planted. Seed alfalfa fields were dormant. Small grain planting was winding down. Grain fields were emerging and progressing well due to ongoing wet conditions. Cotton harvest activities were winding down. Cotton plow down was virtually complete. Sudan hay and sorghum harvests were essentially complete. Rice growers continued to reshape berms and levee paddies. Rice fields were being cultivated, bedded, fertilized and irrigated for spring planting. Grape growers continued to prune, irrigate, cultivate and remove old vineyards. Only a few grapes were still being picked. These included Autumn Royal, Christmas Rose, Crimson Seedless and Kyoho varieties. Pomegranate and jujube harvests ended in Fresno County. Kiwifruit harvest ended in Tulare County. Post-harvest activities such as pruning and irrigation were underway in stone-fruit orchards. Raspberry and strawberry nursery stock harvests continued. Olives were still being harvested. Harvest of Navel oranges, lemons, pummellos, Satsuma and Clementine mandarins, grapefruit and tangerines continued. Cooler temperatures were helping advance citrus color; gassing time was reduced. Harvest slowed during the last half of the month due to wet and cold weather. Citrus growers were treating to control fungus, insects and weeds, as well as irrigating, applying foliar nutrients, and protecting their crops from freezing temperatures. Thrips were being monitored. Almond and pistachio
unseasonably cold weather. Land preparations for the spring watermelon crop were underway in Charlotte County. Light late blight was found in isolated areas among tomato and potato crops. Even with warmer high temperatures, averages were about normal for the month of December in citrus producing counties. Several days had highs in low to mid 80s, many nights were in the low 40s. Rainfall for month was less than an inch and a half in all monitored stations, many areas recording less than an inch. With irrigating regularly, dry weather has not had much affect on citrus crop. Weekly processing of early-season oranges peaked third week of December to over six million boxes. Navel orange harvesting picked up after Thanksgiving, dropped significantly after holidays and gift fruit push. Grapefruit was reported to be excellent quality this season after cold snap in November. Other than harvesting, grove activity included irrigating, cleaning up groves in preparation for harvesting, some fertilizing, and small amount of hedging after harvest. Scouting for greening and pushing of affected trees continued and all fertilizer and nutrient condition December mostly poor to good. Pasture condition poor due to drought, cold; seasonal dormancy of permanent pasture grass. Cattle being feed protein supplements, hay. Cattle condition mostly fair to good. At month’s end, Panhandle, north areas small grain forage (wheat, ryegrass) being grazed, but short. Permanent pasture greened up following warm days. Corn condition in good to very good; pasture condition poor to good, most poor. Warm weather permitted forage growth, drought limited grass growth. Cattle condition mostly poor to good. Southwest; pasture poor due to drought, some pasture flooded from rains several weeks ago.

GEORGIA: December brought rains and periods of extremely cold weather to the state, which was 0.37, 1.50, 1.66 and 0.45 inches respectively above normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 4.64 inches, East 3.57 inches, statewide which was 0.99 inches above normal. Precipitation for the period averaged 37 degrees across the state. Temperatures were cold for the month of December, averaging more than 3.5 degrees below normal across the state. Ice and snow storms during the middle to late parts of the month were hard on some cattle herds, but hay supplies are still in good shape. A few producers are reporting corn still in the fields. Producers are continuing to clean machinery and haul grain. Statewide precipitation averaged 1.77 inches during the month, almost two inches above normal.

INDIANA: Weather during December can be described as cold and wet. The average state temperature was 28.4o which was 2.7o below normal. Total precipitation averaged 5.14 inches which was 2.08 inches above normal. The week started with generally dry weather conditions favorable. Wet weather improved during the month. Some fields in Georgia became muddy and difficult to work in due to rains. For the most part, the rains benefited crops. Fall vegetables have been doing well despite the cold temperatures. Freeze, in some areas, have limited ryegrass and small grain harvest. There were cotton and soybeans left to be harvested in some areas. Snow reported in the northern part of the state didn’t prevent farmers from maintaining livestock. Winter wheat was in mostly good condition. Cold weather has slowed the growth of winter grazing. Other activities included planting small grain for grazing, irrigating crops as needed and applying fertilizer, feeding hay to livestock, and the routine care of poultry and livestock.

HAWAII: Days suitable for fieldwork 6 to 7 depending on location. Soil moisture higher and ranged from adequate to surplus. Banana orchards were in fair condition. Harvesting was a moderate to light levels. Spraying activities were hampered by rainy weather. Papaya orchards were in fair to good condition; few orchards in poor condition. Harvesting was at light levels. Wet weather was unfavorable for the crop, and drenching downpours and intermittent thunder and lightning made fieldwork difficult on most days for Big Island fields. Head cabbage fields were in fair to good condition. Crop progress was slow with colder temperatures. Fewer sunny days in Fieldwork was hampered by muddy field conditions. The week started with generally stable conditions for most islands. A weak high-pressure ridge brought in light trade winds resulting in partly cloudy days and some showers in the evenings. Further into the week, a weak upper trough caused conditions to become unstable. The New Year started with wetter-than-normal conditions to mostly windward and mountain areas, although leeward areas were also affected. The Big Island was hardest hit by the inclement weather conditions. Heavy clouds, thunder, and lightening wandered over the island. Interior sections of the Big Island were cloud covered as southerly winds brought clouds to more leeward and inland areas. Heavy rain also fell on southeast portions of the island. Almost all rainfall gauges on the Big Island registered some level of rainfall on Thursday, January 1st. On all islands, the wet winter weather hampered or halted farming. Rainy conditions and the subsequent muddy field conditions limited access to fields for many farmers. The showers on all islands benefited areas that were previously dry, helped to replenish reservoirs, rejuvenated stream flows, and boosted soil moisture. However, most previously-imposed voluntary and mandatory water restrictions remained in effect at the end of the week. The exception was the Honolulu Board of Water Supply’s cancellation of voluntary water conservation measures for Windward Oahu on January 2, 2009. The voluntary conservation measure was set on August 31, 2008 and asked all Windward Oahu water users to voluntarily reduce water use by 10 percent due to declining well levels.

IDAHO: Topsoil moisture 2% very short, 14% short, 80% adequate, 4% surplus. Field corn harvested for grain 70%, 94% 2007, 94% avg. Hay and roughage supply 0% very short, 7% short, 89% adequate, 4% surplus, %. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 0% poor, 19% fair, 69% good, 12% excellent.

ILLINOIS: Topsoil moisture 77 percent adequate, and 23 percent surplus. Winter wheat conditions stood at 3 percent poor, 30 percent fair, 67 percent good, and 0 percent excellent. Temperatures were cold for the month of December, averaging more than 3.5 degrees below normal across the state. Ice and snow storms during the middle to late parts of the month were hard on some cattle herds, but hay supplies are still in good shape. A few producers are reporting corn still in the fields. Producers are continuing to clean machinery and haul grain. Statewide precipitation averaged 1.77 inches during the month, almost two inches above normal.

KANSAS: Days suitable for field work in December was 13. Topsoil moisture 2% very short, 17% short, 74% adequate, and 7% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 14% short, 80% adequate, and 4% surplus. Wheat condition was rated 1% very poor, 8% poor, 27% fair, 52% good, and 12% excellent. Wind damage to wheat was rated 90% no damage, 9% light damage, 1% moderate damage. Freeze damage was 89% no damage, 2% light damage, none moderate. Range and pasture condition is rated 5% very poor, 14% poor, 32% fair, 42% good, and 7% excellent. Feed grain supplies 1% very short, 4% short, 86% adequate, and 9% surplus. Hay and forage supplies 6 short, 83% adequate, and 11% surplus. Water supplies are 3% short, 93% adequate, and 4% surplus.

KENTUCKY: December 2008 experienced near normal temperatures and above normal precipitation on average. However, active weather patterns occurred throughout the Bluegrass state resulting in wintry weather, wind advisories and fluctuating temperatures (record highs and extended spells of very cold temperatures). Wet conditions prevailed with the first two weeks seasonably cold and the later half of the month seasonably mild. Temperatures for the period averaged 37 degrees across the state which was 0 degrees from normal. High temperatures averaged from 45 in the West to 46 in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 28 degrees in the West to 29 degrees in the East. Precipitation for the period totaled 5.04 inches statewide which was 0.99 inches above normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 4.64 inches, Central 5.86 inches, Bluegrass 5.29 inches and East 4.37 inches, which was 0.37, 1.50, 1.66 and 0.45 inches respectively above normal. Farmers were kept busy feeding and caring for their livestock as extended periods of cold weather caused stress on animals. Tobacco producers continued to strip their burley as December rains made conditions favorable. Wet weather improved soil moisture conditions.
which was beneficial for fall seeded small grain growth.

LOUISIANA: The state averaged approximately 4.28 inches of rainfall over the last four weeks, remaining below the state average. It was a historic month with over 3 inches of snow falling across much of the state including Baton Rouge. Sugar cane harvest was completed before January 1, 2009. Livestock producers fertilized winter pastures and fed hay. Producers repaired and cleaned equipment in preparation for the 2009 crop year.

MARYLAND: Topsoil moisture 8% short, 84% adequate, 8% surplus. Subsoil moisture 13% short, 86% adequate, 1% surplus. Hay supplies 7% very short, 8% short, 82% adequate, 3% surplus. Feed Supplies 2% short, 95% adequate, 3% surplus. Winter wheat condition 2% poor, 20% fair, 61% good, 8% excellent. Barley condition 51% fair, 35% fair, 49% good, 14% excellent. Barley planted 100%. Barley emerged 100%. Winter wheat planted 100%. Winter wheat emerged 100%. Wheat, Barley and Pastures are in good condition. Livestock are healthy.

MICHIGAN: The precipitation for the past four weeks ending January 4 varied from 1.70 inches western Upper Peninsula to 3.96 inches west central Lower Peninsula. Heavy snow during the month resulted in decreased fieldwork and adequate cover for the winter wheat crop. However, rains and higher temperatures melted snow causing flooding in some areas. Refreeze of excess water could have adverse effects on winter wheat and alfalfa. Corn was harvested in some areas as conditions permitted, but there was still some corn standing in other areas.

MINNESOTA: Temperatures during December averaged from 7.1 degrees below normal in the North Central and West Central Districts to 4.8 degree below normal in the East Central, Southwest, and South Central Districts. Temperature extremes included a low of -34 degrees at Hibbing, and a high of 43 degrees at Redwood Falls. Precipitation averaged from 0.42 inch above normal in the Southwest District to 1.04 inch above normal in the West Central District. Greatest monthly precipitation of 2.44 inches was recorded in Aitkin. Snow cover ranged from a couple inches in the southern parts of the state to nearly two feet in the central and northern parts of the state. As of December 31, depth of frost under sod averaged 12 inches across the state. Feed supplies were reported to be good to adequate. Livestock conditions were generally good.

MISSISSIPPI: Days suitable for fieldwork 1.9. Soil moisture 2 percent very short, 3 percent short, 30 percent adequate, 65 percent surplus. Winter precipitation 4 percent very short, 94 percent adequate, 2 percent surplus. Wheat 99 percent emerged, 2008, 5 yr avg. Mid temperatures and rainfall are encouraging growth in winter forages. Some fields and pastures are accumulating water in low-lying areas.

MISSOURI: December was slightly colder and wetter than normal. Precipitation averaged 3.06 inches compared to the December 30-year average of 2.67 inches. Much of the precipitation came as a rain event on the 27th. Average temperatures were 1 degree below normal. The condition of the dormant winter wheat crop ranges from fair to excellent, with a majority rated good. Many reporters estimate planted wheat acreage down from last year due to relative crop prices and high fertilizer cost at planting time. Furthermore, some producers will consider tearing out planted wheat and putting in corn depending on corn prices this spring.

MONTANA: Topsoil moisture 2% very short, 24% last year, 16% short, 46% last year, 75% adequate, 28% last year, 7% surplus, 2% last year. Subsoil moisture 12% very short, 36% last year, 22% short, 42% last year, 64% adequate, 21% last year, 2% surplus, 1% last year. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 2% last year, 4% poor, 11% last year, 20% fair, 54% last year, 61% good, 29% last year, 14% excellent, 4% last year. Winter wheat damage 78% none, 56% last year, 19% light, 38% last year, 2% moderate, 6% last year, 0% heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat freeze and drought damage 85% none, 56% last year, 19% light, 38% last year, 2% moderate, 6% last year, 0% heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat frost and drought damage 85% none, 56% last year, 19% light, 38% last year, 2% moderate, 6% last year, 0% heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat frost and drought damage 85% none, 56% last year, 19% light, 38% last year, 2% moderate, 6% last year, 0% heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat frost and drought damage 85% none, 56% last year, 19% light, 38% last year, 2% moderate, 6% last year, 0% heavy, 0% last year.

NEVADA: December conditions statewide rated 0 percent very poor, 4 percent very good, 21 fair, 63 good, and 12 excellent, well above last year. Hay and forage supplies rated 0 percent very poor, 1 percent very good, 16 fair, 75 good, and 8 excellent, near last year. For the month of December 2008, temperatures averaged five degrees below normal across the state. During the first two weeks temperatures were near normal with no notable amounts of precipitation. During the third week temperatures turned bitter cold and averaged 18 degrees below normal, with precipitation in the form of snow and freezing rain. The last week temperatures moderated but were still below normal with virtually no precipitation reported across the state. Livestock producers above average in others. Slight accumulations of ice due to snow and cover and extreme low temperatures. Depth of snow at the end of December averaged one inch across the state, with the Northeast District reporting the largest amount of cover at 2 inches and other areas showing none. Temperatures averaged near normal the first part of the month and below normal for the last half of the month. During the last week of the month, soil temperatures ranged from 26 in the Northwest District to 34 in the Northeast District. Soil temperatures in the western part of the state were 3-5 degrees below last year.

NEW ENGLAND: Average high temperatures for the month of December ranged from the mid-30s to low 40s across New England with average lows ranging from the single digits in Maine to the upper 20s, average to above average for the region. Total precipitation for the month was 0.5 to 3.4 inches, with many areas above average in most areas. December began with mostly cloudy skies and some light rain and snow. Temperatures were average to above average in the low 30s to upper 60s with lows in the mid-20s to mid-40s. Temperatures dropped to below average levels during the weekend where lows were in the teens to low 20s. Heavy rains and winds moved into New England on December 9 and continued through December 12. Temperatures were unseasonably warm with highs in the mid-40s to mid-60s. Rainfall totals for the week ranged from 2.0 to 4.5 inches with 7.0 to 11.0 inches of snow falling in northern areas of Vermont and Maine. Areas of southern Vermont and New Hampshire and northern Massachusetts experienced devastating ice accumulations of up to 12 inches. States of Emergencies were issued for both New Hampshire and Massachusetts as a result of widespread downed trees and power outages. Power was restored to some areas within days, but other areas were without power for a week and some even longer. Livestock farmers struggled to care for their animals under these challenging conditions while many orchardists and maple producers suffered damage to their trees and tubing. Temperatures were in the single digits during the week, making the clean-up effort more difficult. Temperatures were at above average levels on December 15 where record highs were either met or shattered with high temperatures in the low to mid 60s. Scattered light rain and snow fell during the first part of the week and temperatures varied depending on location. Heavy snow and wind moved into New England on December 19 bringing 6.0 to 12.0 inches of snow accumulation. Snow continued falling through Saturday morning, however many areas were given a break during the afternoon before another snowstorm moved in on Sunday, bringing additional 1.0 to 1.5 inches of snow to New England. Temperatures during the weekend were generally below average in the upper teens to mid-20s with lows in the negative single digits to upper teens. Christmas Eve was wet and warm with areas experiencing up to 0.6 inches of rainfall. Christmas day was mainly dry however many areas saw 0.5 to 1.0 inches of accumulation. Temperatures warmed up on Sunday and were at record levels in the 50s. Temperatures remained above average until New Year’s Eve where snow, wind and below average temperatures came to the region. Snowfall accumulations ranged from 0.4 and 6.5 inches with...
the most snow falling in the southern states.

NEW JERSEY: Temperatures were mostly below normal for the first week of December. The remainder of the month saw variable temperatures, ranging from high 60s to mid-teens. There were measurable amounts of precipitation in most localities. Middlesex, Monmouth, and Morris counties received significant amounts of rain and sleet. Some areas reported over 5.0 inches of snow. Farmers finished their 2008 season harvesting their remaining corn and soybean fields during the first few days of December. Producers continued planting small grain crops. Other activities included equipment repair, field maintenance, and greenhouse work.

NEW MEXICO: The first week of December was fairly dry with temperatures near normal. Storm systems moved through New Mexico the second week bringing rain and snow to high elevations. Very strong winds were reported across the state. Another series of winter storms crossed New Mexico the third week bringing more snow, rain and wind. Areas reporting more significant snow amounts included north, central and western New Mexico. The weather pattern was the same for the fourth week, with heavy snow occurring in the western and northern portions of the state. Farmers were busy finishing up harvesting cotton, pecans and some red chile. They were also planting onions and preparing for other spring crops. Ranchers were busy supplemental feeding and culling herd.

NEW YORK: Cold, snowy weather hindered outside activities and daily chores. Producers were kept busy clearing snow and ice. Major activities included caring for livestock, spreading manure, grading and packing potatoes, onions, apples and cabbage. Winter meetings and trade shows were well attended.

NORTH CAROLINA: Days suitable for field work 3.8. compared to 3.6 for the week ending December 14. Statewide soil moisture levels are rated at 1% very short, 3% short, 69% adequate, and 27% surplus. Activities during the month included the final stages of soybean harvest, tending to livestock, and general farm maintenance. Most of North Carolina received below average precipitation last week, ranging from no rain in Salisbury to 1.57 inches in Franklin. Average temperatures were above normal for December. Wheat emergence and soybean harvest is nearly complete statewide.

NORTH DAKOTA: Average snow depth was 17.1 inches on January 4. Hay and forage supplies were rated 5% very short, 23% short, 69% adequate, 3% surplus. Snow cover protection for winter wheat was rated 1% poor, 43% adequate, 56% excellent. Cattle conditions were rated 3% poor, 26% fair, 63% good, 8% excellent. Sheep conditions were rated 3% poor, 26% fair, 60% good, 11% excellent. County and secondary roads were rated 67% open, 26% difficult, 7% closed. Forty-six percent were drifted, 14% icy, 1% muddy, 39% dry. Heavy snowfall and cold temperatures during December slowed the remaining crop harvest. Corn producers in some areas do not expect to finish harvest until spring, according to reporters. All districts had below normal temperatures during December.

OHIO: The December 2008 average temperature for Ohio was 30.5 degrees, 1.2 degrees below normal. Precipitation for the state averaged 4.72 inches, 1.80 inches above normal. Winter wheat producing counties report that field conditions are good to excellent, and the plants achieved good fall growth. There are some snow covered fields, mostly in the Northeast corner of the state. Cattle are in good condition. Hay inventories are adequate for livestock.

OKLAHOMA: Topsoil moisture 32% very short, 39% short, 27% adequate, 2% surplus. Subsoil moisture 23% very short, 38% short, 39% adequate, 0% surplus. Wheat 3% very poor, 17% poor, 40% fair, 35% good, 6% excellent. Rye 3% very poor, 17% poor, 28% fair, 43% good, 9% excellent. Oats 6% very poor, 25% poor, 47% fair, 19% good, 3% excellent. Livestock 1% very poor, 7% poor, 31% fair, 51% good, 10% excellent. Pasture & Range 3% very poor, 19% poor, 44% fair, 32% good, 2% excellent. Livestock remained in mostly good to fair condition. Livestock markets were average. Drinking water for livestock was beginning to be a major concern for producers in areas that have not received adequate rainfall.

OREGON: The winter weather was intense in the Pacific Northwest this December. Travel was difficult. Agriculture activities were limited. Average snow accumulation varied from 10 inches to 26 inches in higher elevations, & average temperatures varied from 23 to 44 degrees. The good snow cover throughout the State has aided soil moisture & protected winter wheat from cold. However, heavy snow & ice damaged greenhouse cold frames in some Willamette Valley nurseries. Structure damage will be costly to nursery growers. Some dairies struggled to keep pipes from freezing & barn roofs clear from heavy snow accumulation. A period of significant cold weather before the snow storms may have caused some damage to later seeded grains in north central areas, but this will not be known until the weather warms. Some corn in Malheur County was harvested late due to high moisture content. Minimal fruit tree & vineyard pruning has started in Klamath County.

PA.: Principal farm activities during the month of December included inspecting wheat, barley and fruit trees for frost damage, completing the corn and soybean harvests, attending organizational meetings, barn and fence maintenance, spreading manure, and making other preparations for the winter weather. The Keystone state during the first week of December was characterized by a wide range of temperatures and precipitation. The highest recorded temperatures (63°F) for the month occurred on December 15 and December 28. The 63°F high on December 15 matched a record high for that date set back in 1929. The lowest recorded temperature for Harrisburg was 13°F on December 22 The average high temperature was 41.9°F, while the average low temperature was 27.6°F. Temperatures were near average at 34.7°F, which is only 0.1°F less than normal. December was the second wettest December on record. The total precipitation for the month was 6.83 inches, which is 3.61 inches above normal. There was a near average amount of snowfall for December, with a total of 10.2 inches. At month and year’s end, wind was a problem in Pennsylvania. Wind gusts reached 56 M.P.H on December 31.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Snow flurries were observed during the first week of December from Table Rock to Greer. Early morning temperatures on Wednesday were reported in the low to middle 20’s. Morning temperatures, after cold front passage in the 60’s, were reported Thursday afternoon ahead of a slow-moving boundary and areas of light rain. Rainfall amounts were generally less than one-tenth of an inch. Table Rock saw snowflakes for the second time this week as cold air entered the mountains. Saturday began with overcast skies or fog, then brief sunshine followed by clouds and a few sprinkles which were limited to the Pee Dee region. Sunny, clear conditions ended the week. The state average temperature for the period was seven degrees below normal. The state average rainfall for the period was 0.0 inches. A hard freeze was observed on the second Monday morning of the month. Southerly surface winds on Tuesday helped warm much of the Lowcountry into the 70’s. The unstable airmass supported the development of thunderstorms bringing temperatures into the upper 70’s near Myrtle Beach and the southern Lowcountry into the 70’s. The unstable airmass supported the development of thunderstorms bringing temperatures into the upper 70’s near Myrtle Beach and the southern Lowcountry into the 70’s. The unstable airmass supported the development of thunderstorms bringing temperatures into the upper 70’s near Myrtle Beach and the southern Lowcountry into the 70’s. The unstable airmass supported the development of thunderstorms bringing temperatures into the upper 70’s near Myrtle Beach and the southern Lowcountry into the 70’s. The unstable airmass supported the development of thunderstorms bringing temperatures into the upper 70’s near Myrtle Beach and the southern Lowcountry into the 70’s.
weekend with occasional light rains. Conway, Georgetown, and Myrtle Beach all recorded 79 degrees on Sunday afternoon. Table Rock received rainfall on five of the seven days, totaling 1.58 inches. The state average temperature for the period was six degrees above normal. The state average rainfall for the period was 0.2 inches.

**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Average snow depth (inches) 5.6. Winter wheat snow cover 37% poor, 54% adequate, 9% excellent. Winter wheat 4% poor, 34% fair, 52% good, 10% excellent. Alfalfa snow cover 23% poor, 65% adequate, 12% excellent. Feed supplies 1% very short, 5% short, 81% adequate, 13% surplus. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 8% short, 79% adequate, 12% surplus. Fall crop calf deaths 14% below average, 84% average, 2% above average. Cattle condition 1% very poor, 3% poor, 16% fair, 64% good, 16% excellent. Fall crop lamb deaths 7% below average, 69% average, 24% above average. Road conditions--township 86% open, 12% difficult, 2% closed. Sheep condition 1% very poor, 6% poor, 27% fair, 54% good, 12% excellent. Road conditions--county 98% open, 2% difficult. Road construction--township--86% open, 12% difficult, 2% closed. Frequent snow storms and cold weather presented some challenges to South Dakota producers in December. Some producers throughout the wheat producing areas of South Dakota have been concerned about the lack of snow cover protection for the upcoming winter wheat crop; despite snow accumulation, in some areas, high winds have left very little snow on the level. Reporters stated that there is a small percent of corn and sunflowers left to be harvested in the spring. Freezing temperatures and high winds, in some areas, have also presented challenges to livestock producers.

**TENNESSEE:** Temperatures and rainfall were variable throughout the month of December. Several fronts moved across the State and brought much needed rain which helped replenish water supplies for livestock producers. Cattle were rated in mostly good-to-fair condition. Pastures were rated in mostly good-to-fair condition. Hay supplies were rated as 79 percent adequate-to-surplus. The winter wheat crop was rated in mostly good-to-fair condition.

**TEXAS:** Top soil moisture was mostly very short to adequate across the state. Wheat condition was mostly very poor to fair. Oat condition was mostly very poor to poor. Cotton condition was mostly fair to good statewide. Range and Pasture condition was mostly poor to poor statewide. Wheat in the High Plains, Northern Low Plains, and Cross Timbers was in need of moisture and growing slowly. Cotton harvest in the High Plains was 90% completed. Corn harvest in the High Plains and good in the Northern Low Plains. pecans in the Cross Timbers and Edwards Plateau showed poor yields. Supplemental feeding of livestock took place across most of the state. Pasture and range land continued to be very dry and was in need of rain across most of the state.

**UTAH:** The weather in Utah was cold and dry for the first 2 1/2 weeks of December. The latter part of the month brought heavy snow storms which left behind 1 to 24 inches throughout the state. Most field activities will not begin until the spring. Farmers around the state are enthused that fuel prices have decreased but commodity prices have also slipped since harvest. They are still very concerned about high fertilizer prices and hope that they will come down before it is time to apply the fertilizer in the spring. Box Elder agents report hay movement is slowing with prices softening from record highs. Much of the dry land wheat within Box Elder County was planted late this fall. As a result, many farmers do not believe that there will be a serious snow mold problem. Producers within Utah are done with field work for the winter except for some manure spreading. Box Elder agents report livestock owners are now feeding hay in most parts of the county except some of the desert areas around the north part of the Great Salt Lake. Uintah County agents report producers began feeding their cattle early because snow covered the ground. Livestock remained in good condition despite the colder temperatures near the end of the month. The much needed moisture has been well received within the county.

**VIRGINIA:** Livestock 1% very poor, 5% poor, 27% fair, 59% good, 8% excellent. Small Grain and Winter Grazing Crops 5% poor, 30% fair, 60% good, 5% excellent. Beef Cattle Forage Obtained from Pastures 20%; 39% 2007. Milk Cow Forage 7% Obtained from Pastures; 10% 2007. Sheep Forage 23% Obtained from Pastures; 45% 2007. Throughout most of the month of December, Virginia received much needed precipitation. In parts of the Commonwealth, ground water and stream flow were restored. However, there are still areas in the State that need more water. Temperatures have been variable. The month consisted of cold snaps with occasional warm days. Overall, the small grains have benefited from the rain and temperatures. Farmers are busy determining what crops to plant for next year; the price of soybeans and corn are closely watched and will call to the finicky farmers make. Other farming activities included renewing pesticide applicator licenses, preparing taxes, and fertilizing small grains.

**WASHINGTON:** Heavy snows clobbered both the east and west sides of the State. At the end of December, over 5 feet of snow had been recorded in Spokane. On the west side, two feet of snow during the holidays caused real problems for cattle producers not accustomed to heavy snows as they struggled to get hay to cattle. Initial reports indicate that most of the grain ground had not froze before the snows and producers are hoping the snow pack will continue to melt into the very dry subsoil. Lincoln County reported some potential for frozen and dried-out wheat crowns but damage will be unknown till spring. Cattle producers reported difficult conditions for cattle calving due to the snow. Christmas tree growers were relieved that most wholesale orders had been filled and shipped prior to snow and cold weather.

**WEST VIRGINIA:** Topsoil moisture 8% short, 90% adequate and 2% surplus compared with 5% short, 87% adequate and 8% surplus last year. Hay and roughage supplies were 5% short, 90% adequate and 5% surplus compared with 6% very short, 38% short, and 56% adequate last year. Feed grain supplies were 4% short, 94% adequate and 2% surplus compared with 30% short and 70% adequate last year. Winter Wheat conditions were 9% poor, 26% fair and 65% good compared with 11% poor, 49% fair and 40% good last year. Cattle and calves were 2% poor, 29% fair, 64% good and 5% excellent compared with 9% poor, 29% fair, 58% good and 4% excellent last year. Sheep and lambs were 2% poor, 53% fair, 41% good and 4% excellent compared with 19% poor, 31% fair, 47% good and 3% excellent last year. Farming activities included general farm maintenance and preparing for the 2009 growing season.

**WISCONSIN:** December temperatures for the state of Wisconsin ranged from 4 to 8 degrees below normal. Average high temperatures were in the low 20s to the low 30s. Average low temperatures ranged from 1 to 14 degrees. Precipitation ranged from 0.91 inches in Eau Claire to 3.58 inches in Milwaukee. December 2008 had the most snow of any month on record in Wisconsin. At the end of the month, the entire state had snow cover. Of the reporting stations, Green Bay had the most snow with 45.6 inches of snow in December.

**WYOMING:** Topsoil moisture 7% very short, 32% short, 61% adequate. Subsoil moisture 20% very short, 24% short, 56% adequate. Average depth of snow 1.7.Corn 100% mature, 91% harvested. Winter wheat condition 28% fair, 72% good. Winter wheats freeze damage 89% none, 4% light, 7% moderate. Winter wheat freeze damage 29% none, 64% light, 7% moderate. Wheat condition 26% fair, 74% good. Sheep condition 25% fair, 75% good. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 20% short, 79% adequate. Hay and roughage supplies 6% short, 93% adequate, 1% surplus. The temperatures were much cooler. Most of the corn has been harvested for grain. Activities feeding cattle, harvesting, branding and moving livestock.