ALABAMA: The central and southern part of Alabama experienced abnormally dry intensities. As indicated by the Agricultural Weather Information Services, during the week of March 23-29, as much as 3.9 inches and as low as 2.1 inches of precipitation occurred in northern Alabama. In the southern part of the state, Geneva County encountered as high as 12.6 inches of rain whereas Crenshaw County witnessed as low as 4.1 inches of precipitation. During the middle of March, four to six inches fell in central Alabama, according to the US Drought Monitor released 3/17/09. Alabama producers are busy preparing and planting corn as the weather permits. Doug Chapman, Regional Extension Agent from Northwest Alabama stated that strawberries, peaches, and apples are in good to excellent condition with adequate blooming taking place. The Alabama Cooperative Extension Service reported that many peach producers are worried about Peach Scab due to the mild weather and persistent rain. Brandon Dillard of Geneva County reported wheat crop in good to excellent condition. Mr. Dillard expressed that the rain was an advantage to wheat production, but producers are worried about the effect disease will have on their crops. Charles Burmester, Agronomist in Northern Alabama, commented that several counties planted wheat late, but overall condition was reported fair to good.

ARIZONA: Temperatures across the State were mostly above normal for the month of March. Little to no precipitation fell throughout the month. By the end of the month, there were no reporting stations with above normal precipitation for the year. Crop conditions remained relatively unchanged for March. Alfalfa condition remained mostly good to excellent for the month. Small grain emergence was complete by the end of the month. Cotton planting was underway. Range and pasture conditions remained unchanged for most of the month despite lack of new rainfall. Alfalfa harvesting continued for Arizona. The winter vegetable harvest continued throughout March along with the citrus harvest.

ARKANSAS: For most of March, temperatures were warmer than normal in Arkansas, reaching as high as 11 degrees above normal in Fayetteville for the week ending March 8, 2009. High temperatures well above 80 degrees Fahrenheit were observed at some weather stations during each of the first three weeks of the month, as temperatures reached as high as 85 degrees Fahrenheit in Mountain Home during the week ending March 22. Wet weather occurred throughout the month, but a weather system during the last week of March brought significant amounts of rain to the majority of the state. Some places such as West Memphis and Morrilton received over 4 inches of rain during that last week. Planting of row crops was delayed due to the wet field conditions, but 12% of the corn crop was in the ground by the week ending. March 29, 2009, and 3% of the crop had emerged. Winter wheat was in fair to good condition as producers continued to make fertilizer and herbicide applications to the crop. livestock were in mostly fair to good condition, and there were still reports of ongoing fence repairs from the January ice storm.

CALIFORNIA: Weed spraying in wheat, oat, and sorghum grain fields was still underway across the state. Winds caused lodging in grain fields in the central San Joaquin Valley, which will make harvesting difficult. Dryland grain fields were showing good surfacing with recent rains. Early planted fields of wheat, oats were starting to develop seed heads. Rice growers were fertilizing, irrigating to prepare for spring planting. Newly planted alfalfa fields were being irrigated; established fields were treated with herbicides to remove weeds. Alfalfa for forage was being cut in the San Joaquin Valley. Sod growers were preparing the ground for seeding. Corn fields were being planted in Merced. Safflower and cotton were emerging in Sutter County. Potatoes continued to be harvested. Grape buds began to swell while vineyard tilling and spraying wrapped up. Irrigation began in vineyards. Bloom began in apple, apricot, peach, cherry, nectarine, pluot, prune, and pear orchards. In the Sacramento Valley, Cling peach bloom was complete and leafing out occurred in some areas; persimmons were beginning to leaf out. Fungicide treatments were applied to protect blooms during moist conditions in the central and northern parts of the state. Weed, blight control continued in peach and prune orchards. Lack of significant rainfall in the San Joaquin Valley forced farmers to begin irrigation practices for most tree crops. Bee hives remained in stone fruit orchards throughout the state. Growers assessed damage from cold temperatures in grapes, kiwis, fruit trees. Scattered freeze damage to orchard crops was reported in parts of the San Joaquin Valley. Spring strawberries and blueberries were blooming. Kiwis began to show leaves. Olive orchard maintenance continued. Lemon and Pummmelo, Oro Blanco and Melo Gold grapefruit harvests moved forward. Washington, Nucellar, and Atwood navel oranges were still being picked. Minneola and W. Murcott mandarin and Valencia orange harvest increased. Some mandarin orchards in the San Joaquin Valley were covered with nets to discourage cross pollination. Cold weather forced growers in the San Joaquin Valley to use wind machines and irrigation to keep temperatures up. Pre-plant fumigation continued in new almond, walnut orchards. Cool temperatures extended the almond bloom in parts of the Sacramento Valley. Petal fall was almost complete through much of the San Joaquin Valley. Early mite damage to almonds was reported in the San Joaquin Valley in areas where last year’s water restrictions increased tree susceptibility to water stress. Freeze damage to almonds from early March was not yet quantified. Walnut orchards were fertilized, irrigated and treated for blight. Pollen sacks continued to develop on male pistachio trees. Pistachio trees were blooming. The asparagus harvest was in full swing along the Central Coast, lower San Joaquin Valley. The harvest of radicchio, cabbage, carrots, greenhouse vegetables progressed well. Broccoli, cauliflower, leaf lettuce harvests were underway in Monterey. Stanislaus County harvested broccoli and spinach. In Merced, radicchio harvest finished; tomatoes were planted. Fresno County lost some tomatoes to frost; but carrots, onions and garlic were cultivated, irrigated, and treated with herbicide. Harvests continued more slowly for farmers’ market vegetables in Fresno County such as basil, beets, carrots, cilantro, collard greens, leaf lettuce, leeks, lemongrass, kale, mustard greens, green onions, radishes, saluyot (okra leaf), spinach, winter squash, Swiss chard, and many varieties of herbs. Fields were prepared for commercial planting of cantaloupe, tomatoes, Outdoor zucchini, summer and yellow crooked neck squash, cucumbers germinated under hot
caps in Tulare. Carrots were planted; onions, garlic emerged nicely from the ground. Spring lettuce plantings grew well and were almost ready for harvest. Carrots were being planted while harvest remained underway in Imperial. Foothill pastures and rangeland in the northern part of the state continued to improve. Pastureland in Central California also made gains in nutritive value, but more rain was needed to sustain growth and some areas remained in poor condition. Cattle were gaining weight steadily on central rangeland and pasture, but supplemental feeding continued in many areas. Some calving continued. Dairy herds were reduced in response to market conditions. Sheep were moved off alfalfa as fields went into production. Continued predator problems were reported in the Sutter Buttes area. Bees remained in dried plums in northern areas, and were moved from almonds to stone fruit orchards in central areas.

COLORADO: Colorado received well below normal amounts of precipitation. Although, most of the state did receive some much needed moisture in late March. Temperatures were slightly above average for the state during the month. Statewide, the mountain snowpack is 99%, up from only 92% in mid-March but down from February’s 109%. The eastern plains experienced extremely dry conditions during most of the month. Winter wheat broke dormancy in fair to good condition but will require additional moisture during the growing season. Producers are planting spring crops on schedule under good conditions.

DELAWARE: Dry conditions until weekend of 3/28/09. Rainfall departure from normal 4 to 6 inches for state. Hay and feed supplies are adequate. Winter wheat and Barley are in mostly fair to good condition. Farmers are preparing fields for planting. Some peas already in the ground.

FLORIDA: Very little rain allowed field work to progress, hindered most crops. Glades County producers harvested frosted-damaged sugarcane as season ended. Early-planted potatoes escaped cold damage, northeast; newly-emerging plants had some damage. Vegetables looked good, production slow due to drought, cold stress. Growers prepared fields for row crops, spring vegetables early in month. Sweet corn, beans, squash planted in southern areas. Watermelons set, many central, northern locations. St. Johns County harvested cabbage, broccoli with good yields, quality. Mid-month, small grains doing well. Growers planting field crops, vegetables. St. Johns County some cabbage plowed under, replaced with potatoes. Collier, Hendry, Lee counties salt problems in vegetables due to warm, dry field conditions. Scattered showers late March, barely eased drought. Wheat, fair to good condition. End of March, heavy rain, flooding to Panhandle; up to 8.00 inches in extreme western counties, stopped field work. Hail, high winds caused some crop damage. Perennial pastures greened, winter forage got a boost. Areas where planting was delayed by drought able to proceed in prepared fields. Vegetables marketed tomatoes, squash, celery, onions, endive, escarole, strawberries, sweet potatoes, radishes, greens, cantaloupe, broccoli, cabbage, beets, eggplant, peppers, beans, sweet corn. Early March, citrus trees showed new growth, new leaves, small amount of bloom. Valencia harvest begun while processing of early, midseason varieties slowed. White, colored grapefruit harvesting continued at a strong pace. Mid-month, rainfall scarce, drought continued. New limb growth reported on trees, slowly recovering from freezing temperatures. Fertilizing, aerial spraying, hedging dominant activities in well cared for groves. End-month, start of new crop evidenced by widespread spring citrus bloom. Growers reported new growth flush with full open bloom on many citrus trees. Monthly average pasture condition very poor to good, lower than for February. Pasture condition low due to drought, cool temperatures; seasonal dormancy of permanent pasture. Month’s end, winter grain forage provided limited forage due to drought. Permanent pasture greening provided limited forage in southwestern areas. Supplemental hay fed throughout State. Hay supply short. Cattle condition mostly poor to good, down from February’s average.

GEORGIA: Days suitable for fieldwork 4.5. Topsoil moisture: 1% very short, 12% short, 57% adequate, 30% surplus. Corn 0% very poor, 2% poor, 32% fair, 65% good, 1% excellent. Winter wheat 0% very poor, 4% poor, 33% fair, 57% good, 6% excellent. Range and pasture 6% very poor, 12% poor, 41% fair, 39% good, 2% excellent. Onions 0% very poor, 0% poor, 11% fair, 88% good, 1% excellent. Peaches 0% very poor, 6% poor, 13% fair, 81% good, 0% excellent. Corn 48% planted, 37% 2008, 33% avg.; 27% emerged, 13% 2008, 13% avg. Sorghum 0% planted, 1% 2008, 0% avg. Winter wheat jointing 76%, 78% 2008, 52% avg.; boot 35%, 24% 2008, 4% avg. Apples 3% blooming, 4% 2008, 5% avg. Peaches 97% blooming, 95% 2008, 57% avg. Tobacco transplanted 5%, 2% 2008, 4% avg. Watermelons 35% planted, 27% 2008, 22% avg. Heavy rain, throughout the state, improved soil moisture conditions. In some areas, the rain damaged crops, delayed planting and caused replanting of some vegetables.

HAWAII: Days suitable for fieldwork 7. Mostly cloudy to overcast skies. Precipitation light to moderate with the heaviest rainfall concentrated over windward and mountain locations. Soil moisture levels were adequate in most areas. Winds were moderate to breezy trades. Overall, temperatures were slightly warmer, but still cool to warm during the day and cool during the evening and early-morning hours. Most banana orchards were in fair to good condition. Overcast skies and wet conditions slowed field operations in some areas. Breezy conditions causing some leaf shredding. Harvesting was light to moderate. Most papaya orchards were in fair to good condition. Wet conditions increasing disease problems in some fields. Harvesting activities were light. Head cabbage crop was in fair to good condition. Insect infestation was light, but increasing. Harvesting pace was light to moderate.

IDAHO: Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 4% short, 79% adequate, 17% surplus. Calving complete 70%, 77% 2008, 79% avg. Lambing complete 71%, 73% 2008, 79% avg. Hay and roughage supply 0% very short, 33% short, 61% adequate, 6% surplus. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 0% poor, 17% fair, 76% good, 7% excellent. Spring wheat, barley and sugarbeet planting began in the South Western and South Central districts. Spring wheat and barley emergence has begun in the South Western district. Onion and potato planting have begun in South Western districts.

ILLINOIS: Temperatures during the month of March averaged 43.2 degrees, 2.5 degrees above normal across the state. Statewide precipitation averaged 4.08 inches during the month, 1.14 inches above normal. Heavy rain and wet snow fell on many parts of the state over the weekend, causing delays in fertilizer application. Even though most of the snow melted quickly, fields were left saturated. Topsoil moisture was rated 50% adequate and 50% surplus. Winter wheat conditions stood at 1% very poor, 5% poor, 27% fair, 59% good, and 8% excellent.

INDIANA: As of the 29th the state temperature for March averaged 43.9o which was 3.40o above normal. Total precipitation averaged 3.30 inches which was 0.05 inches above normal. Precipitation in northern areas averaged 200% of normal causing flooding in low lying areas while precipitation in central and southern areas averaged only 70 percent of normal. The winter wheat crop has begun to break dormancy and is reported to be in mostly good condition. Many of the winter wheat fields were topdressed with nitrogen during the month. Many operators were applying pre-plant anhydrous ammonia on intended corn acreage. Dry fertilizer, lime and manure were also spread during the month along with completing some light tillage operations. Calving and lambing continues on livestock operations with good survival rates being reported. Hay supplies remain mostly adequate as usage slows down as pastures begin to green up. Other activities included preparing spring tillage and planting equipment, cleaning fields of debris, fixing winter erosion problems, taking delivery of seed and fertilizer, financial planning, spreading fertilizer and manure, moving grain to market and taking care of livestock.

IOWA: Soil moisture availability rated 3% short, 65% adequate, and 32% surplus. Grain movement rated 26% none, 38% light, 30% moderate, and 6% heavy. Availability of hay and roughage
supplies rated 10% short, 78% adequate, and 12% surplus.
Quality of hay and roughage supplies rated 11% poor, 44% fair, and 45% good. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing rated 53% none, 28% limited, 15% moderate, and 4% extensive. Hog and pig losses rated at 11% below average, 85% average, and 4% above average. Cattle and calf losses rated 14% below average, 83% average, and 3% above average. Manure hauling and applications have been the predominant activities of late. However, saturated fields have limited activities as farmers must wait for fields to dry out. Farmers are anxious to get into their fields and get fertilizer applied and planting underway. Calving conditions have been mostly good with some reports of mud causing problems.

KANSAS: Days suitable for field work in March 20.4. Topsoil moisture 7% very short, 28% short, 50% adequate, and 15% surplus. Subsoil moisture 6% very short, 23% short, 64% adequate, and 7% surplus. Thirteen percent of the wheat has jointed, 10% last year, 20 percent 5-yr avg. Wheat condition was rated 4% very poor, 13% poor, 41% fair, 38% good, and 4% excellent. Wind damage to wheat was rated 77% no damage, 16% light damage, 5% moderate damage, 2% severe. Freeze damage was rated 88% no damage, 10% light damage, 1% moderate damage. Oats 91% planted, 84% 2008, and 65% 5-yr avg. Range and pasture condition rated 10% very poor, 16% poor, 35% fair, 35% good, and 4% excellent. Feed grain supplies 9% short, 90% adequate, and 1% surplus. Hay and forage supplies 12% short, 81% adequate, and 7% surplus. Stock water supplies are 1% very short, 14% short, 83% adequate, and 2% surplus.

KENTUCKY: The first week of March was very dry for the majority of the Commonwealth with many locations receiving zero rainfall. Rainfall was below normal for the 4th time in the past 5 weeks as the dry trend continued. Temperatures during the period were above normal as southerly winds ushered in warm, humid air for much of the period. Late in the week, temperatures reached 80 degrees in some locations. Temperatures for the period averaged 47 degrees across the state which was 5 degrees above normal and 9 degrees above the previous week. High temperatures averaged from 59 in the West to 56 in the East. Rainfall for the period totaled 0.08 inches statewide which was 0.95 inches below normal. Rainfall totals by climate division, West 0.18 inches, Central 0.00 inches, Bluegrass 0.00 inches and East 0.06 inches, which was 0.84, 1.19, 1.00 and 1.00 inches respectively below normal. The second week of March experienced above normal rainfall and temperatures. Multiple weather systems moved through the state bringing showers and a few thunderstorms. Some locations in the southeastern part of the state received over two and a half inches of rain while northern portions of the Bluegrass State received under a quarter of an inch. Temperatures during the period remained mild with above normal values being reported for the 2nd straight week. Temperatures for the period averaged 45 degrees across the state which was 1 degree above normal and 2 degrees below the previous week. High temperatures averaged from 57 in the West to 55 in the East. Rainfall for the period totaled 1.40 inches statewide which was 0.48 inches above normal. Rainfall totals by climate division, West 1.21 inches, Central 1.61 inches, Bluegrass 0.88 inches and East 1.75 inches, which was 0.30, 0.63, 0.00 and 0.84 inches respectively above normal. Relatively warm and dry conditions continued during the third week of March. The Commonwealth received below normal rainfall for the 5th week out of the past 7. Southeastern portions of the state continued to receive the majority of the total rainfall. Temperatures continued to be mild as above normal values were reported, although low temperatures did drop down to frost/freeze levels late in the week.

Temperatures for the period averaged 50 degrees across the state which was 3 degrees above normal and 5 degrees above the previous week. High temperatures averaged from 65 in the West to 61 in the East. Rainfall for the period totaled 0.22 inches statewide which was 0.89 inches below normal. Rainfall totals by climate division, West 0.04 inches, Central 0.06 inches, Bluegrass 0.28 inches and East 0.43 inches, which was 1.06, 1.13, 0.79 and 0.65 inches respectively below normal. The last week of March was a much needed wet week with some locations receiving well over 2 inches of rainfall. Temperatures remained above normal for the 4th straight week, but lows did drop to frost/freeze levels during the evening of March 29th. Temperatures for the period averaged 55 degrees across the state which was 6 degrees above normal and 5 degrees above the previous week. High temperatures averaged from 65 in the West to 63 in the East. Rainfall totals by climate division, West 1.97 inches, Central 1.67 inches, Bluegrass 1.40 inches and East 1.66 inches, which was 0.96, 0.76, 0.61 and 0.83 inches respectively above normal.

LOUISIANA: The state averaged 7.27 inches of rain over the last four weeks. Producers have been busy this March preparing fields for planting. As of the Weekly Crop Weather Report released on 03/30/2009 approximately 73% of spring plowing has been completed. Corn, sorghum, and rice have been planted in many areas with corn starting to emerge across the state. However, the significant rainfall at the later part of the month has slowed down planting of sorghum, rice, corn, and soybeans. Wheat across the state has started to head. Vegetable, fruit, and citrus producers have been busy preparing for spring and summer crops. Crawfish producers have reported an improvement in size of crawfish in their catches. Cattlemen remained busy with calving and pastures showed improvement this month.

MARYLAND: Dry conditions until weekend of 3/28/09. Rainfall departure from normal 3 to 8 inches for state. Hay and feed supplies are adequate. Winter wheat and Barley are in mostly good condition. Farmers are preparing fields for planting. Some plots already in the ground.

MICHIGAN: The precipitation for the past four weeks ending March 29 varied from 0.78 inches in western Upper Peninsula to 2.84 inches in southwest Lower Peninsula. Although a few areas remained under snow, above normal temperatures for the month ushered in spring and allowed for early planting of sugar beets across the State. Early assessments revealed wheat wintered well with little to no winterkill. Buds were swelling in fruit crops and minimal winter damage reported in strawberries and blueberries. Field activities included top-dressing wheat, applying copper to peaches for leaf curl, and getting machinery ready for planting.

MINNESOTA: Temperatures during March 1-29 averaged from 2.8 degrees below normal in the Northwest District to 1.1 degrees above normal in the Southeast District. Temperature extremes included a low of -30 degrees at Itasca and a high of 69 degrees at Marshall. Precipitation averaged from 0.89 inches below normal in the Southeast District to 2.35 inches above normal in the North Central District. Greatest monthly precipitation of 5.13 inches was recorded in Aitkin. Rain and melting snow, in addition to frozen or saturated soil, caused overland and river flooding in the Red River valley and in a few other parts of the state. Warmer than normal temperatures early in the month and deep frost made fields and pastures muddy throughout much of the state. Colder temperatures later in the month slowed thawing of snow. Livestock conditions varied across the state depending on temperature and rain and snow received. Feed supplies were generally adequate.

MISSISSIPPI: Days suitable for fieldwork 1.8. Soil moisture 19% adequate, 81% surplus. Corn 48% planted, 39% avg., 18% emerged, 19% avg. Soybeans 3% planted, 7% avg. Winter Wheat 53% jointing, 45% avg. Watermelons 37% planted, 17% avg. It has been one wet week across Mississippi. Heavy rain and thunderstorms covered most of the state, forcing several producers out of the field; however, the precipitation has been beneficial for pastures. Prior to the rainfall, some producers were able to successfully apply nitrogen applications. Winter wheat is progressing with few pest problems.

MISSOURI: March was warmer than normal and precipitation slightly above average. Precipitation averaged 3.75 inches compared to the 30 year March average of 3.48 inches. The precipitation ranged from 2.85 inches in the east-central district to 5.18 inches in the north-central district for March. Average temperatures were 2 degrees to 4.5 degrees above normal with the exception of the northwest district that was 1.1 degrees below average.
MONTANA: Topsoil moisture 4% very short, 29% last year, 11% short, 41% last year, 74% adequate, 29% last year, 11% surplus, 1% last year. Subsoil moisture 8% very short, 30% last year, 18% short, 46% last year, 70% adequate, 23% last year, 4% surplus, 1% last year. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 4% last year, 3% poor, 11% last year, 40% fair, 51% last year, 52% good, 31% last year, 4% excellent, 3% last year. Winter wheat condition 62% none, 37% last year, 33% light, 37% last year, 4% moderate, 2% very poor, 24% last year, 2% short, 9% very short, 37% light, 41% last year, 9% moderate, 20% last year, 1% heavy, 1% last year. Winter wheat freeze and drought damage 53% none, 38% last year, 37% light, 41% last year, 9% moderate, 20% last year, 1% heavy, 1% last year. Winter wheat protectiveness of snow cover 24% very poor, 47% last year, 43% poor, 22% last year, 25% fair, 20% last year, 6% good, 9% last year, 2% excellent, 2% last year. Winter wheat spring stages 82% still dormant, 71% last year, 17% greening, 28% last year, 1% greening and growing, 1% last year. Most of the state received moderate precipitation for the month of March. White Sulphur Springs received the most monthly accumulated precipitation with 3.16 inches. Temperatures during the month of March were slightly below normal. Highs ranged from 40s to 70s and lows ranged from minus thirties to positive teens. Broadus had the high temperature during the month of 77 degrees, and Scobey had the low temperature of negative 33 degrees. Cattle and calves receiving supplemental feed 90%, 96% last year. Sheep and lambs receiving supplemental feed 93%, 96% last year. Livestock grazing 40% open, 69% last year, 41% difficult, 15% last year, 19% closed, 16% last year. Grazing has not been possible in many areas as cold weather and snow cover have not allowed grass to green. Producers in the north central district are hoping they have enough hay supplies to last until the grass does green up. Calving completed 52%, 53% last year. Lambing completed 30%, 40% last year.

NEBRASKA: For the month of March 2009, variable temperatures during the month averaged near normal. Precipitation during March was below normal with most areas receiving less than 1 inch of moisture, except for the northern and eastern parts of the state. At the end of March snow depth was limited to the Panhandle and the North Central districts which averaged one to two inches in those areas. A front moved through the western and northern part of the state during the end of the month leaving snow cover in those areas. Soil temperatures were above freezing across the entire state with the eastern half of Nebraska near last year’s temperatures while the western half was between 5 and 8 degrees below year ago soil temperatures. Fieldwork was mostly limited to fertilizer applications and seed bed preparations. A few fields of oats had been planted. Calving continued to make good progress with normal calf losses reported. Wheat conditions 0% very poor, 5% poor, 27% fair, 59% good, and 9% excellent, above last year’s condition of 50% good or excellent. Oat planting was underway with 11% seeded statewide, slightly ahead of last year. Hay and forage supplies rated 0% very short, 5%, 91% adequate, and 4% surplus, well above year ago levels of 86% good or excellent. Cattle and Calves conditions rated 0% very poor, 1% poor, 13% fair, 74% good, and 12% excellent, above year ago levels. Calving progressed to 56% complete with calf losses mostly average.

NEVADA: A fast moving cold front brought snow to much of northern Nevada early in the month. Las Vegas recorded the monthly high at 85 degrees. Ely recorded the lowest temperature of the month at 2 degrees. Precipitation was scattered during the month. Reno recorded the most precipitation, 1.61 inches. Drought conditions for northwestern Nevada improved from severe to moderate drought. Supplemental feeding of range livestock continued. Other farm and ranch activities included equipment maintenance, calving, fence repairs, field preparation, ditch burning, and weed control.

NEW ENGLAND: A region-wide snowstorm and below average temperatures ushered in the month of March. During two days, areas saw anywhere between 5.0 to 11.6 inches of snowfall. New England experienced more rain and snow during the weekend of March 7 where an additional two to four inches of snow fell and some areas saw up to 0.2 inches of rain. The remainder of the month was mainly dry with light rain falling periodically. Maple producers were busy collecting and boiling sap towards the end of the month. Cool overnight temperatures, combined with warm, sunny days kept the sap running. Some producers were still trying to move trees out of the way and repair downed pipelines that resulted from the ice storm in December. On prime sap running days, high temperatures crept up into the mid-50s. March ended with below normal precipitation, 1 to 1.15 inches during the course of the weekend. The mostly dry month of March left precipitation levels in many areas of New England one to three inches below average. Average high temperatures across New England during March were three to seven degree below normal in the southern states, while high temperatures were average in the northern states. During March, tobacco farmers began seeding their greenhouses with broadleaf and shade tobacco. Some farmers have even begun to plow, which is very early for the region. Other farm activities included nursery/greenhouse work, tending livestock, and preparing for the spring planting season.

NEW JERSEY: Temperatures were up to 22 degrees below normal the first week of March in some state localities. During the rest of March, temperatures were variable ranging from a high of 67 degrees to a low of 19 degrees. There were measurable amounts of precipitation in all districts. Farmers continued plowing fields, spreading lime, and testing soil moisture. Other activities included planting oats, working greenhouses, and feeding stored hay to livestock.

NEW MEXICO: Days suitable for fieldwork 5.5. Topsoil moisture 36% very short, 54% short, 10% adequate. Wind damage 26% light, 26% moderate, 1% severe. Freeze damage 18% light, 16% moderate, 2% severe. Alfalfa 5% poor, 43% fair, 52% good. Winter wheat 32% very poor, 30% poor, 22% fair, 10% good, 6% excellent; 66% grazed. Lettuce 74% good, 26% excellent. Chile 36% planted. Onion 13% fair, 54% good, 33% excellent; 100% planted. Cattle 2% very poor, 19% poor, 58% fair, 21% good. Sheep 3% very poor, 16% poor, 64% fair, 17% good. Range and pasture 16% very poor, 35% poor, 40% fair, 9% good. Temperatures in the northern parts of the state were in the mid forties to fifties the beginning of the week, with the lows being in the mid twenties to high thirties. Temperatures in the southern portion of the state were in the high to low eighties and lows in the high forties lower fifties. On Thursday the winter storm system made its way into the state dropping temperatures significantly across the state Thursday and Friday. Some areas high temperatures dropped as much as twenty degrees from the previous day. The winter storm moved from west to east dumping the highest snowfall totals in the Northern and North eastern plains of the state causing numerous road closures and near blizzard conditions. With the system moving out of NM Friday, temperatures over the weekend climbed back up to fifties and high sixties on Saturday and sixties to low eighties on Sunday.

NEW YORK: March brought more cold weather with intermittent warming periods. Toward the end of the month warmer daytime temperatures provided excellent conditions for sap runs in maple syrup sugar bushes. Producers spent long days and nights boiling sap to make syrup. Apple, onion, and potato growers continued moving their crops from storage for grading and packing. Other major activities included tending livestock, spreading manure, attending meetings and trade shows, and finalizing plans for the upcoming season.

NORTH CAROLINA: Days suitable for field work 3.0. Soil moisture 5% short, 52% adequate, 43% surplus. Activities during the week were limited due to wet conditions. North Carolina received widespread precipitation last week. Rainfall ranged from no rain to 2.68 inches in Elizabeth City and Franklin. Average temperatures ranged from 42 to 60 degrees.

NORTH DAKOTA: Average snow depth was 8.1 inches on March 1. Hay and forage supplies were rated 15% very short, 32% short, 52% adequate, 1% surplus. Pastures and ranges remained 100% dormant. Grain and concentrate supplies were 4% very short, 10% short, 84% adequate, and 2% surplus. Cow
conditions were rated 1% very poor, 6% poor, 30% fair, 57% good, 6% excellent. Calving was 42% complete. Calf conditions were rated 1% very poor, 5% poor, 27% fair, 64% good, 3% excellent. One percent of cattle/calves obtained feed from pasture and ranges. Sheep conditions were rated 6% poor, 35% fair, 53% good, 8% excellent. Lambing was 60% complete. Lambing conditions were rated 1% very poor, 7% poor, 30% fair, 57% good, 5% excellent. Shearing was 89% complete. County and secondary roads were rated 57% open, 28% difficult, 14% closed. Nineteen percent were drifted, 15% icy, 40% muddy, 26% dry. Colder than normal temperatures and above normal precipitation were experienced throughout most of the state during March. Severe winter weather and flooding struck regions of the state in the last week of March. The state of North Dakota was declared a disaster area on March 24, with 34 of 53 counties designated to receive aid. Reporters commented that adverse weather delayed fieldwork and grain movement, and strained calving conditions and livestock feed supplies.

OREGON: The March 2009 average temperature for Oregon was 41.9 degrees, 2.5 degrees above normal. Precipitation for the state averaged 2.65 inches, 0.31 inches below normal. Winter wheat producing counties report that field conditions range between very good to poor depending on the area. Before winter the plants achieved good growth, and were topped with snow cover for much of winter. There are some flooded acres that have been lost for the season. Livestock are in good condition. Hay inventories are beginning to run low; and some farmers have required additional shipments of hay.

OKLAHOMA: Days suitable for fieldwork 4.1. Topsoil moisture 23% very short, 28% short, 44% adequate, 5% surplus. Subsoil moisture 35% very short, 39% short, 25% adequate, 1% surplus. Wheat condition 15% very poor 21% poor, 39% fair, 22% good, 3% excellent; jointing 62% this week, 45% last week, 48% last year, 59% average. Rye condition 16% very poor 26% poor, 37% fair, 20% good, 1% excellent; jointing 79% this week, 70% last week, 72% last year, 69% average. Oats condition 21% very poor 34% poor, 30% fair, 15% good; 92% planted this week, 91% last week, 99% last year, 94% average; jointing 11% this week, N/A last week, 20% last year, 17% average. Corn seeded prepared 69% this week, 67% last week, 62% last year, 55% average. Sorghum seeded prepared 25% this week, 21% last week, 23% last year, 22% average. Soybean seeded prepared 33% this week, 22% last week, 37% last year, 30% average. Peanuts seeded prepared 42% this week, 40% last week, 32% last year, 27% average. Cotton seeded prepared 62% this week, 52% last week, 49% last year, 43% average. Livestock condition 3% very poor, 16% poor, 43% fair, 36% good, 2% excellent. Pasture and range condition 10% very poor, 23% poor, 45% fair, 22% good. Livestock Prices for feeder steers less than 800 pounds averaged $97 per cwt. Prices for heifers less than 800 pounds averaged $87 per cwt. Livestock conditions declined last week and were rated mostly in the fair to poor range. Average livestock marketings were reported last week.

Pennsylvania: Farmers are continuing to prepare for the upcoming season. Principal farm activities for the month of March included milking cows, plowing, spreading manure, applying chemicals and fertilizers, and pruning trees. Some farmers seeded alfalfa and oats. Dense fog and lots of rainfall happened towards the end of the month of March. March temperatures were highly variable. Lows were down to 12 degrees occurring on the 3rd, with highs into the low 70s on the 7th. This month did not have much wintry precipitation, as the precipitation throughout the month was mostly rainfall. The average temperature for March was 40.7, which is 0.2 degrees below normal. Fruit and winter grains were reported to have survived the winter. Wheat and barley are beginning to green up.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Days suitable for fieldwork 4.7. Soil moisture 2% very short, 15% short, 67% adequate, 16% surplus. Winter wheat 0% very poor, 1% poor, 35% fair, 60% good, 4% excellent. Oats 0% very poor, 2% poor, 27% fair, 69% good, 2% excellent. Peaches 0% very poor, 0% poor, 27% fair, 65% good, 8% excellent, fair, 0% good, 0% excellent. Livestock condition 1% very poor, 2% poor, 35% fair, 58% good, 4% excellent. Corn 15% planted, 26% 2008, 26% avg.; 2% emerged, 5% 2008, 9% avg. Winter wheat 0% planted, 3% 2008, 1% single, 17% 2008, 6% avg. Snapbeans, fresh planted 14%, 14% 2008, 19% avg. Cucumbers, fresh planted 3%, 15% 2008, 14% avg. Watermelons 23% planted, 26% 2008, 22% avg. Tomatoes, fresh planted 19%, 17% 2008, 23% avg. Cantalopes 16% planted, 6% 2008, 16% avg. All of South Carolina received rainfall this past week with most of the state receiving an inch or more of precipitation. Upstate areas that needed moisture the most got it from this latest system. The slow rainfall over the course of several days greatly improved soil moisture, and helped replenish irrigation and livestock ponds. Field and land preparation for this year’s crops was being done at a rapid pace prior to the storm system. Corn planting has been slowed by cool wet weather, but should pick up in another week or so. Oat conditions were mostly good this past week, and were just beginning to head out in some areas. Likewise, winter wheat was also progressing well. Pastures were greening up with some Upstate pastures even in soggy or muddy condition. Vegetable planting is well under way particularly in Low Country areas. Most peaches have finished blooming. Following a cold sunrise, mild weather was observed from Monday afternoon through Tuesday. Jamestown reported a Monday high temperature of 78 degrees and Allendale, 77 degrees on Tuesday. Clouds increased for Wednesday with a few rain showers affecting the Upstate. A nearly stationary boundary remained draped across the state through Saturday with periods of rain, some heavy and with thunder. During the four-day stretch from Wednesday though Saturday, Table Rock measured 3.92 inches of rain, Jocassee Dam, 3.55 inches. The mild conditions have jump-started spring flowering while the wet weather helped rinsed early surface coatings of tree pollen. Drying sunshine returned on Sunday’s building high pressure, with strong, westerly winds. Conway and Jamestown both recorded an afternoon high temperature of 78 degrees on Sunday before the cold front swept away the warmth. The state average temperature for the period was two degrees above normal. The highest official temperature reported was 79 degrees at Myrtle Beach on March 29. The lowest official temperature reported was 32 degrees at Cedar Creek March 23. The heaviest 24-hour rainfall reported was 2.90 inches at McCormick ending at 7:00 a.m. on March 29. The state average rainfall for the period was 1.6 inches. The four-inch depth average soil temperature. Columbia 59 degrees. South Carolina river stages were near to above normal. Ocean water temperatures at Springfield Pier Myrtle Beach were reported at 57 degrees.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Topsoil moisture 1% short, 62% adequate, 37% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 7% short, 69% adequate, 23% surplus. Expected date to start spring fieldwork, April 12, 2009. Average snow depth (inches) 1.4. Winter wheat snow cover 65% poor, 32% adequate, 3% excellent. Winter wheat breaking dormancy 23%. Alfalfa snow cover 56% poor, 42% adequate, 2% excellent. Feed supplies 1% very short, 11% short, 83% adequate, 5% surplus. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 5% short, 74% adequate, 20% surplus. Accessible livestock feed supplies 83% readily, 16% difficult, 1% inaccessible. Accessible stock water supplies 93% readily, 6% difficult, 1% inaccessible. Range and pasture 2% very poor, 13% poor, 31% fair, 48% good, 6% excellent. Cattle death losses 10% below normal, 85% normal, 5% above normal. Calf deaths 9% below average, 83% average, 8% above average. Cattle moved to pasture 2% complete. Calving 36% complete. Cattle condition 1% very poor, 3% poor, 17% fair, 66% good, 13% excellent. Sheep & lamb deaths 8% below average, 70% average, 22% above average. Sheep condition 2% very poor, 3% poor, 20% fair, 64% good, 11% excellent. Lambing 60% complete. Road conditions-county 81% open, 16% difficult, 3% closed. Road conditions-township 79%
open, 15% difficult, 6% closed. South Dakota agriculture was hit with extremes of major winter storms and in some places a week of above-average temperatures. Some livestock producers have reported difficulties in calving and lambing due to the winter storms. Crop producers are expressing concerns about winterkill in winter wheat and alfalfa and excessive soil moisture in some areas.

**TENNESSEE:**  March temperatures averaged above normal for the entire month. Precipitation amounts varied during the month, with the first and third weeks above normal and the second and fourth weeks below normal. Cattle were rated in mostly good-to-fair condition. Pastures were rated in mostly fair-to-poor condition. Hay supplies were rated at 74 percent adequate-to-surplus. The winter wheat crop was rated in mostly good-to-excellent condition. Many producers have been busy applying fertilizer to wheat.

**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. Com condition was mostly fair to good statewide. Sorghum condition was mostly very poor to fair statewide. Range and Pasture condition was mostly very poor to fair statewide. The western part of the state received little to no moisture while the rest of the state received up to 6 inches of rainfall. Producers continued to irrigate wheat fields in the Plains. Wheat was growing well in the Cross Timbers and the Blacklands; however, more moisture was needed to help fill heads with grain. Cotton field preparation took place in the Northern Plains. Com has emerged in the Blacklands, the Edwards Plateau, and South Texas. Sorghum producers in South Central Texas were in need of more rain for land preparation. Pecan trees in the Trans-Pecos and the Edwards Plateau were beginning to bud. In South Texas, land was being prepared for melons, cabbage harvest continued, green beans were being planted, onions were making good progress and potatoes were in the flowering stage. Producers continued to supplement livestock in most areas of the state.

**UTAH:**  Box Elder County reports that calving is about two-thirds completed. The cattle are doing pretty well with very few problems. In two weeks branding will begin. Cache County reports cattlemen are hoping for warmer, drier weather. The cold snow and winds are hampering calving success. Stormy weather is forecasted for the remainder of the week. Utah and Wasatch County livestock producers are heavy into the calving season. Sheep producers who have farm flocks are about done lambing and range herds will start in April and May. Beaver County reports livestock are doing well. Garfield and Kane counties report the mix of warm and cold days is stressing livestock but calving is progressing. There have been reports of scours within the state. Iron County reports calving is mostly completed. Many of the range sheep operations have finished shearing and are starting the lambing season. Wayne County reports sheep are all shorn and lambing is well underway. Box Elder County reports onions are still not planted because of some snow still left on the ground. Farmers are hoping to complete onion plantings by mid-April. Cache County reports farmers are waiting for the weather to improve before they begin field work. Beaver County reports crop work is going well. The Milford Flat area is reporting a bad infestation of ground squirrels. Agents within the county are conducting a research project and baiting program to try to take care of the problem. Iron County reports some producers are planting spring grains and have commented on the good soil moisture. Alfalfa hay is just starting to green up. Wayne reports spring fieldwork is 2-3 weeks ahead of normal. Box Elder County reports it had a couple warm days, which melted away the snow. Some snow mold was reported. Cache County reports they are still in winter and no fieldwork has taken place yet. Some producers have been doing some soil testing. Toole County reports storms continue to cover the area resulting in normal or close to normal perception. No abnormal freezes or incidents have been reported. Utah and Wasatch County report the weather has been cold and wet for the past few days. Duchesne County irrigation water level is beginning to look very bleak.

Farmers are hoping for more rainstorms before mid April. Garfield and Kane counties report moisture is well below normal. Iron County reports snow pack and soil moisture are very good. Wayne County reports snow-pack on the Dirty Devil River drainage is 65% of normal and the expected run-off will also be below normal. Weather within the month of March has been very warm.

**VIRGINIA:**  Topsoil moisture 3% very short, 20% short, 70% adequate, 7% surplus. Subsoil moisture 5% very short, 29% short, 64% adequate, 4% surplus. Beef cattle forage obtained from pastures 16%; 10% 2008. Milk cow forage obtained from pastures 5%; 12% 2008. Sheep forage obtained from pastures 10%; 22% 2008. Pasture 4% very poor, 12% poor, 50% fair, 32% good, 2% excellent. Livestock 2% very poor, 5% poor, 28% fair, 60% good, 5% excellent. Small grain and winter grazing crops 1% very poor, 5% poor, 37% fair, 53% good, 4% excellent. Soil moisture conditions continued to show improvement throughout the month of March, as moderate rain and snow showers continued to accumulate across the state. Both topsoil moisture and subsoil moisture showed a marked increase, with ratings at 70% and 64% adequate, respectively. Pastures and hayfields are beginning to show signs of new growth, and some of the hardest-hit regions are showing signs of recovery from the previous year’s drought. In some areas, producers are beginning to apply burn down applications to corn fields in preparation for early planting, which should begin within the next couple of weeks. Field activities in spring grain fields continued, with many producers applying pre-spring nitrogen applications. Vegetable growers began planting early-season varieties, although wet fields in some areas have delayed planting for several growers.

**WASHINGTON:**  Days suitable for fieldwork were 2.8. In Whitman County, fresh drifted snow banks remained on many fields. Welcome rains continued to slow progress for field work in most of the grain growing counties. Spring seeding through out the region was kept to a minimum. Adams County reported Crop Adjusters were trying to assess general winter wheat losses. Due to the moisture and inability of farmers to get out into the fields, the winter wheat crop condition generally remains unknown. Yakima County reports most fruit growers have completed tree pruning and the fruit trees were breaking dormancy. Snohomish County reported raspberry caning was finished. Whatcom County reported raspberry and blueberry growers were busy with new plantings. Range and pasture conditions were 10 percent very poor, 21 percent poor, 51 percent fair and 18 percent good. On the Eastern side, soil temperatures were still cold and early pasture growth was delayed. Many producers still had cattle on feed, and hay was reported to still be available.

**WEST VIRGINIA:**  Topsoil moisture was 11% very short, 11% short, 77% adequate and 1% surplus compared with 1% very short, 2% short, 69% adequate and 28% surplus last year. Hay and roughage supplies were 3% very short, 12% short, 83% adequate and 2% surplus. Feed grain supplies were 3% very short, 8% short, and 89% adequate. Winter Wheat conditions were 3% poor, 94% fair and 3% good. Cattle and calves were 2% poor, 46% fair, 49% good and 3% excellent. Calving was 64% complete, compared to 60% last year. Sheep and lambs were 2% poor, 46% fair, 50% good and 2% excellent. Lambing was 73% complete, compared to 69% last year. Farming activities included general farm maintenance, pruning fruit trees, calving, lambing, feeding livestock, and spring plowing.

**WISCONSIN:**  Snow cover was limited to the northern-most part of the state until snow fell on much of the state Saturday, March 28, leaving a shallow snow cover in the southern third, central and east-central parts of the state. Precipitation in the last 30 days was highest in the south-central part of the state, with 5 to 6 inches. The more north you go in the state, the lower the precipitation totals for the last 30 days, with the north central part of the state receiving less than 1 inch in most areas.

**WYOMING:**  Topsoil moisture 7% very short, 20% short, 69% adequate, 4% surplus. Subsoil moisture 13% very short, 41% short, 45% adequate, 1% surplus. Average depth of snow 3.7
inches. Barley 22% planted, 1% emerged. Oats 0% planted. Spring Wheat 0% planted. Sugar beets 0% planted. Winter wheat condition 44% fair, 54% good, 2% excellent; wind damage 29% none, 64% light, 7% moderate, freeze damage 87% none, 5% light, 8% moderate. Spring calves born 48%, 39% previous week. Farm flock 47% ewes lambed, 39% previous week, 51% 2008, 55% avg. Farm flock 51% sheep shorn, 44% previous week, 40% 2008, 55% avg. Range flock 14% ewes lambed, 9% previous week, 3% 2008, 7% avg. Range flock 35% sheep shorn, 27% previous week, 6% 2008, 16% avg. Calf losses 39% light, 60% normal, 1% heavy. Lamb losses 51% light, 46% normal, 3% heavy. Cattle condition 1% very poor, 28% poor, 68% fair, 3% good. Calves condition 24% fair, 75% good, 1% excellent. Sheep condition 1% poor, 22% fair, 77% good. Lambs condition 22% fair, 77% good, 1% excellent. Range and pasture conditions 2% very poor, 11% poor, 48% fair, 38% good, 1% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 5% short, 88% adequate, 7% surplus. Wyoming was experiencing early spring snow storms with wet snow and a lot of wind. Snow packs in some areas were replenished with snow. Activities preparing to plant small grain crop, calving, lambing, feeding livestock.