Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin

State Stories

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ALABAMA: Moderate precipitation led to improvements in northern, southeastern, and central Alabama, however areas in the eastern region of the state remain dry. The US Drought Monitor released December 30 stated a storm system brought light precipitation that resulted in the form of snow, providing a White Christmas to cities such as Huntsville. The state is 1.82 percent extremely dry, 29.34 percent severely dry, 55.26 percent moderately dry, and the majority of the state is abnormally dry with 82.53 percent compared to 100 percent free from drought a year ago. Overall, the dry fall allowed farmers to harvest corn quickly with little weather damage or loss. Despite drought conditions, cotton farmers had fair to good yields this year, and continue to harvest as weather permits. The peanut and soybean crop suffered severe drought conditions during the maturing stage which caused the nuts and beans to be small. Drought conditions also produced Seg 2 and 3 quality peanuts. The wheat crop was in fair condition as operators began planting late because of the dry conditions, however, adequate rainfall benefited progress the beginning of December.

ALASKA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE

ARIZONA: Temperatures across the State started out below normal in December then were above normal for a two-week period. The year ended with below normal temperatures as a cold front moved across the State. The temperature extremes for December were a high of 84 degrees in Roll and a low of 28 below zero at Grand Canyon. Precipitation in the form of rain or snow had fallen throughout the month in virtually every area of Arizona. Ten of the twenty-two reporting stations finished the year with below normal precipitation. Douglas and St. John’s finished the year with 74 percent of normal precipitation. Parker finished the year with 142 percent of normal precipitation. Cotton harvesting slowed down as and seasonal activities on the alfalfa fields occurred in central and western areas of the State. Vegetable and citrus harvesting activities increased throughout the month.

ARKANSAS: Temperatures during the month of December were mostly at or below normal and ranged from as low as 10 degrees below normal to as high as 4 degrees above normal. December started off with temperatures slightly below normal and a wet weather system brought much needed moisture to the state. This system was followed by two weeks of little moisture and very cold temperatures. Lows ranged from 9 degrees Fahrenheit in Gilbert to 26 degrees Fahrenheit in Hot Springs. The last week of December brought near normal temperatures and severe weather to the state. Heavy rains, hail, and wind damage were reported in several areas of the state. An EF3 tornado tracked 21 miles in northwest Arkansas on December 31, resulting in loss of life and major property damage. Drought conditions still existed for all Arkansas counties. Cattle producers were experiencing low pond levels and were having to feed hay extensively to their herds. Field work was minimal during December due to the rain that was received. Many farmers were planning for the 2011 crop season by attending meetings, locating seed, and making planting decisions. Winter wheat was reported to be looking good.

CALIFORNIA: Winter wheat, oats, barley, and other winter forage crops continued to emerge nicely due to good soil moisture levels. Oats silage fields were being harvested and new alfalfa planting was complete in Merced County. Herbicides were applied in alfalfa fields in Madera County. The cotton harvest and plowdown was complete. Corn harvest for grain and silage was mostly finished. Alfalfa production for the season was mostly complete. New alfalfa fields were being planted for next season. Tillage, fertilizer application, and planting continued as field conditions allowed. Rainfall continued to slow winter crop ground preparation and planting. Operators proceeded with field operations as conditions allowed. Pruning and other maintenance continued in orchards and vineyards as conditions allowed due to ongoing wet weather conditions. The fall grape harvest was finished across the State. The navel orange, mandarin, and grapefruit harvests continued in the San Joaquin Valley at a slower pace due to wet conditions. Lemon and pummel harvests continued in the desert region. The olive harvest continued. Bareroot blueberry, raspberry, and boysenberry plants were shipped from Tulare County to in-State and out-of-State growers. Kiwifruit, as well as fruit and nut nursery plants, continued to be transplanted in Sutter County. Almond pruning and orchard removal were underway in the Central Valley. Orchard maintenance took place as field conditions allowed. Winter vegetables continued to be planted and were advancing despite weather conditions in Fresno and Tulare Counties. Radicchio harvest continued in Merced County. Recent rains delayed the harvest of potatoes and carrots in Kern County. Field work and ground preparation continued in onion and carrot fields in Sutter County. Late planting of winter crops continued as weather and ground conditions allowed in San Joaquin County. Ground preparation and weed control progressed as weather permitted. Rangeland forage and non-irrigated pasture were verdant in many foothill locations. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued, though reduced, due to the improved range conditions. Cattle continue to be moved to winter pasture. Some cattle and sheep grazed on alfalfa and crop stubble. Out-of-State sheep were reported in Imperial County. Lambing and calving continued. Most Bee hives entered the state for placement into winter staging areas.

COLORADO: Central mountainous areas received above normal amounts of precipitation during December while the rest of the state received substantially below average precipitation until the end of the month. Temperatures averaged above normal for most of the State. Currently, the mountain snowpack in the northern regions are 143% of average while the southern areas are 115% of average. The central region received the largest amount and is currently rated at 155% of average. Overall, mountain snowpack is currently 134% of average. The winter wheat growing areas experienced windy conditions during the month and the crop remains in mostly poor to fair condition. Currently, there is some very patchy snow cover on the winter wheat crop but soil moisture remains short to very short.

DELAWARE: Hay supplies are rated adequate. Livestock are in good condition. Soil moisture was rated mostly adequate with some areas in need of rain. Small grains are reported in good condition.

FLORIDA: Majority of field crops finished for season. Sugarcane harvest progressed in Everglades. Freezing temperatures affected sugar development in cane; some cane used for seed next year was destroyed; damage being assessed. Peanut, cotton harvest complete. Farmers protected vegetables from freezing temperatures; used freeze cloths to protect some crops. Strawberry growers ran overhead sprinklers to save plants, immature fruit. Trucking weight restrictions lifted to mitigate production loss. Cold slowed growth of vegetables. Significant crop losses attributed to sustained, low temperatures. Marketed avocados, snap beans, sweet corn, cabbage, cucumbers, eggplant, radicchio, escarole, okra, bell peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, tomatoes. Growers applied cold temperature protection to floriculture, nursery products with blankets, sprinklers, heaters. Damage from latest freeze being assessed.
Citrus trees generally in good condition. Drought condition worsened to extreme across Indian River, Brevard, St Lucie counties, surrounding counties had severe conditions. Moderate to extreme drought condition extended over most of citrus area. Entire citrus-growing region in various stages of drought. Harvest well underway with forty-four packinghouses, fourteen processing facilities receiving fruit. Growers continued to harvest and pack fruit. The work and lime application, surveyed groves for greening, treated trees for citrus psyllid, removed already infected trees. Irrigation used in areas with less rainfall. Pasture condition throughout State poor due to drought, hard freezes. Perennial grass killed by freeze. Limited small grains for forage planted, grazing started on emerged small grain forage. Hay, supplement feeding begun. Limited small grain forage due to drought. Southwest pasture condition very poor to good, most poor. More cattle being fed hay, molasses. Mid-month pasture condition decreased due to killing freeze, continued drought. Below freezing temperatures stopped forage growth, caused damage to late-plantated oats, ryegrass. Ranchers fed hay earlier than normal, supplies dwindling. Cattle suffered from extreme cold. Central Little overseeding of pastures to winter forage small grains. Winter grain forages not ready to graze. Stock pond water levels continued to decline. Statewide cattle condition very poor to excellent, most fair to good. Month’s end pasture condition lower due to coldest December in recent history, drought. Hay, supplements fed. Limited small grains forage. Southwest pasture grass running out. Statewide cattle condition very poor to excellent, most fair to good. Livestock auctions closed for holidays.

GEORGIA: Temperatures for the month of December were colder than normal and brought some snow to parts of the State, according to the USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service, Georgia Field Office. Many areas in northern Georgia had a white Christmas for the first time since 1991 and again in 1993. A record high temperature of 84 degrees was set at Lihue [Kauai] on Friday, December 17th. This broke the old record of 83 degrees set in 1983. A record maximum rainfall of .87 inch was set at Honolulu [Oahu] on Tuesday, December 28th. This broke the previous record of .45 inch set in 1954. IDAHO: December brought several winter storm systems through Idaho. Snowpack is above average for most locations in the state. Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 6% short, 92% adequate, 2% surplus. Calving complete 2%, 3% 2010. Lambing complete 1%, 1% 2010. Growing hay, grazing supply 1% very short, 11% short, 85% adequate, 3% surplus. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 2% poor, 12% fair, 82% good, 3% excellent. ILLINOIS: Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 12% short, 79% adequate, and 8% surplus. Last month, statewide temperatures were below normal while precipitation was also below normal for much of the State. The cold temperatures allowed what snow did fall to blanket fields in most parts of the state, with a partial thawing occurring later in the month. Temperatures averaged 23.5 degrees, 6.4 degrees colder than normal. Statewide precipitation averaged 1.71 inches, 0.98 inches below normal. INDIANA: Temperatures and precipitation were both below normal during December. However, most of the precipitation came in the form of snow making travel hazardous in many areas. The state average temperature was 23.70 which was 7.40 below normal. The state received an average of 1.47 inches of precipitation which was only 48 percent of normal. Winter wheat is reported to be in mostly good condition as there has been adequate snow cover to insulate the crop from the frigid temperatures. Some dry fertilizer, manure and lime were spread during the month. High commodity prices had many operations moving grain to market and contracting for winter crops. Livestock are reported to be in mostly good condition. Hay supplies remain adequate in most areas. However, livestock producers in some southern and eastern counties that faced drought conditions during the summer and fall are already buying hay. Other activities included income tax preparations, purchasing inputs for 2011 crops, moving snow, clearing fence rows, spreading fertilizer and lime, repairing, and installing drainage tile, hauling grain to market and feeding hay to livestock.

IOWA: Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 11% short, 85% adequate, and 7% surplus. Grain movement for the state was 36% none, 38% light, 22% moderate, and 4% heavy. Availability of hay and roughage supplies was 12% short, 75% adequate and 13% surplus. Hog and pig losses were 48% light, 51% average, and 1% heavy. Cattle and calf losses were similar with 47% light, 52% average, and 1% heavy. Iowa primarily experienced normal winter weather conditions throughout December.

KANSAS: Days suitable for fieldwork 20. Topsoil moisture 23% very short, 39% short, 37% adequate, and 1% surplus. Winter wheat condition 11% very poor, 22% poor, 40% fair, 25% good, and 2% excellent; wind damage 85% no damage, 13% light damage, and 2% moderate to severe. Hay condition 8% no damage, 6% light damage, and 1% moderate damage. Range and pasture condition is rated 11% very poor, 19% poor, 43% fair, 26% good, and 1% excellent. Feed grain supplies 4% short, 85% adequate, and 11% surplus. Hay and forage supplies 1% very short, 7% short, 83% adequate, and 9% surplus. Stock water supplies 4% very short, 16% short, 78% adequate, and 2% surplus. The month of December in Kansas remained very dry across all counties. Only two locations reported greater than half an inch of precipitation, Columbus with 0.69 inches and lola with 0.54 inches, both in the Southeast District. The temperatures ranged widely during the month, with the western third of the state being above average while the eastern third was below average. The highs were mostly in the 60's with a few stations reaching up into the 70's, while the lows were in the teens to near zero. Only Goodland reported a low below zero with -2 degrees. For 2010, the Leavenworth station reported the most precipitation during the year at 47 inches, 6.34 inches above the normal annual total. On the other end of the spectrum, Elkhart received only 11.74 inches for the year, the lowest in the State and 7.14 inches below normal. Producers have been able to take advantage of the dry December weather to get tillage and fertilizer applications done. The lack of snow cover on wheat fields and the dry soil conditions have some producers concerned that their winter wheat crop is vulnerable to wind and freeze damage. Cotton harvest finished during December with reports of high quality cotton being ginned. There was moderate rainfall for cattle as fields and pastures have not been muddy. Cattle are still being grazed on crop residue reducing the need for supplemental feeding.
KENTUCKY: This past December can best be described as cold with below normal temperatures reported along with below normal precipitation. The average temperature for the month was the 5th coldest December on record. Most every day lows were below the freezing mark, with several days staying below the freezing mark for highs. Snowfall started early in the month, with Frankfort having received 5 inches the first week of the month. Intermittent light to moderate snowfall continued thru the month, with some locations getting ice on a couple occasions. For much of the month many locations, especially north and east, had snow or ice accumulations on the ground. It was only after the light snowfall around the 25th that snow began to melt away.

Temperatures for the period averaged 28.4 degrees across the state which was 8.5 degrees cooler than normal and 16 degrees cooler than the previous period. High temperatures averaged from 38.8 in the West to 35.0 in the East. Departure from normal high temperatures ranged from 8.3 degrees cooler than normal in the West to 12.7 degrees cooler than normal in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 21.4 degrees in the West to 21.7 degrees in the East. Departure from normal low temperature ranged from 7.7 degrees cooler than normal in the West to 5.3 degrees cooler than normal in the East. The extreme high temperature for the period was 68.5 degrees at Cumberland County and the extreme low was -5.3 degrees at Madison County. Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 3.13 inches statewide which was 1.1 inches below normal and 74.0% of normal. Precipitation was below normal in the Midwest, 2.82 inches, Central 3.51 inches, Bluegrass 2.58 inches and East 3.61 inches, which was 1.77, 1.08, 1.12 and 0.44 inches below normal. By station, precipitation totals ranged from a low of 1.90 inches at Lewis County to a high of 5.12 inches at Calloway County.

Tobacco producers continued to strip their burley as December rains made conditions favorable. Farmers were kept busy feeding and caring for their livestock as extended periods of cold weather caused stress to animals. Wet weather improved soil moisture conditions which was beneficial for fall seeded small grain growth.

LOUISIANA: Averaged 1.78 inches of rain in December of 2010, well below the norm of 5 inches for the month. Louisiana remains 18.29 inches behind the norm for the year. Harvesting of sugarcane was ongoing. Citrus producers were spraying to control diseases. Strawberries were being harvested. Livestock producers were fertilizing winter pastures and feeding hay. Crawfish producers were putting out traps. Other activities included repairing and cleaning equipment.

MARYLAND: Hay supplies are rated adequate. Livestock are in good condition. Soil moisture was rated mostly adequate with some areas in need of rain. Small grains are reported in good condition.

MICHIGAN: The precipitation for the past four weeks ending January 3 varied from 1.56 inches to 2.03 inches in the Upper Peninsula and .60 inches to 2.52 inches in the Lower Peninsula. Field activities were finished heading into December. Few weather related headlines came to light this short month. As snow fell, snow insulated the ground for most of the month, protecting winter wheat from sub-freezing temperatures. An early “January thaw” during the last week of December melted any remaining snow in the southern Lower Peninsula.

MINNESOTA: Temperatures during December averaged from 4.5 degrees below normal in the Southeast District to .7 degree below normal in the North Central and Northwestern Districts. Temperature extremes included a low of -33 degrees at International Falls and a high of 48 degrees at Winona.

Precipitation averaged from 0.54 inch above normal in the Northwest District to 1.96 inches above normal in the Southeast District. Greatest monthly precipitation of 4.12 inches was recorded in Rochester. Numerous snowstorms hit Minnesota in December. The largest storm occurred over the 10-11 and blanketed the Twin Cities International Airport with 17.1 inches of snow. Central and southern Minnesota received 4 to 12 inches of snow. Another large snow system the 20-21 covered a large portion of the state with 2 to 6 inches of snow. Both Rochester (Southeast) and Hutchinson (Central) have equaled all-time record snow depths. In addition Grand Meadow (Southeast) and Winona (Southeast) have set new record snow depth marks for the month of December.

MISSISSIPPI: The month of December was fairly uneventful for Mississippi’s farmers. The month started fair with scattered showers across the state. As the month progressed, precipitation increased with fluctuations in temperature reported highs in the 70’s and lows below 10 degrees. Wind storms also swept through the western central section of the state, causing some damage. The weather turned frigid immediately following Christmas, with snow flurries reported. On New Year’s Eve, the wind storms returned and spawned widespread ice accumulations on the ground. Currently, winter wheat is in the ground and is faring well, not if a little dry.

MISSOURI: December was cooler and drier than normal. Precipitation averaged 0.87 of an inch throughout the State compared with the December 30-year average of 2.67 inches. The northwest district averaged the least precipitation with 0.32 of an inch while the Bootheel averaged the most with 4.15 inches.

Temperatures were 2 to 4 degrees below normal Statewide. Severe weather including tornadoes impacted the south-central region of the State on December 31. The condition of the dormant winter wheat crop ranges from fair to excellent with the majority rated good.

MONTANA: Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 3% last year; 7% short, 33% last year; 81% adequate, 63% last year; 12% surplus, 1% last year. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 11% last year; 10% short, 33% last year; 88% adequate, 55% last year; 1% surplus, 1% last year. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 2% last year; 2% poor, 5% last year; 26% fair, 59% last year; 62% good, 29% last year; 10% excellent, 5% last year. Winter wheat wind damage 74% none, 81% last year; 25% light, 15% last year; 1% moderate, 4% last year; 0% very heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat freeze damage 82% none, 79% last year; 17% light, 17% last year; 1% moderate, 4% last year; 0% heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat protective seed cover 1% very poor, 5% last year; 1% poor, 9% last year; 19% fair, 39% last year; 42% good, 40% last year; 37% excellent 7% last year. Range and pasture feed condition 6% very poor, 26% last year; 13% poor, 28% last year; 52% fair, 30% last year; 26% good, 14% last year; 3% excellent, 2% last year. Livestock grazing 4% open, 22% last year; 36% difficult, 47% last year; 60% closed, 31% last year. Cattle and calves receiving supplemental feed 94%, 85% last year. Sheep and lambs receiving supplemental feed 94%, 90% last year. Temperatures in Montana during the month of December were near normal for most of the State, with below normal temperatures in the North Central and Northeast districts. The high for the month of December was 57 degrees in Stanford. The low temperature was minus 33 in Wisdom. The Northeast district had an average temperature of 11 degrees, the coldest average in the State, while the South Central district was the warmest at 24 degrees. West Yellowstone received the most precipitation at 5.34 inches during the month of December.

NEBRASKA: Wheat conditions rated 2% very poor, 12% poor, 44 fair, 38 good, 4 excellent. Hay and forage supplies rated 0% very short, 2%, 94% adequate, and 4% excellent. Cattle and Calves condition rated 0% very poor, 0 poor, 13 fair, 78 good, and 9 excellent. Weather conditions were relatively mild and dry continued to the end of the field growing season. Northern counties were warmest in the southern Panhandle and far southwest counties and coolest as you moved north and east across the state. Depth of snow at the end of December averaged 2-3 inches across the state, with 6 inches or more common across northern Panhandle and north central counties and little or no snow depth over east central and southeastern areas. The northern half of the state received above normal amounts of precipitation while the southern half was below normal. Wheat condition continued well below year ago levels. Cattle producers made good use of stals as snow cover was light. As a result, feed usage was not heavy. Feed supplies are more than adequate and cattle are in good condition. Temperatures averaged 2-3 degrees above normal across the western half of the state but 1-2 degrees below normal for the eastern half. During the last week of the month, temperatures ranged from 27 to 34 degrees and in general got warmer as you moved west to east across the state. Precipitation was less than one half inch over the southern half of the state and generally less than one inch elsewhere.

NEVADA: December brought above normal temperatures and precipitation for the State. Temperatures ranged from 3.5 to 6.6 degrees above normal across the western part of the region while the monthly high at 70 degrees. Ely recorded the lowest temperature of the month at -20 degrees. Ely recorded the most precipitation with 3.33 inches. Snow began to accumulate in the mountains.
Added snowfall increased supplemental feeding of range livestock. Onion and potato processing was ongoing. Main farm and ranch activities include equipment maintenance and feeding livestock.

NEW ENGLAND: The month began with a rain and wind storm creating temperatures warmer than usual with highs reaching the low 60s in southern states and the mid 50s in northern states. The storm system quickly passed, and the rest of the first week returned to seasonal conditions with temperatures ranging from the low 20s in northern States to low 40s in southern States. The second week of the month was mostly windy with temperatures cooler than average until late week when a storm system passed through the region bringing rain and wind to lower elevations and snow to higher elevations and parts of Maine. This storm persisted into the beginning of the third week bringing torrential rains to the State of Maine which left between 6 and 8 inches in some areas, and causing upwards of half a million dollars of damages, according to The Bangor Daily News. Ten counties were affected by storm damages, with Aroostook and Washington being the most adversely impacted. The remainder of the week was drier, with temperatures average to below average throughout the region. The week of the 20th brought average to below average daytime temperatures and warmer than average nighttime temperatures throughout the northern States. The week was mostly dry, but turned stormy Sunday the 26th when a storm system moved up the Eastern Seaboard to New England bringing snow and strong winds that persisted until late Monday the 27th. The Blizzard of 2010 brought over a foot of snow in many areas with Massachusetts receiving over 18 inches by the coast. Wind speeds during the blizzard were highest in coastal areas with 80 mph being recorded in Wellfeet, Massachusetts. Wind gusts from 65-70 mph were recorded elsewhere along the coast while wind gusted into the mid-30 mph range inland. As the storm left the region, cold air and gusty winds lingered until month’s end. Total precipitation for the month ranged from as low as 2.46 inches in northern elevations of New Hampshire to as great as 5.37 inches in northern Maine.

NEW JERSEY: Temperatures were mostly below normal the entire month of December. There were measurable amounts of snowfall in all localities Christmas weekend with reports of up to 30 inches in Union County. Farmers finished their 2010 season harvesting of corn and soybeans. Other activities included equipment repair, greenhouse work, and feeding stored hay to livestock.

NEW MEXICO: December began with temperatures above normal across most of the state with a few locations below normal. A cold front swept through New Mexico the last week of December bringing bands of snow showers in the higher elevations and rain in the lower elevations. Behind this system, a polar air mass drop temperatures drastically. Low temperatures drop below zero in the north and west central mountains. Most of the northwest was ten degrees below normal compared to the southeast which was five degrees below normal. Cattle and livestock conditions were rated good due to supplemental feeding and haying. Cold weather the last week of November helped to defoliate pecan trees and get them ready for nut drop and harvesting. Due to the cold all summer crops ended. Fall onions were unaffected by the cold, however, reports of late planted oats being damaged were reported. The current cold snap and winds up to 60 mph December 30th may slow pecan harvest slightly, however, if snow occurs it may slow winter temprature. Eddy County has not received any measurable amount of precipitation since September. Fire conditions are high, due to tall grass, and very dry conditions.

NEW YORK: Cold, snowy weather hindered outside activities and daily chores. Producers were kept busy repairing machinery and removing snow. 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 2.0. Soil moisture 4% short, 66% adequate and 30% surplus. The state received precipitation in the form of snow the last week of December ranging from none to 1.33 inches in Waynesville. Average temperature was below the period normal. December 29th and 30th were rated 67% open, 25% difficult, 8% closed. Forty-five percent were drifted, 23% icy, 32% dry. Below average temperatures and a strong late December snowstorm marked the change from autumn to winter. Road conditions in some areas made hauling grain and livestock feed difficult, as more than two-thirds of the roads in the state were described as drifted or icy.

NORTH DAKOTA: Average snow depth was 18.3 on January 2. Hay and forage supplies were 2% short, 83% adequate, 15% surplus. Snow cover protection for alfalfa was rated 1% poor, 23% adequate, 76% excellent. Snow cover protection for winter wheat 1% poor, 20% adequate, 79% excellent. Cattle condition 1% poor, 10% fair, 78% good, 11% excellent. Sheep condition 1% very poor, 22% poor, 72% good, 5% excellent. The current cold snap and winds were not expected to damage crops. High temperatures ranged from 35 to 43 degrees. Severe cold weather during the month of December limited field work. Activities included tending livestock and winterizing farm equipment.

NORTH DakoTA: Average snow depth was 24.3 degrees, 7.4 degrees below normal. Precipitation for the state averaged 2.05 inches, 0.87 inch below normal. Winter wheat producing counties report that the wheat crop is in excellent to good condition. The winter wheat crop was planted on time and emergence percent and timing was normal. There was good snow cover for the first 3 weeks of December; however current field conditions are without snow cover. There are no flooding or freeze-out conditions reported. Cattle are in excellent to good condition. Hay inventories are adequate for wintering livestock, agents report that there are no anticipated feed shortage issues for wintering livestock.

OKLAHOMA: Topsoil moisture 31% very short, 22% short, 45% short, 2% surplus. Subsoil moisture 24% very short, 46% short, 29% adequate, 1% surplus. Wheat 1% very poor, 18% poor, 44% fair, 32% good, 5% excellent; grazed 34% this month, 33% last year, 26% average. Rye 4% very poor, 8% poor, 38% fair, 47% good, 3% excellent; grazed 65% this month, 62% last year, 49% average. Oats 1% very poor, 12% poor, 67% fair, 19% good, 1% excellent; grazed 13% this month, 11% last year, 5% average. Livestock 1% very poor, 6% poor, 45% fair, 41% good, 7% excellent. Pasture and Range 8% very poor, 28% poor, 45% fair, 18% good, 1% excellent. Livestock conditions were rated mostly in the good to fair range and cattle prices continued to be strong. Problems with low pond water levels and limited grazing were reported.

OREGON: December was wetter and somewhat warmer than normal. High from 42 to 49 inches in northern Oregon to 65 degrees in Roseburg. Low temperatures ranged from -25 degrees in Burns to 32 degrees in Bandon. Total precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) ranged from 17.12 total inches in Detroit Lake to 1.44 total inches in Bend. Average snow accumulation varied from 0 total inches in some lower elevations to 157.5 total inches in higher elevations. Winter wheat had a good blanket of snow in Northern Oregon. Fall plowed grassland, grasses, and cover/hay grains were looking good in Jackson County. There were still quite a lot of cattle on fall/winter pastures. Some spring calving was underway and looked to be going good.

PENNSYLVANIA: Principal farm activities during the month of December included pruning fruit trees, baling corn fodder, marketing grain and making plans for spring crops. Wheat and barley crops that were planted in early fall are being reported as looking fair at this point. The weather conditions for the month of December were as follows. The highest recorded Harrisburg temperature (62°F) for the month occurred on December 1st. The lowest recorded temperature for Harrisburg was 17°F on December 30th. The average high temperature was 36.9°F; while the average low temperature was 24.4°F. The temperature extremes were near average at 33.5°F, which is 1.3°F less than normal. The total snowfall for the month was 0.7 inches, which is 3.8 inches below normal.

SOUTH CAROLINA: A slow-moving boundary of cold air entered the Upstate on November 29th and was the focus for areas of heavy rain and storms. Two locations in the Upstate reported moderate damage from brief, EF1 tornadoes. Clearing orifices were observed on Wednesday, December 1st along with a chilling wind. Thursday’s afternoon high temperature at Myrtle Beach International AP was only 48 degrees. After a cold and sunny Friday, a few showers rotated southeastward across the state on Saturday. More cold was forced into the state on Sunday. The state average temperature for the period November 29 – December 5, was two degrees below normal. The state average rainfall was 0.7 inches. Arctic-sourced cold dominated the second week of December with temperatures well below the long term average.
Livestock supplemental feeding was active and mineral however, dry land winter wheat was in need of moisture. Across most of the state, winter wheat emerged and cotton the Blacklands received up to 4 inches of rainfall, and the rest of the state for the month. Precipitation averaged near normal across the state. Temperatures fluctuated from mid 50's to freezing throughout the month with expectation that a long, harsh winter would result in extremely cold temperatures in late November. During mid December temperature was up several degrees with below average temperatures and heavy rain to the western part of the State. The “Pineapple Express” storm brought unseasonably high temperatures and lingering snow from previous storms. Mountain snow pack and soil moisture content across the state is above average for this time of year, and has increased since November. The top soil moisture content for December was 1 percent short, 79 percent adequate, and 20 percent surplus. There was very little field activity across the State of Utah in December. Most of the winter wheat in Box Elder County entered the winter months in good condition. Snow mold may be a concern if the snowpack remains into the month of March. Some grain corn remains standing in Utah County. Fruit trees have been damaged due to heavy snow. Garfield and Kane Counties received warm rains which enabled forages to continue growing. Some flooding has occurred in those counties. Iron County producers are concerned the excellent soil moisture conditions may produce an abundant crop of cheatgrass which could result in an increase of wildfires this summer. Box Elder and Duchesne Counties livestock producers are feeding cattle and preparing for calving season which is expected to begin around February 1st 2011. Cattle appear to be in good condition. In Weber County livestock producers are glad temperatures are below freezing so they do not have to deal with mud. In Utah and Beaver Counties some producers have started their calving seasons. In Uintah County livestock have been stressed due to the temperature swings this past month.

VIRGINIA: Days suitable for fieldwork 2.0. Topsoil moisture 2% very short, 8% short, 72% adequate, 18% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 24% short, 65% adequate, 9% surplus. Beef Cattle Forage Obtained from Pastures 12%. Milk Cow Forage Obtained from Pastures 3%. Sheep Forage Obtained from Pastures 17%. Livestock 2% very poor, 11% poor, 45% good, 11% excellent. Small Grain and Winter Grazing Crops 4% poor, 36% fair, 55% good, 5% excellent. Heavy snow covered many areas of the state. Unusually cold daytime and nighttime temperatures kept snow on the ground. In some areas, the snow melted, extremely muddy conditions were prevalent. Wheat that was planted in November had slowed development due to below normal temperatures during December. Field activities during the month included soil sampling, applying low rates of nitrogen and pesticides to a few small grain fields and applying lime and potash for spring crops. Greenhouse owners began to prepare their greenhouse for tobacco planting. The first planting was 1% closed. Road conditions--township 64% open, 25% difficult, 1% closed. Road conditions--county 82% open, 17% difficult, 1% closed. Snow conditions--state 82% open, 17% closed. Livestock appeared to be in good condition. In Weber County livestock producers have started their calving seasons. In Uintah County livestock have been stressed due to the temperature swings this past month.

WASHINGTON: For the majority of the State the average December temperature was up several degrees with below average amounts of precipitation. At the beginning of the December tree fruit producers were able to identify winter injury to the buds and trunks of tree fruit and grapes as a result of severe cold temperatures in late November. During mid December a Pineapple Express storm brought unseasonably warm temperatures and heavy rain to the western part of the State. The storm caused flooding in the lowland areas of Snohomish County. This slowed the business of the U-cut Christmas tree farms. Standing water remains in many of those fields. With 15 percent of corn for grain left to harvest at the end of November, producers in Grant County were able to continue soybean and canola harvest. The month. Hay sales in Klickitat County remained brisk during the month with expectation that a long, harsh winter would result in higher price and less availability later on. Unusual for Lincoln County, the snow cover came and went twice with the snow currently melted into the ground. Pastures in the northwest part of the State were packed with the normal ice and snow and during December. The snow received in mid November was very strong for both domestic and international sales. Cranberry growers continued bog repair work. In southeast Washington temperatures fluctuated from mid 50’s to freezing throughout December with just enough snow to keep the fall seeding of winter wheat covered.
WEST VIRGINIA: Topsoil moisture 10% short, 86% adequate and 4% surplus compared with 2% short, 80% adequate and 18% surplus last year. Hay and roughage supplies were 1% very short, 13% short, 84% adequate and 2% surplus compared with 8% short, 90% adequate and 2% surplus last year. Feed grain supplies were 2% very short, 23% short, 73% adequate and 2% surplus compared with 3% short and 97% adequate last year. Winter Wheat conditions were 6% very poor, 12% poor, 26% fair, 54% good and 2% excellent. Cattle and calves were 4% poor, 33% fair, 56% good and 7% excellent. Sheep and lambs were 2% poor, 37% fair, 57% good and 4% excellent. Farming activities included: feeding hay to livestock and getting ready for calving and lambing.

WISCONSIN: December average temperatures for the state of Wisconsin ranged from 1 to 5 degrees below normal. Average high temperatures ranged from 23 to 31 degrees. Average low temperatures ranged from 8 to 19 degrees. Full month precipitation ranged from 0.76 inches in Eau Claire to 2.25 inches in La Crosse. The entire state received snow in December. Of the reporting stations, La Crosse and Eau Claire received the most snow, with 32 inches of snow since December 1.

WYOMING: Topsoil moisture 9% very short, 26% short, 61% adequate, 4% surplus. Subsoil moisture 10% very short, 39% short, 51% adequate. Average Depth of Snow Cover 3.10 inches. Winter wheat condition 51% fair, 48% good, 1% excellent. Winter wheat wind damage 67% none, 32% light, 1% moderate. Winter wheat freeze damage 91% none, 9% light. Farm flock sheep shorn 1%. Calf losses 82% light, 18% normal. Lamb losses 71% light, 29% normal. Cattle condition 1% poor, 10% fair, 88% good, 1% excellent. Sheep condition 1% poor, 10% fair, 88% good, 1% excellent. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 11% short, 88% adequate. Hay and roughage supplies 1% short, 95% adequate, 4% surplus. Temperatures in December for the majority of Wyoming were above normal, despite the cold front that worked its way through the end of the month. Converse County reported harsh winter conditions over the New Year Holiday and Lincoln County commented that they were in the middle of a tough winter with a lot of snow and bitter temperatures. Weston County reported blustery and colder temperatures the last two weeks in December with the northern half of the county receiving significant snowfall, particularly in the northwest corner of the county. The NRCS SNOTEL sites are currently showing a snow water equivalent of 118% of average statewide, with a low of 89% and a high of 170% of average. Activities feeding livestock, preparing for calving % lambing, maintaining equipment.