

# Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin State Stories

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**ALABAMA:** Wet weather conditions prevailed in most areas during December. For a few days of the month the state received cold weather. Cotton harvesting was hampered by untimely rainy weather. By mid-month, some farmers in the southern part of the state had just begun harvesting. Winter wheat seeding is slightly behind schedule due to the weather. Peach orchards need chill hours to.

**ALASKA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE**

**ARIZONA:** Temperatures for the State were above normal for the last week of December. Cotton harvest is complete on 97% of the acreage, behind last year's average and the five year average of 99%. Rain throughout the week delayed final cotton harvest progress. Alfalfa condition remains mostly good. Precipitation was reported at all of the 17 reporting stations ranging from 0.04 inches in Douglas to 3.88 inches in Flagstaff.

**ARKANSAS:** Early planted winter wheat is in overall good condition. While later planted acres don't have a good stand, are in fair condition. Weather conditions have allowed 100% of the crop to enter dormancy. Cattle remain in good condition. Pastures have received adequate moisture, are also in good condition for this time of year, despite below normal precipitation levels. Temperatures for the month of December averaged above normal on 15 days, below normal on 15 days and at normal one day. The average temperature for full month of December was 43.8°, 0.4° above normal. The highest temperature for the month was 67°, the lowest was 13°. There were 11 days with high temperatures in the 60s, two days with low temperatures less than 20°. This was the driest December since 1989. Precipitation during the month totaled 2.89 inches, 1.64 inches below normal. A snow storm moved through the northern, central parts of the state on December 22, dropping the most snowfall for December since 1983.

**CALIFORNIA:** Ground preparation, planting of small grains, winter forage continued throughout the month. Cotton harvesting was mostly completed by early December. Wet soil conditions delayed the discing of harvested cotton fields to meet Pink Bollworm plowdown requirements, but plowdown activity was completed in most areas by the end of the month. The majority of the State's winter wheat fields were emerged, remained in good condition overall. Alfalfa was cut, windrowed, baled. Emerged alfalfa fields showed very good growth for most of December. Sugar beet fields were prepared for planting in the San Joaquin Valley. Sweet potato hotbeds were fumigated. Potato harvesting continued as conditions allowed. Grape growers pushed out, stacked, burned old vines in preparation for new plantings. Vines were pruned, tied in many vineyards. Pruning, shredding activities continued in many fruit orchards as conditions allowed. Trees blown down by storms were removed from productive orchards. Dormant spraying of peach trees was ongoing. Persimmon harvesting was winding down by the end of the month. Strawberry, caneberry nursery stock digging continued. Navel oranges, lemons, pummelos, tangerines, clementines, and Satsuma mandarins were picked and packed, with good yields reported. Navel oranges showed some signs of frost damage at the packing sheds, but the cold weather conditions were also expected to enhance rind toughness, shelf life. Some Navel trees experienced fruit drop as a result of freezing

temperatures. Citrus fruit maturity, coloration were good overall. Pre-emergent herbicides and white wash were applied in citrus groves. Olive trees were pruned. Pruning, shredding, orchard removal continued as weather conditions permitted. Orchards were treated with pre-emergent herbicides in many locations. Stockpiled nuts were hulled, shelled. Walnut orchards were fumigated. Activity in many vegetable fields was slowed due to muddy conditions. Onions, garlic were planted as conditions allowed. Vegetable seedlings were started in greenhouses. Broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, leaf, head lettuce were harvested in the southern desert region. Lettuce harvesting in the Huron district was winding down by the end of December. Other crops harvested included bok choy, daikon, gai choy, gailon, kale, kohlrabi, lemon grass, Napa cabbage, sugar cane, taro root, and turnips. Winter pasture conditions were good to excellent overall, thanks to ample precipitation throughout much of December. However, foggy conditions slowed grass growth in the Central Valley. Some supplemental feeding of cattle continued as new vegetation developed. Fall calving was completed. Stocker cattle were moved onto pastures. Sheep grazed in alfalfa pastures. Beekeepers overwintered their hives in preparation for almond pollination.

**COLORADO:** Temperatures in the state were above average during December. Precipitation levels were below normal at the beginning of the month, but picked up substantially towards the end of the month. Most areas have recorded above normal amounts of moisture during the last two weeks of December. The mountain snow pack is 96% normal, which is the same percentage as last year. Producers made significant progress in the late harvest of standing corn and sorghum during the month.

**DELAWARE:** Most farmers finished the last of their soybean harvest in December. Precipitation has been normal with some periods of rain. There has been no major snow events so far this winter. Air temperatures have fluctuated from mild to severely cold. This fluctuation in temperatures is hard on the health of the cattle. Cow hay is adequate, but good quality hay is getting hard to find. No major disease problems have been reported for the livestock, poultry. Small grains have received adequate moisture. Winter activities include FSA paperwork, repairing farm equipment, finishing soybean harvest, feeding livestock and poultry.

**FLORIDA:** Mostly mild, dry weather allowed field work to proceed at a steady pace during December. The nearly ideal weather allowed small grain growth to make excellent progress. Mild temperatures delayed the dormancy of some nursery stock in the Panhandle with plants still holding leaves by mid-month. The growth of cool season forage in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula slowed due to low temperatures dipping into the 30s on some nights which caused some frosts and hard freezes. Livestock producers in the northern and central areas fed supplemental hay as pastures declined. Temperatures over the central and southern Peninsula remained warm during most of the month. Cold fronts, crossing the State around mid-month, and again during the last half, caused temperatures to plunge into the 30s in parts of the central and southern Peninsula with some frosts and hard freezes occurring in mostly low lying areas. Some strawberry and citrus growers and some flower and foliage producers ran overhead irrigation and heaters to protect plants from the cold weather. However, the short duration of the cold caused no significant damage to unprotected crops and actually aided strawberry

development. Dry conditions in most areas depleted soil moisture until a cold front crossing over the Peninsula late in the month brought much needed rain to many localities, except for the extreme southeastern Peninsula. The late month showers slowed vegetable planting and harvesting. Producers finished picking most cotton by mid-to-late month. Citrus harvesting gained momentum throughout the month with grove caretakers removing and replacing dead trees, controlling weeds and irrigating as needed. Harvesting of snap beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries and tomatoes remained active throughout the month. The harvest of Romaine lettuce, endive and escarole began early in the month while cabbage and celery harvesting began during the last half. Dade County growers finished cutting okra by mid-month.

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**GEORGIA:** Temperatures during December varied, ranging from unseasonably mild conditions to extremely cold. There was a wide range of temperatures with the lows in the 10's to highs of 70's. For the most part the average temperatures were in the low 50's. Producers continued to harvest cotton, soybeans. Vegetables were rated in mostly good to fair condition. Mild weather at the beginning of the month improved grazing, small grain growth. Livestock producers continued to increase supplemental feeding due to declining pasture conditions. Overall, pasture was rated in mostly good to fair condition. Activities Included: Producers spraying vegetables for diseases, preparing land for spring planting, and the routine care of livestock and poultry.

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**HAWAII:** Crops were making fair progress until a potent cold front produced steady showers over the New Year's Day weekend. Kauai island, on the northern end of the State, bore the brunt of the storm as steady showers began falling on Thursday night (12/30), extended into Sunday. Three-day totals, ending 8:00 a.m. Sunday (1/2/2005), showed that many parts of Kauai received rainfall in excess of 6 inches. Islands further south received diminished amounts of rain as the cold front weakened and picked up speed after passing Kauai. Rainfall totals on Oahu, Maui, Hawaii counties were generally under 6 inches. Farmers across the State were still assessing any losses as muddy conditions make field work difficult. Spraying to contain disease outbreaks is expected to increase in the coming weeks. Banana, papaya fields are not expected to be severely impacted by the recent rains. Strong winds, which did not materialize, are a greater concern for banana, papaya farmers. Progress for vegetable crops will be setback by the wet conditions, cloudy skies. Crop recovery will depend on weather conditions in the days to come.

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**IDAHO:** Topsoil 16% short, 76% adequate, 8% surplus. Winter condition 7% fair, 65% good, 28% excellent. Hay, roughage supply 55% adequate, 45% excellent. Livestock are in winter pastures. More soil moisture is needed in most places. Farmers are attending crop, commodity schools, and repairing equipment

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**ILLINOIS:** Topsoil 2% short, 61% adequate, 37% surplus. December ended with near normal temperatures, below normal precipitation. These recent weather conditions were ideal for livestock but have winter wheat producers a little concerned. They would prefer more winter conditions like snow cover than spring conditions of recent rainfalls. Activities Included: Hauling grain to terminals, attending agricultural meetings, events, working on taxes, ordering seed, working on machinery, and signing up for 2005 farm programs.

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**INDIANA:** Farmers were able to harvest corn, soybeans early in the month. Tillage of soils, spreading of fertilizer also took place. Snow halted field activities around most of state during late December. Some southern, central regions received heavy amounts of snow. Heavy snow caused some damage to buildings, roofs. Recent rain, warm temperatures have melted most of the snow. Ponding, flooding has occurred in many low lying areas of fields, along some river bottoms. Some corn, soybean fields are still not harvested. Mud is a major problem in most fields and feedlots. Winter wheat is in mostly good condition. Snow protected most wheat fields during the extreme cold temperatures. Pastures are muddy. Stripping, selling of tobacco is progressing well. Temperatures averaged about 0.4° below normal for December. Precipitation averaged 2.77 inches compared with 3.06 inches for normal. Livestock are in mostly good condition, but were under some stress from the cold temperatures, wet conditions. Feeding of hay

is necessary on most livestock farms. Activities: Cleaning up, repairing equipment, hauling grain to market, attending FSA offices for 2005 DCP, LDP's, and loans, hauling manure and taking care of livestock.

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**IOWA:** Soil 2% very short, 17% short, 73% adequate, 8% surplus. Movement of grain for the state was 30% none, 45% light, 23% moderate, 2% heavy. Producers took advantage of moderate temperatures to complete outside operations: fall tillage, dry fertilizer application, fencing, tiling, and tree cutting. Reporters noted grain movement was slow, reduced by low prices, year-end tax strategies. Large piles of grain remain on the ground and there is a growing concern for grain quality. There were some reports of spoilage in the top two feet of corn piles. Some farmers are concerned by the lack of precipitation. At the end of December, the average depth of snow cover across the state was visibly zero inches, compared to 2 inches at the same time last year. The average depth of frost penetration for the state was 9 inches, compared to last year's 7 inches. Availability of hay, roughage supplies 3% short, 83% adequate, 14% surplus. Quality of hay, roughage supplies 5% poor, 34% fair, 61% good. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing 28% none, 19% limited, 32% moderate, 21% extensive. Hog, pig losses in December were below last year's state averages at 23% below avg.; 72% avg.; 5% above average. Cattle, calf losses were also below last year's state averages at 32% below avg.; 65% avg.; 3% above average. With no snow, little ice cattle, calves were reported in good condition. Corn stalk bales were being used extensively, grazing on corn stalk fields was wide open. There were scattered reports of Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome Virus (PRRSV) in hogs.

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**KANSAS:** Topsoil 4% very short, 20% short, 66% adequate, 10% surplus. The State experienced normal, below normal temperatures most of the month, but unseasonably warm temperatures arrived the end of the month with record high temperatures in some areas. The Southeast section of the State received the most precipitation with dry conditions still persisting in the Western, Central areas of the State. Wheat condition 1% very poor, 5% poor, 23% fair, 57% good, 14% excellent. Wheat wind damage is 86% none, 13% light, 1% moderate. Wheat freeze damage is 84% none, 13% light, 3% moderate. Hay, forage supplies 1% very short, 5% short, 79% adequate, 15% surplus. Feed grain supplies 2% very short, 5% short, 75% adequate, 18% surplus.

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**KENTUCKY:** As December began, skies began to clear as high pressure settled in, but winds were strong from the southwest, gusting to 25+ miles per hour before dying down. Overnight lows dropped below freezing for much of the State, daytime highs climbed to near normal levels in the upper 40's. Clouds, rain moved into western state late on 5th. Weekly temperatures averaged 42°, 2° above normal. Rainfall totaled 1.43 in. statewide, 0.49 in. above normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.48 in. at Covington to a high of 2.32 in. at London. The first full week of December began with a warm front moving north across the State bringing clouds, fog, and rain. Winds from the southwest gusted to 45 miles per hour, were sustained at 15-20 miles per hour. Warm air from the south moved into the area, Jackson, London set record highs in the lower 70's. More rain prompted flood watches, warnings to be issued across eastern state. After a calm day at midweek influenced by high pressure, more rain, isolated thunderstorms moved into the area for the end of the week. Temperatures dropped to near normal levels over the weekend as a cold front ushered in cold air from Canada. Weekly temperatures averaged 48°, 10° above normal. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 1.94 in. statewide, 0.99 in. above normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 1.12 in. at Princeton to a high of 3.57 in. at Somerset. After several weeks of above normal precipitation, temperatures, a change occurred just before winter officially arrives. A cold front passed through as the week began bringing light snow showers, clouds. Winds also gusted to 30 miles per hour. High pressure settled in at midweek clearing the skies as it brought cold air from Canada into the region. South winds returned bringing temperatures to near normal levels. The warmer temperatures did not last long. A late weekend vigorous cold front arrived bringing a dusting of snow to many locales, and temperatures fell back into the teens. Weekly temperatures averaged 32°, 4° below normal. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 0.01 in. statewide, 0.94 in. below normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.00 in. at Bowling Green to a high of 0.04 in. at Covington. A Winter Storm of Historic proportion dominated the Christmas week weather in the State, and the Ohio Valley. An unusually early, and powerful winter storm dump 10 to 20 in. of snow in western, northern sections, one half inch of ice,

sleet, snow central, heavy rains, flooding in eastern sections of the Commonwealth. On it's heel's, bitter cold arctic air dropped temperatures to near zero degrees with wind chill temperatures well below zero. Temperatures averaged 24<sup>o</sup>, 10<sup>o</sup> below normal. Precipitation (liq. equ.) totaled 1.49 in., 0.54 inches above normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of 0.16 in. at London to a high of 2.98 in. at Louisville. Above normal temperatures, moderate rainfall ended the month causing a rapid snow melt. Temperatures reached a high of 68<sup>o</sup> in Glasgow and Somerset. Statewide temperatures average 7<sup>o</sup> above normal. Precipitation totals ranged from a low of zero at Bristol, Buckhorn Lake, Cumberland Gap, London, to a high of 1.14 in. at Spindletop, UK's Research farm near Lexington. Soybean producers got the final soybean acres combined at the beginning of the month. Winter wheat growth varied from excessive to just emerging as the month began. Tobacco producers were busy stripping their crop, delivering it to contract receiving stations or auction warehouses. Tobacco companies have been very selective in their purchases at burley auction markets, as loan receipts were at the highest point for the season prior to the Holiday break. The Christmas recess for auction markets went into effect after sales on the 16th. Contract centers stopped receiving tobacco after the 17th. Both auction, contract centers will reopen on Monday, January 10, 2005. Burley Belt gross sales through December totaled 198.1 million pound averaging \$198.75 per cwt. The wide temperature swings, cold temperatures caused increased livestock stress throughout the month and pastures remained extremely muddy in many areas.

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**LOUISIANA:** Harvesting of sugarcane was finished by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of December. Sugarcane producers were approximately one week ahead due to excellent harvesting conditions. The state averaged 4.69 inches of rain over the last 4 weeks. Citrus producers were spraying to control diseases. Strawberries were being harvested. Livestock producers were fertilizing winter pastures, feeding hay. Crawfish producers were putting out traps. Early reports have indicated that this will be a very good year for crawfish producers. Activities Included: Repairing and cleaning equipment.

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**MARYLAND:** Weather conditions have been mild, precipitation normal so far this winter. No major disease problems have been reported for livestock or poultry. Air temperatures have fluctuated from mild to severely cold. This change in temperatures is hard on the health of the cattle. Small grains appear to be faring well with adequate moisture. Winter activities include repairing farm equipment, feeding livestock, poultry, FSA paperwork, and preparing for the next crop season

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**MICHIGAN:** December weather varied across the State. Farmers from the southeast reported a lack of snow cover, temperatures that fluctuated between above freezing to well below zero. Most of the northern districts reported frozen ground, plenty of snow cover, with temperatures dropping well below zero for several days during December. Much of the State reported adequate amounts of soil moisture. The cold temperatures adversely affected movement of livestock. Some respiratory ailments were reported but producers hoped the colder weather would eliminate these problems. Reports on feed supplies ranged from good to adequate. Some corn fields remained unharvested due to the wet weather, snowfall slowing progress. In the southeast, minor flooding was reported. Soybean harvest wrapped up with scattered reports of abandoned fields. Winter wheat looked good across the State. Activities Included: Snow plowing, hauling manure, machine maintenance and other general repairs.

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**MINNESOTA:** Precipitation averaged below normal in the state for the month. December temperatures were above normal throughout the state. Not very much snow cover was present at the end of December. Topsoil and subsoil moisture levels are adequate due to the precipitation in the fall. Livestock throughout the state is said to be in good condition. Producers are reporting that hay supplies are adequate.

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**MISSISSIPPI:** Soil 1% very short, 7% short, 72% adequate, 20% surplus. Hay supply 2% short, 92% adequate, 6% surplus. Feed grain 1% short, 98% adequate, 1% surplus. On average, December temperatures were a few degrees below normal. Parts of northern state experienced a hard freeze during the Christmas holidays. State rainfall averages were slightly below average. Northeast, Central State reported above average rainfall. Winter wheat survived the hard freeze, has matured well considering the fact that a majority of the crop was planted late. Hay

supply is adequate with cattle producers allowing cattle to graze on fields, supplementing with hay. Producers are hopeful that the milder temperatures will continue and cool-season forage growth will continue.

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**MISSOURI:** Precipitation for the State during December averaged 1.29 inches, well below the 30-year average of 2.67 inches, but soil moisture supplies are mostly adequate as a result of the substantial October and November rain. About 2 weeks of favorable weather in December enabled farmers to complete row crop harvesting in virtually all areas as well as accomplish some late tillage. Winter wheat condition continues mostly fair to good with below-normal growth in some areas due to late planting, excessive fall moisture. Cattle are doing well with winter grazing, good hay supplies and adequate water in stock ponds.

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**MONTANA:** Soil 20% very short, 43% short, 36% adequate, 1% surplus compared to last year which 14% very short, 44% short, 41% adequate, 1% surplus. Subsoil 36% very short, 32% short, 32% adequate, 0% surplus compared to last year during which subsoil 43% very short, 46% short, 11% adequate, 0% surplus. During the month of December, temperatures in the state have been above normal with scattered precipitation throughout the state, but the state received colder temperatures along with snow during the last week of the month. Winter wheat 0% very poor, 2% poor, 33% fair, 49% good, 16% excellent. In spite of lack of snow cover, the winter wheat crop condition is better than last year because of very little freeze or wind damage. Wind damage to the winter wheat 46% none, 33% light, 20% moderate, 1% heavy. Freeze and drought damage for the crop 48% none, 32% light, 20% moderate, and 0% heavy. Snow cover for winter wheat 67% very poor, 19% poor, 8% fair, 3% good, and 3% excellent. Most of the pastures are available for grazing due to the above normal temperatures throughout the month. Livestock grazing 76% open, 15% difficult, 9% closed, compared to last year when 12% open, 28% difficult, 60% closed. Currently, 82% of the cattle, 84% of the sheep are receiving supplemental feed.

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**NEBRASKA:** Days suitable for fieldwork 5.6. Temperatures for the week ending January 2, 2005 averaged 9<sup>o</sup> above normals. Precipitation was limited to a 1-2 hundredths of an inch in extreme east central state. Soil temperatures just below freezing in most areas. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 2% poor, 33% fair, 53% good, 11% excellent. Corn harvest not yet complete in Panhandle counties. Snow depth zero, expect for traces in the Panhandle. Hay, forage supplies mostly adequate. Condition of cattle, calves mostly good to excellent. Activities Included: Fall harvest, winter preparations, livestock care and end of the year paperwork

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**NEVADA:** Pacific storms visited the State at the beginning, the end of the month. High pressure kept storms at bay through most of the month. Precipitation totaled well above normal in most areas with snow covering the northern half of the State. Accumulated snow pack at the end of the month was well above normal in the Sierra State, eastern state, but remained below normal in the Owyhee river basin. Temperatures averaged above normal statewide. Livestock feeding increased in response to the snow cover. Hay, onion, potato shipping continued. Equipment maintenance was common and grower meetings were being held.

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**NEW ENGLAND:** Seasonable temperatures persisted through the first half of December. Bitter cold temperatures, snow hit the six-State region on the 20<sup>th</sup> with accumulations of 3 to 6 inches. A second storm during the last weekend of the month brought freezing rain, snow to portions of Southern State with accumulations of up to 19 inches in some locations. Christmas tree sales were brisk during the first half of the month.

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**NEW JERSEY:** Temperatures were varied, from over twenty degrees below normal to over 15<sup>o</sup> above normal across the state, during the month of December. Precipitation was at or near normal for the month. There were measurable amounts of snow in some parts of the state during the month of December.

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**NEW MEXICO:** The month began with a winter storm moving across the state then continued without much precipitation throughout most of the month. Generally, it was a cold month, with temperatures below

normal statewide. The most significant cold wave of the season passed through the state during the week of Dec 20 - 26<sup>th</sup>. The winter storm brought snow to a good portion of the plains, temperatures fell well below normal for several days. Sub-zero readings occurred over a good portion of the plains as well as the most of the north. During the month, harvest was completed for cotton, chile, sorghum while pecans harvest continued. Ranchers spent the month hauling feed, water when needed, and preparing for spring calving

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**NEW YORK:** Below average snow fall with moderate to below normal temperatures were recorded across the state. Record high winds marked the first day of the month. Albany had 51mph winds while Poughkeepsie had 41 mph winds. Average to slightly below average rainfall totals were posted across the state. Activities: Tending livestock, spreading manure, machinery repair, maintenance, grading, packing onions, apples, orchard clean-up, and preparing facilities for winter.

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**NORTH CAROLINA:** Days suitable for field work 3.7. Soil 5% short, 58% adequate, 37% surplus. Activities Included: Stripping burley tobacco, general winter farm maintenance. The last week of the year experienced very cold temperatures, however, the beginning of 2005 promises much warmer conditions. The low temperatures for the week of December 26<sup>th</sup> ranged from 8 to 26<sup>o</sup>. Some areas in the east received substantial snowfall the day after Christmas. Small grain crop conditions are ranked mostly good, with wheat showing 8% excellent. Soybean harvest is nearing completion at 97% and wheat is 96% emerged

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**NORTH DAKOTA:** Above normal temperatures, below normal snowfall dominated most of December, while the most significant snowfall was received the first weekend in January. The mild weather, little snow cover has allowed producers to continue grazing livestock on pastures, corn stalks. Producers were able to harvest corn during December; however, some reporters in the eastern part of the state indicated that there was still corn remaining in the fields. Average snow cover was 6.2 inches on January 2. This compares to 7.4 inches a year ago. Hay, forage supplies 2% very short, 12% short, 79% adequate, 7% surplus. Snow cover protection for alfalfa 30% poor, 53% adequate, 17% excellent. Cattle conditions 0% very poor, 1% poor, 11% fair, 76% good, 12% excellent. Sheep conditions 1% very poor, 3% poor, 13% fair, 71% good, 12% excellent. County, secondary roads 78% open, 19% difficult, 3% closed. Twenty-two percent of the roads were drifted, 27% icy, 3% muddy, 48% dry.

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**OHIO:** December's average temperature across the state 31.2<sup>o</sup>, 0.5<sup>o</sup> below normal. Precipitation averaged 3.32 inches, 0.41 inches above normal for the month of December. The snow, ice storm which struck before Christmas knocked out power to some dairies across the state. Farmers were forced to run generators and tractor pto's to run milking equipment as a result of the power loss. No cattle losses were reported

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**OKLAHOMA:** Topsoil 1% very short, 14% short, 79% adequate, 6% surplus. Subsoil 2% very short, 8% short, 84% adequate, 6% surplus. Wheat 4% poor, 21% fair, 60% good, 15% excellent. Rye 2% poor, 8% fair, 81% good, 9% excellent. Oats 1% poor, 35% fair, 61% good, 3% excellent. Wheat grazed 50% this year, 35% last year, 34% average. Oats grazed 17% this year, 25% last year, 24% average. Rye Grazed 65% this year, 50% last year, 36% average; Livestock 3% poor, 17% fair, 70% good, 10% excellent. Pasture, Range 1% very poor, 8% poor, 32% fair, 51% good, 8% excellent. Livestock: Livestock ranged from mostly good to fair condition. Livestock conditions 70% good, 17% fair compared to 56% good, 31% fair at this time last year. The death loss of cattle was average to light. Hay supplies were rated as mostly above average.

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**OREGON:** Activities: Winter care of livestock ongoing across the State, supplemental feeding of livestock continued. Shipments of small grains, potatoes, corn, dry onions continued. Nurseries were preparing for the upcoming shipping season. Christmas tree harvest neared its completion for the season. According to the State Department of Agriculture, the State Fish and Wildlife Commission was preparing a conservation, management plan to deal with the impact of gray wolves on ranchers. The annual meeting of the State Seed Growers League determined that improved soil conditions, yields resulted from the practice of no-till systems, according to the Capital Press. Snowpack levels

across the State are generally below average as of mid-December, according to information from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

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**PENNSYLVANIA:** Principal farm activities during the month of December included finishing off the corn, soybean harvests, attending organizational meetings, repairing barns, fences, spreading manure, making the final preparations for cold weather. A select few corn, soybean fields were not harvested due to excessive rainfall in parts of the state. Fields that were not harvested by the middle of the month were considered a lost crop. (\*32Lli@23 L:Jli90 ah8oa\*76 ;anj\*(hn H (\*N9n(/\_ )NIL:Ne90J. The Keystone state was spared the massive amounts of snowfall that hit much of Indiana and Ohio, although remote areas in some northern counties have received several inches already. Average highs there have been running between the mid- to upper-30s with lows at night consistently in the 10s and occasionally dipping in to the single digits (°F). In the southern, valley areas of the state, from Harrisburg over to Lancaster on down to Philadelphia, temperatures have remained slightly above those in the North, with highs in the upper-30s to lower-40s. Lows at night have been running consistently in the 20s the first part of the month but have remained in the 10s over the last couple of weeks. Winter precipitation has been very scarce in the southeastern part of the state, as no significant amount has been recorded thus far.

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**SOUTH CAROLINA:** Seasonal temperatures dominated the first week of December with afternoon highs generally in the 60's and lows in the 30's. High pressure dominated until a cold front passed midweek bringing some much needed rain in many locations. Temperatures averaged about 2<sup>o</sup> normal for the week. Spring like temperatures predominated during the second week with afternoon highs in the 70's and night time temperatures in the 40's until Friday when temperatures returned to the more seasonable 50's and 30's. The state average temperature was 6<sup>o</sup> above normal for the week. A freeze was felt over most of the State during the third week with cold weather, a scattering of snow flurries in some areas. The temperatures averaged 5<sup>o</sup> below normal. Temperatures fell to their lowest of the season during the last week with single digits reported in the higher elevations. Late Christmas Day, a mixture of rain, sleet, freezing rain, snow began to develop over the central, coastal sections. By Sunday, a light coating of ice had disrupted travel, downed power lines. The state average temperature was 4<sup>o</sup> below normal for the week. Some early plowing, land preparation occurred in more temperate areas. Small grains were still in good shape despite the dry conditions experienced during the month.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Feed supplies 9% very short, 20% short, 67% adequate, 4% surplus. Stock water supplies 17% very short, 20% short, 62% adequate, 1% surplus. Winter wheat 1% poor, 31% fair, 53% good, 15% excellent. Cattle condition 1% poor, 18% fair, 66% good, 15% excellent. Sheep condition 4% poor, 19% fair, 67% good, 10% excellent. Road conditions, county 100% open. Road conditions, township 100% open. Average snow depth 0.2 inch, 1.1 inches in 2003. Alfalfa snow cover 97% poor, 3% adequate. Winter wheat snow cover 99% poor, 1% adequate. Calf deaths from fall calf crop 34% below average, 65% average, 1% above average. Sheep, lamb deaths from fall lamb crop 14% below average, 86% average. December was an extremely mild month, with temperatures ranging from 6 to 13<sup>o</sup> above normal for the state. Snowfall was minimal, with many areas of the state receiving no precipitation for the month. Activities Included: Marketing grain, tending to livestock, repairing machinery, and fixing fence.

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**TENNESSEE:** The month of December brought rainy, but warm, temperatures towards the beginning of the month, while the end of the month brought icy conditions, below freezing temperatures. However, the last few days of December averaged well above normal temperatures, brought below normal rainfall. Winter wheat was rated in fair-to-good condition, standing water caused minor problems in wheat fields. Livestock were reported in mostly good condition with hay supplies adequate. Livestock producers were feeding hay to their cattle, horses and other pastured livestock.

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**TEXAS:** Weather conditions across the state was a roller coaster event for the month of December. Conditions in early month were characterized by drying out from the recent, extended rain event. Harvest resumed as conditions allowed, planting of small grains continued as soils

dried. Some areas received additional rainfall, but accumulations were minor across the state. Livestock condition improved as sunshine returned, many producers were able to resume grazing of grain fields. By mid month conditions were again deteriorating as temperatures plummeted, record lows were recorded in many locations. Some areas received heavy snowfall, a few locations received snow for the first time in eighty plus years. Supplemental feeding increased with the extremes in conditions, some death loss in livestock herds was also recorded in a few locations. As a further result of these conditions during the month crop losses were also noticed, however they were marginal.

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**UTAH:** December brought much needed snow to the state. State has received above average snowfall throughout most of the state. Temperatures have been mild, close to average. Livestock are doing well with the mild temperatures. Producers are optimistic towards continued drought conditions. December's precipitation has gone a long ways in easing producers minds but continued winter precipitation is needed to end state's sixth year drought.

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**VIRGINIA:** State's crops, livestock reacted to the variable weather patterns during the month of December. At the beginning of the month, counties that were isolated from cold snaps were still experiencing grass growth. This led to most of State's livestock obtaining more than normal forage from pastures for this time of year. However, some areas experienced severe cold snaps that led to an earlier than normal supplemental feeding of livestock. In the warmer regions of the state, late planted winter grains have done better than expected. The warmer than normal temperatures gave small grains a better establishment. Rain showers were common throughout the month, which delayed the completion of the soybean harvest. However, only a few fields remain unharvested. Activities Included: Repairing facilities, machinery, attending winter meetings, sampling soils, buying supplies for 2005. Variable weather patterns occurred during the month of December. A heavy snow storm dropped several inches of snow in isolated regions of eastern stae. Occasional cold snaps, lasting for several days, plunged some counties below 10<sup>o</sup> Fahrenheit. Nevertheless, some areas experienced a few days of warmer than normal temperatures. Scattered rain showers were prevalent throughout the month, varying from normal to heavy precipitation in most counties.

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**WASHINGTON:** Temperatures for the month were unseasonably warm in most areas of the state. Snow pack levels in Kittitas County were reported at around 80%. Snow cover for winter wheat was minimal, winter wheat in various counties was reported as still growing throughout the month, raising concerns for local growers. Christmas tree growers reported increased sales with prices holding the same as last year. Livestock were on supplemental feed in order to compensate for lack of forage growth in pastures. Fruit trees were being pruned. Greenhouse tomato growers in Thurston County were seeding transplants. Commercial dahlia growers continued dividing and packaging tubers for spring sales.

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**WEST VIRGINIA:** Topsoil 1% short, 60% adequate, 39% surplus. Hay, roughage supplies 2% short, 82% adequate, 16% surplus. Feed grains 1% short, 98% adequate, 1% surplus. Wheat conditions 4% fair, 96% good. Cattle, calves 2% poor, 9% fair, 83% good, 6% excellent. Sheep, lambs 1% poor, 7% fair, 87% good, 5% excellent. Activities Included: Repairing fences and caring for livestock.

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**WISCONSIN:** Temperatures averaged 1 to 3<sup>o</sup> above normal for the month of December. Temperatures varied from lows in the -20's to highs in the mid 50's during the month. Precipitation in northern areas of the state ranged from 0.85 to 2.35 inches. Southern areas of the state received around 1.5 inches. Most of the precipitation came in the form of rain, with northern areas receiving more snow in the second half of the month. Small amounts of snow cover was reported in northern parts of the state. Producers continued to harvest corn during the first few weeks of December. At the end of the month, the majority of the remaining corn and soybean crops had been harvested.

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**WYOMING:** Corn 85% harvested, 100% 2003, 100% 5-year average. Temperatures for the five week period through Friday, December 31, averaged above normal. Temperatures ranged from 0.2<sup>o</sup> below normal

in Powell to 6.9<sup>o</sup> above normal in Sheridan. The highest temperature was 66<sup>o</sup> in Sheridan, while the lowest temperature was -26<sup>o</sup> in Recluse. Scattered precipitation was reported in parts of the State with most areas having below normal amounts. The most precipitation fell in Jackson with 1.24 inches, Chugwater with 1.22 inches, and Afton with 1.11 inches.