

Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin

State Stories

Released March 27, 2012, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, U.S. Department of Agriculture. For information on "Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin State Stories" call Julie Schmidt at (202) 720-7621, office hours 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET.

ALABAMA: The month of March brought several rain showers which helped the water table, but was too early to benefit any row crops. There was still a lot of indecision as far as acreage to be planted and very few peanut contracts have been secured. Farmers were just now getting into the burn down phase, and the warmer than normal temperatures had producers gearing up for the planting season. Calves were looking heavier than this time last year with cattle prices relatively high. Robert T. Boozer, Alabama Cooperative Extension System Area Extension Research Horticulturist, said the peach crop was progressing early in terms of bloom & fruit, and looked to be a good fruit crop. The average mean temperature throughout Alabama ranged from 58.3°F in Demopolis to 66.3°F in Mobile. Total precipitation for the month ranged from 1.36 inches in Evergreen to 6.43 inches in Demopolis. The US Drought Monitor released March 13, 2012, showed portions of the State still in drought conditions.

ALASKA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE

ARIZONA: Temperatures across the State started off mostly below normal in March. They were above normal only during the second and third week of the month. The temperature extremes for March were a high of 89 degrees in Roll and a low of 1 below zero at Grand Canyon. Precipitation in the form of rain or snow was recorded in all 21 weather stations in March. All reporting stations are below normal in precipitation for the year. Cotton planting started in March. Alfalfa harvesting is occurring on three-quarters of the growing areas across the State. Vegetable and citrus harvesting remains active throughout the month. Range and pasture conditions vary from very poor to excellent. Even with some precipitation dry conditions remain for most of the state.

ARKANSAS: Temperatures in Arkansas remained higher than usual during March. Some heavy rain and winds occurred throughout the State in mid-March. Planting and fieldwork were underway early in the month but were slowed by wet conditions. Planting and fieldwork resumed and was expected to increase as weather conditions improved at the end of the month. Aided by rain and the early onset of warm weather, forages were growing rapidly, a favorable development for livestock producers who were no longer feeding hay.

CALIFORNIA: Grains continued to show good growth in the northern portion of the State, where more rain was received, and in the south where irrigated, but southern dry-land fields had lagging development. Some grains were irrigated due to the lack of significant precipitation. Wheat, rye and oats continued to mature and were in fair to excellent condition. Alfalfa fields continued to green well following pest and weed control applications. Safflower was planted. Ground for sod was leveled and prepared for seeding. Rice paddy draining continued despite heavy rains in mid March, but ground preparation, fertilization and draining continued as conditions permitted. Field corn planting and preparation continued. Spring cotton planting preparations continued with bed formation, pre-irrigation, and weed control. Plums, peaches, apricots, nectarines and cherries continued to bloom. Growers applied bloom sprays to control fungus. Early varieties of stone fruit experienced petal fall. Pruning of grape and kiwi vineyards ended. Vineyard spraying, irrigating, fertilizing, grafting and repair work continued. Some grape varieties started to bud. Pomegranate orchards were pruned. Blueberries bloomed and bees were used to pollinate. Navel oranges, tangerines, tangelos and lemons continued to be harvested. Valencia oranges were tested for maturity and harvest may start soon. Almond bloom continued. Early varieties experienced petal fall. Almond trees began to leaf-out. Bees remained in almond orchards. Walnuts, almonds, and pistachios continued to be exported. Early walnut varieties were just beginning to leaf-out. In Tulare County, ground preparation and planting started in vegetable fields, and certified producers were starting early summer vegetables in greenhouses and cold frames. Fresno County reported that the low winter rainfall forced growers of annual crops to pre-irrigate in preparation for planting. Shaping of beds and soil fumigation

continued. Fumigation in preparation of planting bell pepper, carrot and some tomato fields continued. Processing tomato transplants were starting to be planted. Fall planted garlic and onions continued to emerge and were growing well, as was spring head lettuce. Asparagus, spring broccoli, beets, cauliflower, cabbage, turnips, daikon, green onions, herbs, choys, chards and kales were being harvested. In Stanislaus County, broccoli continued to be harvested, and asparagus, lettuce, parsley, kale, and spinach were growing well. In San Joaquin County, asparagus was being prepared for harvest. Non-irrigated rangeland began to gradually improve after the late winter rains were welcome by anxious ranchers. Recovery of the non-irrigated rangeland from the unusually dry winter will require some time, especially for new growth and germination to be apparent in central and southern areas. Greening was reported across the state. Some cattle ranchers thinned herds in response to the scant rain and anticipated poor rangeland conditions for the season. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued. Sheep grazed older alfalfa fields. Lambing continued in some areas. Bees continued to be moved to stone fruit orchards. When weather conditions permitted, bees worked the almond, cherry and other stone fruit bloom. Bee colony strength examinations averaged 7 to 10 frames of bees in Tulare County. Temperatures in the southern San Joaquin Valley were favorable for milk production.

COLORADO: Colorado received below normal amounts of precipitation during March. Average temperatures across the State were generally above normal. Producers are taking advantage of the near to ideal conditions and are making great strides in field operations with the planting of small grain and early row crops. Currently, the mountain snowpack in the northern regions are 64% of average while the southern areas are 70% of average. Overall, mountain snowpack is currently 65% of average. The winter wheat growing areas experienced drier conditions during the month. Winter wheat remains in mostly fair to good condition. The soil moisture in these areas remains in mostly short supply.

DELAWARE: Warm temperatures during March helped stimulate plant growth. Light rainfall throughout the month provided adequate soil moisture levels. Pasture conditions were fair. Fertilizer was applied to small grains. Field activities included manure application and spring tillage in preparation for spring planting.

FLORIDA: Early March rainfall relieved dry conditions in northern Florida. Mid-month temperatures dipped below 30 degrees in some fruit, vegetable growing areas; damages light due to short cold temperature duration and protective measures taken. Late month, soil moisture mostly adequate except for counties from northwest Florida southwest to gulf. Throughout March, weather favorable for planting, harvesting vegetables, to remain on schedule. Snap beans, cabbage, celery, escarole, radishes, sweet corn, eggplant, bell peppers, radishes, squash, tomatoes, strawberries harvested. Light supply of blueberries produced after mid-month. Producers planting watermelons near month's end. Winter wheat crop appeared to have a good stand. Drought conditions throughout citrus region this month. Harvesting of early oranges (Navels and Hamlins), Honey tangerines, tangelos about complete. White and colored grapefruit, Valencia oranges harvest strong and steady. Widespread citrus bloom heavy with all varieties showing varying stages of bloom. Cultural practices included irrigation, young tree care, limited hedging and topping. Beginning of March, pasture condition Statewide varied from very poor to excellent, mostly poor to fair. Drought, cold, disease limited forage growth. Cattle condition varied from very poor to excellent, mostly fair. Hay, supplements were fed. Most pasture conditions in Panhandle, north poor to good. Summer (Bahia) pastures started to green due to warmer weather. Central areas, most pasture in poor to fair condition, cattle in very poor to excellent condition, mostly fair. Southwest area, most pasture in poor to fair condition, forage growth slowed by drought and cold. Pasture, cattle conditions continued to improve. Winter forage grew well as nighttime temperatures increased. Drought limited forage

growth, summer pasture not ready for grazing; hay and supplements fed. Seasonal cold also limited forage growth in all but southwest. Cattle condition mostly fair to good. Central area, most pasture in fair condition, hay fields fertilized. Cattle condition very poor to excellent, most fair to good condition.

GEORGIA: Climate warmed slightly from February. Precipitation estimates for the month ranged from an inch in most areas of the State up to 5 inches in the Southwestern coastal plain and the northwestern Appalachian areas of the State. The month's average temperature ranged from the upper 50s to the lower 70s. All of Georgia was warmer than normal for this time of year with some areas setting new record highs and as many as 5 consecutive days above 80°. Georgia is on track to have one of its warmest March months ever recorded. The warmer temperatures have allowed many crops to be planted well before usual planting dates and crop maturity is ahead of schedule. Rains have given Georgia some relief from the exceptional drought; however, extreme drought still covers over half of the State compared to 6% one year ago. Field activities include spring planting and routine care of poultry and livestock.

HAWAII: Drought conditions began to polarize during the first week of March. Land areas classified as having no drought present increased, as did those categorized in the severe, extreme, and exceptional drought stages. The leeward tip of Molokai entered into the highest (exceptional) drought rating category and comprised 1.15 percent of the total land area of the State of Hawaii. This was the first time this year that any land area has attained the exceptional drought rating. However despite the worsening drought conditions in many areas, the islands got a measurable amount of precipitation. On the island of Hawaii most windward areas became saturated while the leeward areas received a moderate amount of precipitation. The islands contained in Maui and Honolulu Counties experienced partly cloudy conditions with intermittent rainfall. The island of Kauai received ample precipitation with an average of 7.74 inches of rain across the island for the week. Very rainy conditions during the beginning of the second week in March did much to improve drought conditions Statewide. The Hanalei rain station on Kauai reported staggering daily totals of 12.52 and 11.48 inches on Monday and Tuesday respectively. The island of Oahu got quite a bit of rain as well, with an island wide average of 6.3 inches for the week. Maui County issued flash flood warnings in some areas due to the amount of precipitation received from storms. These storms also brought with them hail, wind gusts of up to 40 MPH, as well as thunder and lightning. The island of Hawaii missed out on much of the heavy precipitation, but scattered showers and mostly sunny skies combined to produce optimal growing conditions for crops. During the third week of March the heavy rains and storms subsided and the normal pattern of mostly sunny skies with scattered showers windward and isolated showers leeward resumed across the State. The U.S. Drought Monitor reported a decline of the land areas in all stages of drought classifications. Most notably was the leeward tip of Molokai which was downgraded from exceptional to extreme drought stage. This downgrading removed any land area in Hawaii from being classified in the exceptional stage. Overall, optimal growing conditions persisted throughout the week, and the recent rains replenished irrigation reservoir levels to aide in areas still experiencing drought conditions. The fourth week of March brought lots of sunshine and scattered showers across all Islands in the State. The U.S. Drought Monitor indicated only slight changes in the drought conditions from the previous week, primarily the southeastern tip of Oahu Island being downgraded from "abnormally dry" to "none". With this downgrading, the entire island of Oahu now has no areas which are identified as being in drought stages. Similarly, the entire island of Kauai also has no areas classified as having any drought present. Despite the small amount of precipitation received this week, State irrigation reservoirs continued to increase the amount of water in storage.

IDAHO: Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 9% short, 72% adequate, 18% surplus. Calving complete 69%, 71% 2011, 72% avg. Lambing complete 77%, 67% 2011, 69% avg. Hay and roughage supply 16% very short, 19% short, 55% adequate, 10% surplus. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 1% poor, 14% fair, 78% good, 7% excellent. Extension Educators have reported that the warmer weather though out March has brought on excellent growing conditions. Farmers are gearing up to go into the fields. Potato seeds are being shipped at a fast pace. Calving is over half done and livestock are in very good condition.

ILLINOIS: Topsoil moisture 1 % very short, 21 % short, 71 % adequate, and 7 % surplus. Subsoil moisture 3 % very short, 28 % short, 67 % adequate, and 2 % surplus. Corn 1 % planted. Oats 44 % planted. Winter wheat condition 1 % very poor, 2 % poor, 19 % fair, 66 % good, 12 % excellent. Warmer temperatures and below normal precipitation continued into March across most of the State.

Temperatures averaged 54.4 degrees, 14.7 degrees above normal. Total precipitation averaged 1.95 inches, 0.42 inches below normal. The warm temperatures, along with the low precipitation, have allowed many farmers the opportunity to get into their fields earlier than normal. Many farmers were busy prepping fields for planting and performing spring nitrogen applications.

INDIANA: The weather during March was very warm and drier than normal. Temperatures through the 25th of the month averaged 54.70 which is 15.10 above normal. The State received an average of 2.54 inches of precipitation which was 95 percent of normal. A tornado swept across some southern counties March 2nd damaging or destroying many homes and buildings. Farmers were very busy with spring tillage and anhydrous ammonia applications. A very small amount of corn and soybeans were planted, but the majority of producers were waiting to begin after the earliest planting dates allowed for crop insurance replant guarantees. Winter wheat had broken dormancy and was growing quickly. The majority of the winter wheat acreage was reported to be in good condition. Fruit and berry crops were blooming very early this year causing concern for growers as a frost could cause considerable damage. Calving and lambing continued on several livestock farms with very few problems reported. Early pasture growth had allowed many livestock producers to cut back on feeding of hay. Other activities included finishing income taxes, preparing planting equipment, spreading fertilizer and lime, clearing fence rows, repairing and installing drainage tile, hauling grain to market and tending to livestock.

IOWA: Topsoil moisture levels rated 14% very short, 35% short, 50% adequate, and 1% surplus. March has been a dry month for Iowa despite most of the State getting a small amount of rain the week of March 19. Alfalfa and oat seeding, disking, field leveling, and applying fertilizer have been the most common activities of late for farmers. With warmer than normal weather conditions, green pastures can be seen throughout the State.

KANSAS: Days suitable for fieldwork 18. Topsoil moisture 6% very short, 10% short, 60% adequate, 24% surplus. Subsoil moisture 8% very short, 23% short, 60% adequate, 9% surplus. Winter wheat jointed 36%, 11% 2011, 11% avg.; condition 2% very poor, 6% poor, 33% fair, 48% good, and 11% excellent; wind damage 84% none, 10% light, 5% moderate, 1% severe; insect infestation 91%, 7% light, 2% moderate; disease infestation, 90% none, 9% light, 1% moderate. Range and pasture condition 19% very poor, 21% poor, 33% fair, 26% good, 1% excellent. Feed grain supplies 8% very short, 18% short, 71% adequate, 3% surplus. Hay and forage supplies 21% very short, 28% short, 49% adequate, 2% surplus. Stock water supplies 7% very short, 14% short, 75% adequate, 4% surplus. Last week, Kansas producers throughout the State received ample amounts of precipitation coupled with unseasonably warm temperatures. All but 5 of the 52 stations reported rain totals of an inch or more with Columbus leading the State at 5.82 inches, followed by Pittsburg at 5.55 inches, and Parsons at 4.55 inches. Average temperatures last week were still warm for March and ranged from 3 to 15 degrees above normal as highs were predominantly in the 70's with the western districts reporting high temperatures mostly in the low 80's. Only 10 stations reported low temperatures at or below freezing, while most of the State saw low temperatures in the mid-30's to mid-40's. A year ago, topsoil moisture was rated as 17 percent very short, 21 percent short, 53 percent adequate and 9 percent surplus. Topsoil moisture supplies greatly improved for the western districts as the Southwest District reported 52 percent adequate to surplus. This is the first week since the beginning of August 2010 that topsoil moisture has been over 50 percent adequate to surplus in Southwest Kansas. Fieldwork was slowed by the wet weather, but some farmers were able to top-dress wheat, spray for weeds and disease, and prepare for spring planting. Wheat jointing is more than 2 weeks ahead of last year and the average. Last year at this time the wheat condition was considerably worse at 13 percent very poor, 22 percent poor, 34 percent fair, 27 percent good and 4 percent excellent. Wheat in the South Central District jumped from 24 percent jointed on March 18 to 70 percent jointed on Sunday to lead the State. The calm and wet weather provided ideal conditions for burning pasture. Producers continue to calve and prepare pasture for spring grazing.

KENTUCKY: Kentucky experienced two major severe storms and tornado outbreaks on the last day of February and during the first week of March causing death and destruction. The week ended with a winter storm which dumped several inches of snow across central and eastern Kentucky. Temperatures for the period averaged 50 degrees across the State which was 7 degrees warmer than normal and 6 degrees warmer than the previous period. High temperatures averaged from 64 in the West to 61 in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 40 degrees in the West to 38 degrees in the East. Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 1.36 inches Statewide which was 0.39

inches above normal and 140% of normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 1.00 inches, Central 1.47 inches, Bluegrass 1.24 inches and East 1.75 inches, which was -0.07, 0.45, 0.38 and 0.81 inches respectively from normal. The second week of March saw above normal temperatures and above normal rainfall. The week started very cold and snowy, but quickly transitioned to very mild temperatures. This was the fourth week straight with above normal temperatures and the second week in a row with above normal rainfall. Temperatures for the period averaged 48 degrees across the State which was 3 degrees warmer than normal and 2 degrees cooler than the previous period. High temperatures averaged from 62 in the West to 59 in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 37 degrees in the West to 35 degrees in the East. Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 1.48 inches Statewide which was 0.50 inches above normal and 151% of normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 1.88 inches, Central 1.64 inches, Bluegrass 1.00 inches and East 1.41 inches, which was 0.85, 0.61, 0.1 and 0.44 inches above normal. Temperatures soared across the Bluegrass during the third week of March as highs were mostly in the 70s and locations west and south exceeded 80 degrees. Rainfall was frequent but the west received slightly below normal rainfall for the week. This was the third week in a row with above normal rainfall and the fifth week straight with above normal temperatures. Temperatures for the period averaged 66 degrees across the State which was 20 degrees warmer than normal and 18 degrees warmer than the previous period. High temperatures averaged from 78 in the West to 75 in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 58 degrees in the West to 54 degrees in the East. Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 1.20 inches Statewide which was 0.19 inches above normal and 119% of normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 0.97 inches, Central 1.72 inches, Bluegrass 1.02 inches and East 1.09 inches, which was -0.09, 0.66, 0.10 and 0.10 inches respectively from normal. The fourth week in March can be described by above normal temperatures and below normal rainfall. The first half of the workweek was very mild and the last couple of days and the weekend experienced seasonal temperatures. Most locations received 3 to 5 days with temperatures in the low 80s. This was the first week with below normal rainfall in the past 4 weeks. Temperatures for the period averaged 66 degrees across the State which was 18 degrees warmer than normal and no change to the previous period. High temperatures averaged from 75 in the West to 77 in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 58 degrees in the West to 55 degrees in the East. Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 0.60 inches Statewide which was 0.44 inches below normal and 58% of normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 0.88 inches, Central 0.54 inches, Bluegrass 0.43 inches and East 0.57 inches, which was 0.23, 0.56, 0.51 and 0.44 inches below normal. Producers continue making planting decisions for the upcoming 2012 crop season. Costs of inputs are being weighed against anticipated selling prices. Tobacco growers without contracts are making decisions on whether to grow a crop this year. Farmers were busy performing routine equipment maintenance in preparation for the upcoming planting season. Everything is green in the State. Plants and fruit trees have advanced and are much further along than usual. According to UK Extension specialists, wheat in the west and central part of State has developed to the point where frost/freeze could cause damage.

LOUISIANA: The State averaged 8.73 inches of rain over the last four weeks, six inches above the State average. Corn, sorghum and rice have been planted in many areas with corn starting to emerge across the State. However, the significant rainfall at the latter part of the month has slowed down filed crop plantings. Wheat across the State has started to head. Producers continue spraying and harvesting strawberries. Vegetable producers have been busy preparing for spring and summer crops. Crawfish producers have reported an improvement in size of crawfish in their catches. Livestock producers were fertilizing pasture and feeding hay.

MARYLAND: Warm temperatures during March helped stimulate plant growth. Light rainfall throughout the month provided adequate soil moisture levels. Pasture conditions were mostly good and hay fields were green with early spring growth. Ground preparation for spring planting was underway, including manure application and tillage. Small grains received fertilizer applications. Apple and peach trees were in full bloom. Early vegetable crops were planted.

MICHIGAN: The precipitation for the four weeks ended March 25 varied from 0.46 inches to 2.37 inches in the Upper Peninsula and 1.10 inches to 5.34 inches in the Lower Peninsula. Temperatures were warmer than usual for the last 30 days, ranging from 14.5 to 18.8 degrees above normal across the State. A very warm March has led to early fieldwork for Michigan farmers. Wheat growth has been good in the warm temperatures. Planting of oats and sugarbeets was underway. Some fruit trees were in bloom; nearly a month early.

Winter wheat condition for the State was reported 17% excellent, 50% good, 25% fair, 6% poor, and 2% very poor.

MINNESOTA: Early spring-like weather prevailed in March. Statewide temperatures averaged 15.1 degrees above normal for the month. Temperatures ranged from 13.4 degrees above normal in the Northeast District to 17.7 degrees above normal in the Southeast District. Temperature extremes included a low of -14 degrees at International Falls and a high of 83 degrees at Marshall, Redwood Falls, and Winona Dam. Precipitation averaged from 0.46 inch below normal in the West Central District to 0.44 inch above normal in the North Central District. Greatest monthly precipitation of 2.01 inches was recorded in Forest Lake. An unusual mid-March influx of warm, moist air produced record-setting temperatures for many locations in Minnesota. During this warm stretch, the maximum temperature in the Twin Cities reached or exceeded 70 degrees on 6 days during the month, breaking the previous March record of 5 set in 1910. Other records broken in March include earliest ever 80 degrees at MSP and Rochester on March 17th; highest March temperature ever reported from International Falls (79 F on March 18th) and Kabetogama (77 F on March 20); highest minimum temperatures ever reported in March from nearly all climate stations in the state (with overnight lows in the 50s and 60s F); and highest dew points ever measured in March (many in the 60s F), according to the Minnesota State Climatology Office. As of March 20, the southeastern tip of the state was rated abnormally dry, while the rest of the state was rated as undergoing a moderate to severe drought by the U.S. Drought Monitor.

MISSISSIPPI: Soil moisture 0 percent very short, 0 percent short, 62 percent adequate and 38 percent surplus. Corn 25% planted, 9% emerged. Wheat 75% jointing, 22% heading. Wheat 1% very poor, 7% poor, 28% fair, 51% good, 13% excellent. Watermelons 4% planted. Blueberries 0% very poor, 1% poor, 9% fair, 30% good, 60% excellent. Cattle 1% very poor, 5% poor, 41% fair, 45% good, 8% excellent. Pasture 1% very poor, 10% poor, 20% fair, 56% good, 13% excellent.

MISSOURI: Temperatures were 9 to 13 degrees above average. Precipitation 3.81 inches, 0.33 of an inch above average. The southwest district received 4.56 inches with flash flooding occurring in some areas. Topsoil moisture supply 1% very short, 5% short, 69% adequate, 25% surplus. Subsoil moisture supply 2% very short, 19% short, 73% adequate, 6% surplus. Ground worked spring tillage 44%, 22 days ahead of last year. Corn planted 2%, present in all districts. Winter wheat condition 3% poor, 30% fair, 50% good, 17% excellent. Supply of hay and other roughages 3% very short, 13% short, 76% adequate, 8% surplus. Pasture condition 6% poor, 33% fair, 51% good, and 10% excellent. Grass growth is several weeks ahead of normal due to prolonged above average temperatures and adequate rainfall.

MONTANA: Topsoil moisture 6% very short, 0% last year; 33% short, 3% last year; 57% adequate, 68% last year; 4% surplus, 29% last year. Subsoil moisture 7% very short, 1% last year; 36% short, 8% last year; 50% adequate, 80% last year; 7% surplus, 11% last year. Winter wheat condition 3% very poor, 0% last year; 12% poor, 3% last year; 57% fair, 33% last year; 25% good, 60% last year; 3% excellent, 4% last year. Winter wheat – wind damage 48% none, 69% last year; 25% light, 29% last year; 24% moderate, 1% last year; 3% heavy, 1% last year. Winter wheat – freeze and drought damaged 60% none, 71% last year; 31% light, 26% last year; 8% moderate, 3% last year; 1% heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover 59% very poor, 8% last year; 33% poor, 29% last year; 6% fair, 26% last year; 2% good, 36% last year; 0% excellent, 1% last year. Winter Wheat – spring stages 62% still dormant, 92% last year; 28% greening, 8% last year; 10% green & growing, 0% last year. Livestock grazing 79% open, 18% last year; 6% difficult, 33% last year; 15% closed, 49% last year. Cattle and calves receiving supplemental feed 92%, 95% last year. Sheep and lambs receiving supplemental feed 90%, 92% last year. Calving complete 41%; 44% last year. Lambing complete 24%; 31% last year.

NEBRASKA: Wheat conditions rated 1% very poor, 3 poor, 25 fair, 64 good, 7 excellent, well above year ago levels. Hay and forage supplies rated 1% very short, 5 short, 88 adequate, and 6 excellent. Cattle and Calves condition rated 0% very poor, 0 poor, 7 fair, 77 good and 16 excellent. Calf losses 27% below average, 72 average, and 1 above average. Cows Calved 60%. To date for the month of March 2012, temperatures averaged 12 degrees above normal with highs recorded in the 80's while lows were mainly in the upper 20's and 30's. The second week saw temperatures spike to over 20 degrees above normal across the State. Precipitation was limited until the third week of March when amounts of an inch or more fell in Southeastern counties. However, little or no rain was recorded in Panhandle counties and for most of the State, precipitation for the month was below

normal. Winds dried soils leaving topsoil moisture short or very short in about half the State. Compared to normal, driest conditions were recorded in Northeastern counties. During the last week of the month, topsoil soil temperatures ranged from 50 to 57 degrees. Soils across much of the eastern third were above 55 degrees needed for germination of corn, however only isolated fields had been planted. Marketing grain, preparation for spring planting and livestock care were the main activities during the month.

NEVADA: Low pressure systems brought rain and snow to the State during March. Temperatures ranged from 0.3 degrees below normal to 2.2 degrees above normal. Las Vegas recorded the monthly high at 83 degrees. Eureka recorded the lowest temperature of the month at 2 degrees. Elko recorded the most precipitation with 1.32 inches. All weather stations recorded some precipitation. Supplemental feeding of range livestock continued. Other farm and ranch activities included equipment maintenance, spring calving, fence repairs, crop and livestock marketing.

NEW ENGLAND: The unusually warm March brought monthly average temperatures ranging from 6 to 15 degrees above normal throughout New England. The month was marked by a series of record-breaking heat waves. Almost all of New England, outside of northernmost latitudes, experienced one snowstorm in March. Precipitation in the form of rain was also minimal, ranging from 0.3 to 2.0 inches throughout New England. The first week began with a major snowstorm, directly followed by a rainstorm mixing with snow. Many areas of New England reported more than half a foot of snow and over an inch of liquid precipitation. Rainfall was light and infrequent after these storms. The second week began cool and sunny with high temperatures mainly in the 20s and 30s but warmed up rapidly as the first heat wave of the month impacted the region. The warmest weather was reported on March 8, with record-breaking daytime temperatures generally in the 60s. The second heat wave hit at the beginning of the third week, with record-breaking temperatures mainly in the 60s and 70s. Northern Maine reported significant snowfall of over 10 inches once temperatures returned to normal levels. The third and most significant heat wave of March impacted New England by the end of the third week and persisted for most of the fourth week. Temperatures in the 70s and 80s broke records by as much as 23 degrees and were the highest temperatures ever recorded for the month in many northern New England locations. Temperatures returned to normal levels by week's end. Maple syrup production suffered due to persistently warm temperatures during the month, causing maple trees to begin budding. Many sugar producers decided to pull their taps due to this issue. Farm activities included nursery/greenhouse work, tending livestock, and preparing for the spring planting season.

NEW JERSEY: Temperatures were much above normal for the majority of March in most localities. High and low temperatures ranged from the high-70s to the low-20s. There were measurable amounts of precipitation in all districts. Farmers continued field preparations for spring crops. Other activities included planting early corn, pruning fruit trees, repairing machinery, and greenhouse work.

NEW MEXICO: Early-month rain and snow in the Northern portions of the State. Temperatures were below normal Statewide. Wild weather over portions of New Mexico occurred mid-month. An upper low pressure circulation centered over northern New Mexico combined with a strong cold front that brought strong winds with blowing dust and accumulating snow to the State. Eastern wind gust peaked at 68 MPH at the Albuquerque sun port. Snow reports 6 inches at Sandia Park, Albuquerque Foothills 2 to 3 inches and 6.5 inches at the Red River Ski Area. Weather improved as the second half of the month progressed. Precipitation was at a minimum. Above normal to well above normal warm weather experienced throughout the State gave way to cooler temperatures with the arrival of a late-month storm system. The highest temperatures above normal were recorded in Tucumcari at 14 degrees, Clayton at 14 degrees and Raton at 11 degrees. As March ended, windy, cool weather came through the State providing some precipitation following very high winds and dust in some areas. As the low moved out, an upper level ridge began building over the lower Southwest with much dryer air and warmer temperatures as April neared.

NEW YORK: The entire State experienced unseasonably warm weather for March. Few storms and even less snow made it across the State. Temperatures varied widely for the month with record-breaking highs in the 80s and lows in the teens. Outside activities progressed rapidly under extremely mild weather. Spring plowing was off to an early start. The maple season was cut short as temperatures were not conducive to sap runs. Trees budded early to put an end to the season. Fruit producers were concerned that a frost could damage early blooming fruit trees. Major activities included caring for livestock, spreading manure, preparing machinery, and grading and packing potatoes, onions, apples and cabbage. Winter meetings and trade

shows were well attended.

NORTH CAROLINA: State-wide soil moisture levels were rated at 1% very short, 7% short, 71% adequate and 21% surplus. The State received mostly above normal precipitation and temperatures throughout the month of March. Warmer than usual temperatures and recent rainfall had the growing season a few weeks ahead of schedule, with many crops already being planted and small grains in mostly good to excellent condition.

NORTH DAKOTA: Almost no snow cover was reported on March 25. The approximate starting date for field work is April 2. Spring wheat 1% planted. Hay and forage supplies were 3% short, 81% adequate, 16% surplus. Grain and concentrate supply 5% short, 83% adequate, 12% surplus. Calving and lambing 41% complete and 54% complete, respectively. Shearing 76% complete. Cow condition 1% poor, 6% fair, 73% good, 20% excellent. Calf condition 7% fair, 74% good, 19% excellent. Sheep condition 7% fair, 69% good, 24% excellent. Lamb condition 7% fair, 70% good, 23% excellent. The percentage of feed obtained from pasture and range for cattle and sheep were 16% and 8%, respectively. Road conditions 98% open and 2% difficult. Nine percent were muddy and 91% were dry. Pastures and ranges 18% growing and 82% still dormant.

OHIO: The March 2012 average temperature was 52.5 degrees, 14.2 degrees above normal. Precipitation for the State averaged 2.40 inches, 0.68 inches above normal. Winter wheat producing counties reported the crop in fair-to-good condition. Much of the crop was planted late and acreage planted is down from operator planting intentions due to a wet fall. Some areas of winter wheat have been drowned out, which will affect amount harvested and yield. Livestock are in good to excellent condition. There are no widespread disease problems reported by producers. Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome has affected some hog operations in Ohio.

OKLAHOMA: Topsoil moisture 5% very short, 8% short, 64% adequate, 23% surplus. Subsoil moisture 16% very short, 28% short, 52% adequate, 4% surplus. Wheat condition 1% very poor, 5% poor, 19% fair, 56% good, 19% excellent; jointing 73%. Canola condition 1% very poor, 5% poor, 26% fair, 52% good, 16% excellent; blooming 69%. Rye condition 1% very poor, 2% poor, 17% fair, 62% good, 18% excellent; jointing 81%; headed 16%. Oats condition 0% very poor, 2% poor, 25% fair, 58% good, 15% excellent; planted 94% this week, emerged 74%, jointing 16%. Corn seedbed prepared 66%, planted 9%. Sorghum seedbed prepared 31%. Soybeans seedbed prepared 25%. Peanuts seedbed prepared 20%. Cotton seedbed prepared 45%. Livestock condition 4% very poor, 15% poor, 38% fair, 39% good, 4% excellent. Pasture and range condition 16% very poor, 25% poor, 35% fair, 21% good, 3% excellent. Several weeks of above average temperatures were felt throughout the State during March, with average temperatures in the 60s and average highs in the upper 70s. Scattered rain showers were received during the week of March 5-11, with the State averaging 1.34 inches. The showers improved the small grain conditions as well as soil moisture allowing producers to prepare seedbeds for spring planting. The above average temperatures and intermittent showers during March meant rapid growth for small grains and some recovery in pasture and range conditions. The week of March 19-25, heavy rains the first part of the week alleviated the drought conditions across most of the State, as the State averaged 3.13 inches of rain. Eastern Oklahoma received the most rain with flooding reported in some areas. Livestock prices for feeder steers less than 800 pounds averaged \$165 per cwt. Prices for heifers less than 800 pounds averaged \$148 per cwt. Livestock conditions were rated mostly in the fair to poor range.

OREGON: March brought average temperatures and above normal precipitation in the form of rain and snow. High temperatures ranged from 57 degrees in North Bend, up to 73 degrees in Medford and Roseburg. Low temperatures ranged from 32 degrees in Bandon, down to -1 degrees in Lakeview. The average temperature across the State was 40.8 degrees. Thirty-six of the forty-two stations reported above normal precipitation. Detroit Lake again reported the most precipitation with 14.78 inches, five inches more than February. Average total snowfall across the State was about 5 inches higher than in February. Lake County was around 73 percent of normal for the water year, up 17 percent from last month. Irrigation reservoir storage was 106% of normal, but there were still some concerns for producers who rely on snowpack for their irrigation water. Snow on the Willamette Valley floor and heavy snow in the Coast Range caused the highest flood this year in Washington County. Fall wheat and grass for seed were fertilized before flooding occurred. There has been an overabundance of geese in fields. Umatilla County reported that spring planting is underway, and fall planted crops are growing well. More moisture is still needed for fallow ground intended to be planted for 2013 wheat. Canal irrigation began in some parts of the County the last week of the month. There have not been any reports of winter wheat damage due

to the lack of snow coverage this year. There will be early and late sugar beets and onions in Malheur County due to warm and dry conditions early in the month and then planting being disrupted by mid-month rains. There was some damage to fruit and nut trees in Lane County due to a wet, heavy snow later in the month. Flowering prunes were hit pretty hard along with branch damage to hazelnut, plum, and peach trees. Some rivers are near flood stage in the County as well. There were many other fruits that had expanding buds, getting close to blossom. Beef producers were wrapping up calving, and were beginning to brand calves in preparation to send them out onto grass and government allotments during the next few weeks. There has been some concern about livestock water, but the recent storms full of moisture have helped the supply, and also increased pasture growth.

PENNSYLVANIA: Warm temperatures arrived early this year, but threat of a frost remained in the forecast. Fruit trees were starting to bloom. Principal farm activities were applying fertilizer, spreading manure, and plowing. Many farmers had started seeding alfalfa as well as planting oats and spring barley. Some farmers had been observed planting corn. Weather for the month of March was warmer than normal, with less than average rainfall. This allowed for early field activities. The Harrisburg area during March received no ice or snow. The average high temperature was 62.3 degrees and the average low was 40.9 degrees. March 23rd was the warmest day of the month, with a high of 79 degrees. The lowest temperature of the month was 24 degrees, which happened on March 6th. The average temperature for the month was 51.6 degrees, which is 10.9 degrees above normal.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Unseasonably warm temperatures and heavy rainfall was observed for much of South Carolina during the first week of March. Topsoil moisture was mostly adequate for the week. However, subsoil moisture and irrigation ponds still needed to be replenished due to a dry winter season. Soil moisture conditions were listed as 5% very short, 24% short, 66% adequate and 5% surplus. With the week's persistent rain showers, there were 4.8 days suitable for fieldwork. The State average temperature for the period was nine degrees above normal. The State average rainfall for the week was 2.4 inches. A lack of rainfall, coupled with strong winds, dried excess surface water from the previous week and allowed many South Carolina farmers to get back in the field for planting preparations by Monday, March 12th. Some locations, particularly the UpState, experienced some frost on Monday and Tuesday. However, very little freeze damage was reported. Soil moisture conditions were 1% very short, 26% short, 72% adequate and 1% surplus. With drier conditions, there were 5.9 days suitable for fieldwork. The State average temperature for the week was two degrees above normal. The State average rainfall for the period was 0.1 inches. Some precipitation was observed for the week ending March 18th, 2012, but mostly dry conditions allowed many farmers to begin planting or continue field preparations. Soil moisture conditions were 1% very short, 27% short, 71% adequate and 1% surplus. There were 6.4 days that were suitable for fieldwork. The State average temperature for the period was a balmy thirteen degrees above normal. The State average rainfall for the week was 0.3 inches. Record high temperatures were present during the week ending March 25th, 2012. Many areas reached 85 degrees on Monday, leading to scattered storms for the rest of the week. Some hail was observed in stronger thunderstorms but little damage was reported. Scattered showers and high temperatures allowed plantings to continue. Soil moisture conditions were 2% very short, 26% short, 69% adequate and 3% surplus. The State average temperature for the period was ten degrees above normal. There were 6 days that were suitable for fieldwork. The State average rainfall was measured at 0.9 inches.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Topsoil moisture 7% very short, 43% short, 48% adequate, 2% surplus. Subsoil moisture 4% very short, 40% short, 55% adequate, 1% surplus. Winter wheat 3% very poor, 16% poor, 32% fair, 41% good, 8% excellent. Feed supplies 1% short, 89% adequate, 10% surplus. Stock water supplies 7% short, 91% adequate, 2% surplus. Accessible livestock feed supplies 100% readily. Accessible stock water supplies 98% readily, 2% difficult. Range and pasture 1% very poor, 8% poor, 41% fair, 43% good, 7% excellent. Cattle death losses 42% below normal, 57% normal, 1% above normal. Calf deaths 36% below average, 63% average, 1% above average. Cattle moved to pasture 3% complete. Calving 35% complete. Cattle condition 6% fair, 75% good, 19% excellent. Sheep & lamb deaths 39% below average, 61% average. Lambing 40% complete. Sheep condition 4% fair, 63% good, 33% excellent. Road conditions--township 99% open, 1% difficult. Road conditions--county 100% open. Early spring like weather helped farmers get into the fields to prepare for the upcoming planting season, with some farmers starting planting of small grains in some areas of the state. Precipitation is still desired across the state; as some areas are starting to become dry with the wind and warm temperatures.

TENNESSEE: Topsoil moisture 3% short, 78% adequate and 19% surplus. Winter Wheat 1% poor, 14% fair, 64% good and 21% excellent. Range and Pasture Conditions 1% very poor, 3% poor, 25% fair, 58% good, and 13% excellent. Hay stocks 6% very short, 15% short, 69% adequate, and 10% surplus. Cattle 3% poor, 21% fair, 64% good and 12% excellent. Spring like weather came early with temperatures well near normal across the entire State throughout the month of March. Rainfall was above normal for most of Tennessee. Farmers busy fertilizing pastures, applying herbicides, top-dressing wheat, and planting some corn. Most crops, especially fruits and nuts, seem to be progressing well ahead of the normal pace. Growers are very concerned about the potential of a late spring freeze. Spring calving is well underway.

TEXAS: Considerable rainfall during March, with monthly totals ranging from 0.01 inch to 8 inches. However, in West Texas and the High Plains dry, windy conditions persisted, causing problems with blowing dust and soil erosion. Precipitation and warm temperatures allowed small grains to progress well in most areas, although in parts of the Panhandle, wheat and oats were stressed due to lack of moisture. Irrigation was active in these areas. Toward the end of March, some producers reported problems with rust, powdery mildew, and armyworms in winter wheat. Corn and sorghum planting made good progress during the month. Some planting delays occurred in the Blacklands and South Texas due to rainy weather and wet field conditions. Cotton land preparation continued throughout the month with fields being furrowed, pre-watered and treated with pre-plant chemicals. Cotton planting had begun by mid-month. Soybean and sunflower preparations were also underway. Overall, rain and warm temperatures created favorable growing conditions for row crops across much of the State. Throughout March, fruit trees from the High Plains to East Texas were in bloom. Pecan trees were budding by the end of the month and some pecan producers were beginning to fertilize trees with nitrogen. Vegetable growers in North and East Texas had prepared fields and were planting spring vegetables by the end of the month. Spinach, onions, cabbage, and melons made good progress in South Texas and the Lower Valley. Citrus, vegetable, and sugarcane harvests were underway in the Lower Valley. In the Trans-Pecos, chili planting was active and onions were beginning bulb formation by the end of March. Range and pastureland around much of the State improved markedly with precipitation in March. Rainfall aided the growth of cool and warm season grasses and some grasses were being cut for hay. Improved pastures also allowed producers to reduce supplemental feeding. However, many pastures were still recovering from overgrazing and producers used them cautiously. Other issues that producers dealt with in March were weed growth, cattle bloat due to clover growth, and feral hog damage to pastures and hayfields. The spring calving, lambing, and kidding season were in full swing throughout the month. Rainfall improved stream and pond levels throughout most of the State. However, many stock tanks in South Texas and the Lower Valley remained low at the end of the month.

UTAH: In the northern part of Utah, farmers are beginning to worry about the lack of moisture. Snowpack in the west part of the State is below normal which will limit irrigation water for areas that rely on stream flow for irrigation. Dry conditions will also affect pasture and grazing land. Last year's excessive snowfall in the southern region of the State made it extremely difficult for livestock producers to access their grazing cattle. Lighter snowfall in Utah this year has made it easier for livestock producers to provide calving assistance and transport additional feed to their grazing cattle. Some counties in the northern region have reported water supply looks good and the weather is great. The general condition in the central and southern parts of the State remains dry. Box Elder County livestock producers have reported that calving is going well with no major problems. Sheep producers are currently making arrangements to shear flocks and herds. Prices are still very good for cattle, lambs, and wool. Garfield and Kane Counties are on the tail end of calving. Few calves have been lost due to disease or scours this season because of mild temperatures. In Utah County this past week producers have been in the fields attributable to good weather. Livestock producers are busy calving and lambing. The weather has been great for calving and lambing in Duchesne County and there have been very few death losses and a low reporting of sickness in newborns. The higher prices are also encouraging a lot of producers to expand if they can. Morgan County representative reported the weather conditions look good for crops and livestock. Farmers in Box Elder County began field work. Farmers have planted onions and some small grains. Fertilizers were added last week. Most of the fall grain in the Bear River Valley looks very good because of warmer temperatures. Dry land winter wheat is also beginning to break dormancy and most farmers reported that it made it through the winter in good shape. Fertilization and spring tillage are progressing nicely in Weber County. Fall grain is being

treated for weeds. Some cutworm damage occurred to Fall planted alfalfa. In Emery and Carbon Counties farmers are starting to plow in preparation for spring planting. Utah County reported the storms have helped dry land crops and fall planted grains. Fruit growers, on the other hand, are starting to worry about freezing temperatures. Duchesne County farmers are worried about the soil not having much moisture. Warm temperatures have allowed producers to get their crops planted much earlier this year and most spring grain and field work are under way.

VIRGINIA: Topsoil moisture 2% very short, 7% short, 76% adequate, 15% Surplus. Subsoil moisture 7% short, 89% adequate, 4% surplus. Beef Cattle Forage Obtained from Pastures 34%. Milk Cow Forage Obtained from Pastures 14%. Sheep Forage Obtained from Pastures 46%. Livestock 3% poor, 23% fair, 61% good, 13% excellent. Small grain and winter grazing crops 1% poor, 14% fair, 63% good, 22% excellent. Exceptionally warm weather has graced Virginia throughout the month with temperatures in many areas in the 70's to 80's during the day and down in the 50's at night. Some areas need more moisture but many areas have received steady rain over the past few weeks. Small grains are well ahead of schedule but there is a fear of another heavy frost. Many growers are preparing their fields to plant corn. Hay consumption by livestock has been down in a few areas since the pastures are so strong. Strawberry growers are seeing an early bloom and set due to the warm weather. Growers are providing maintenance on their equipment and preparing their fields for the spring crops.

WASHINGTON: March produced enough moisture for most producers in western counties to be oversaturated, in Lincoln and Adams County to remain under saturated, and in the rest of the counties happy with the moisture profile going into spring. In Yakima County, mild temperatures allowed vegetable and hop growers to prepare fields for the growing season. Fruit growers d most of the orchards and vineyards pruned during the dormant season. Delayed dormant sprays were applied to manage overwintering insect pests and reduce the incidence of disease. Most fruit trees were experiencing bud swell with apricots showing bloom already. In Adams County, spring wheat seeding was started and with favorable weather could be completed in the next week. Winter wheat stands were looking good in Grant County. Fresh peas were also being seeded down in the Mattawa area. There was a lot of early spring field work such as disking corn stalks, plowing, and spraying of chemicals being done in Grant County. Cattle producers continued calving under mixed conditions in Stevens County without major problems. Christmas tree growers welcomed the cool temperatures and wet conditions as they finished up planting new fields in Thurston County. Commercial raspberry growers took advantage of several days with no rain to finish pruning and tying canes. Commercial blueberry growers were applying copper sulfate fungicide sprays. Dairy producers were pumping manure lagoons for application on forage fields.

WEST VIRGINIA: Topsoil moisture was 3% short, 87% adequate

and 10% surplus compared to 3% short, 78% adequate, and 19% surplus last year. Hay and roughage supplies were 3% short, 78% adequate, and 19% surplus compared with 3% very short, 23% short, 62% adequate, and 12% surplus last year. Feed grain supplies were 2% short and 98% adequate compared with 4% very short, 13% short, and 83% adequate last year. Winter wheat conditions were 8% fair and 92% good. Cattle and calves were 2% poor, 18% fair, 75% good, and 5% excellent. Calving was 69% complete, compared with 70% last year. Sheep and lambs were 1% poor, 10% fair, 86% good, and 3% excellent. Lambing was 75% complete, compared to 73% last year. The month of March has been mild and unseasonably warm. The warm weather has grass at peak growth and fruit trees in full bloom. Farming activities included turning livestock out on pasture, preparing fields for planting, feeding hay, repairing fences, repairing livestock feeding areas, calving, and lambing.

WISCONSIN: Temperatures ranged from 16.0 to 18.5 degrees above normal. Precipitation ranged from 0.76 inches in La Crosse (0.80 inches below normal) to 2.81 inches in Milwaukee (1.09 inches above normal). Snowfall totals ranged from 0.50 inches in Eau Claire and La Crosse to 8.10 inches in Green Bay. Though the whole State received snow this month, unseasonably high temperatures melted snow cover soon after it fell.

WYOMING: Topsoil moisture 7% very short, 36% short, 57% adequate. Subsoil moisture 10% very short, 33% short, 57% adequate. Average depth of snow cover 0.4 inches. Barley planted 34%. Wheat condition 29% fair, 71% good. Winter wheat wind damage 49% none, 38% light, 13% moderate. Winter wheat freeze damage 89% none, 11% light. Spring calves born 29%. Farm flock ewes lambing 34%. Farm flock sheep shorn 29%. Range flock ewes lambing 2%. Range flock sheep shorn 6%. Calf losses 42% light, 58% normal. Lamb losses 49% light, 51% normal. Cattle condition 5% fair, 94% good 1% excellent. Calves condition 1% fair, 98% good, 1% excellent. Sheep condition 8% fair, 92% good. Lamb condition 5% fair, 95% good. Range and pasture condition 7% very poor, 3% poor, 39% fair, 51% good. Spring grazing prospects 15% poor, 46% fair, 38% good, 1% excellent. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 10% short, 84% adequate, 5% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 3% very short, 6% short, 90% adequate, 1% surplus. Warm and dry conditions across State. Wyoming has experience above normal temperatures and below normal moisture for most of March. Weston County has experienced above normal temperatures and the last measureable moisture was received in late February. Producers are experiencing very dusty conditions. Fire danger is high. Some green up has occurred due to warm temperatures. Uinta County reports snowpack below 100% and a need for moisture. Albany County reports unseasonably warm and dry. Open winter conditions has put the livestock in good condition and left hay supplies in good shape. Concern is for summer grazing conditions.