

Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin State Stories

Released April 1, 2003, 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 Terry P. O'Connor at (202) 720-4288, office hours 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET.

ALABAMA: Rains, warm weather greened pastures, hayfields. Farmers across the state performed cover-crop burn-down for minimum till cotton planting. Conditions were favorable for land preparation in areas where rain was not a factor. Activities: General care of livestock, poultry, catfish.

ALASKA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE

ARIZONA: Temperatures for most of the state were above average for the week. Alfalfa conditions ranged from fair to mostly good. Sheep continued to graze on alfalfa fields for winter pasture. Small Grains emergence is virtually completed, while heading is underway. Range and Pasture conditions have improved due to the recent precipitation. There were 17 of the 17 reporting stations above normal percentage levels.

ARKANSAS: The first days of March continued with wintery weather. Snow and ice covered most of the northern two thirds of the state. After a brief warmup period another arctic cold front dropped temperatures back below normal around the 10th of the month. At that time precipitation for the year had dropped below normal despite all of the snow in February. Mid-month temperatures were well below normal with scattered rains throughout most of the state. The latter part of the month again saw arctic air move in and keep temperatures several degrees below normal. Most of the state, except for the southwestern portion of the state, also had a minimum of half an inch of rain. The last weekend of the month had a minor cold front move across the state lowering the temperatures once again after several days of warm sunshine. Producers were able to get into the fields for planting. Corn planting is in full swing, and some producers began planting rice. Wheat fields and pastures are beginning to be fertilized and have herbicide applied. Ground is being prepared for sorghum, soybean, cotton planting. Cattle are reported as being in good condition with some producers reported working cattle for vaccination purposes.

CALIFORNIA: At the beginning of March, rainfall improved soil moisture for many crops. Fields of wheat, oats, barley, winter forage were exhibiting good growth due to the greater soil moisture, mild weather that followed the early rains. However, wet conditions slowed field work in many areas. Preparations for planting of corn, cotton were largely completed by early March, growers awaited proper conditions for planting to begin. Fields of alfalfa hay, seed thrived under good growing conditions. Burning of rice stubble fields continued into mid-March in a few areas. Pre-plant herbicide treatment of rice fields got underway later in the month. Sweet potato hotbed fumigation was completed, planting began. By mid-March, the hotbeds began to emerge. Cool temperatures caused freeze damage in some tree fruit orchards early in the month. Fruit trees continued to bloom through the first half of March. By the end of the month, developing fruit were visible in many early variety orchards. Irrigation, cultivation, herbicide applications continued. Ground preparation and planting of new tree fruit orchards continued. Swelling buds, newly opened green shoots were present in many grape vineyards by mid-March. Growers irrigated, cultivated, applied disease, insect control treatments to their vineyards. Strawberry plants in the Central Valley bloomed and by the end of the month were showing a heavy fruit set. Citrus groves were irrigated, pruned, treated for weed control. Open flowers were evident in many orange orchards in late March. Lemon

harvesting was winding down in most desert areas by early March. Navel orange harvesting continued, but packouts decreased as crop quality diminished. Tangelos, mandarins, grapefruit were also picked, packed. Almond tree bloom continued through early March. By mid-month, new leaves began to appear. Blossoms were sprayed to protect them from disease, insects. Early variety walnut trees were leafing out, developing flower clusters in late March. Walnut, almond trees were treated with herbicides. Walnut trees were treated with blight spray. Ground preparation, planting continued in orchards that had previously undergone removal. Wet conditions slowed vegetable harvesting in southern areas early in the month. Ground preparation, planting of tomatoes, sweet corn, melons, squash, cucumbers, other warm season vegetables continued. Previously planted fields of fresh, processing tomatoes showed good growth, were irrigated, treated to control insects, disease. Fields of onions, garlic exhibited vigorous growth. Hot caps, plastic row covers were placed in many summer vegetable fields. By the end of the month, the vegetables growing under the hot caps, row covers were making good progress. Broccoli, lettuce, asparagus were harvested in the San Joaquin Valley. Artichoke harvesting was underway in late March. The following vegetables were also harvested: bok choy, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cilantro, green onions, mustard greens, parsley, radicchio, radishes, spinach. Periodic rainfall, generally mild temperatures kept most pastures in good condition throughout the State. Livestock were in good condition. Ranchers cut back on supplemental feeding as the availability of new vegetation increased. Cattle weight gain was reported to be good in some areas. Cattle, sheep grazed on foothill rangeland, fallow fields. Sheep grazed on alfalfa fields in the Central Valley. Later in the month, many sheep were removed from alfalfa fields in preparation for the start of harvesting. Sheep shearing was in full swing in the southern San Joaquin Valley in late March. Bees were active in many stone fruit orchards early in the month. By the end of the month, some hives were being moved to orange orchards.

COLORADO: Temperatures for March started the month below average, then finished out the month on average to slightly above average. Late March snowstorms dumped over 3 feet of snow along the Front Range which had a moisture equivalent of about 3.0 to 4.0 inches. The Eastern Plains also received some welcome moisture in the form of rain with totals up to an inch in some areas. The high country saw snow totals of up to 7 feet. The late season snow dramatically improved snowpack ratings to 95% of normal statewide. Although ample moisture fell nearly statewide, drought conditions remain a serious concern for the state. Winter wheat condition has improved to mostly good with the recent moisture. Lambing, calving activities progressed under mostly good conditions. Activities: Center around care and feeding of livestock, planting spring crops.

DELAWARE: The area received a large amount of snow during the month of February. This resulted in some damage to barns, sheds, poultry houses. Pastures, hay are in short supply. Small grains are in good condition due to the snow, rain. Livestock are in fair condition. Activities: Snow removal, repairing damaged barns, machine buildings, feeding livestock, working on farm equipment.

FLORIDA: During March 2003 wetter weather, mostly warmer temperatures spurred the growth of small grains, pastures in the Panhandle and northern counties with oats forage, damaged by a virus,

recovering well. Central, southwestern grazing remained mostly poor due to drier weather while, Statewide, pastures were only in fair condition. The ample rains replenished stock ponds but flooded some pastures, delayed the preparation of fields for corn, soybean, cotton, peanut planting in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Some pine seedlings in the Big Bend region were lost to flooding during the month. The wet conditions delayed the application of fertilizers to some ryegrass, small grain forage. Soggy soils slowed potato digging, caused some rot in some fields with most acreage adequately draining off the excess moisture. The wet fields slowed the preparation of land for watermelon, other vegetable planting in the Panhandle, northern Peninsula. Cabbage cutting neared the usual seasonal peak in mid March as growers met the increased demand for the St. Patrick's Day holiday. Drier conditions for most of the month around Palmetto-Ruskin, Immokalee, Homestead permitted vegetable planting, harvesting to proceed with few delays. Strawberry picking slowed about mid month as supplies from other states increased. Some snap bean growers stopped picking due to a poor market. The March storms reduced the quality, yield prospects of some vegetables. Sugarcane harvesting remained active in the Everglades throughout the month with the rains causing only minor delays. The warmer temperatures helped flush a lot of new growth on citrus trees of all ages with most groves reaching full open bloom around mid month. Most young citrus trees lost bloom petals by mid March. The bloom cycle neared the end in late March with most trees showing a lot of petal drop except for a few older grapefruit and tangerine trees that still had significant amounts of open bloom. Activities: Rotating irrigation to provide ample moisture during the bloom cycle; increased harvesting of Valencias, decreased picking of Temples, Honey tangerines as supplies dwindled; some picking of grapefruit; mowing, chopping, disking of cover crops to reduce the fire danger; pushing, burning of dead trees, especially those with sour orange root stock; planting of resets; application of postbloom nutritional sprays; hedging; topping. Temperatures plunged well below normal at the end of the month with Panhandle producers assessing any crop damage that the near freezing weather caused.

GEORGIA: Topsoil moisture was adequate to surplus during the month of March. Overall, rainfall was well above normal for the month. Temperatures were near normal during March, although the last weekend of the month was much colder than normal. Peaches began to bloom, the overall condition was good. Planting of corn was delayed due to heavy rains in south state. Top dressing of rye neared completion. Tobacco conditions were mostly good; limited transplanting was reported. Harvest of carrots continued. Fertilizing, spraying for weeds in pastures was reported. Small grain condition was good. Land preparation for spring planting has been slowed due to wet conditions. Livestock producers continue to feed hay to animals.

HAWAII: DATA NOT AVAILABLE

IDAHO: Days suitable for fieldwork 4.0. Topsoil 8% very short, 23% short, 63% adequate, 6% surplus. Irrigation Water Supply is 6% very poor, 31% poor, 40% fair, and 23% good. March spring rain has been well received. Idaho growers are eager to capitalize on good soil moisture and seedbed conditions for a successful spring planting season. Hay, Roughage Supply is 1% very short, 2% short, 76% adequate, 21% surplus. Lambing is 82% complete. Calving is 83% complete. Sugarbeets Planted 25%, 2% 2002, 8% avg. Oats Planted 23%, 0% 2002, 2% avg. Onions Planted 68%, 12% 2002, 29% avg. Dry Peas Planted 5%, 0% 2002, 4% avg. Activities: Preparing taxes, machine maintenance, marketing, feeding livestock, planting spring wheat, barley, oats, sugarbeets, onions, dry peas

ILLINOIS: As of March 30, Topsoil 7% very short, 29% short, 53% adequate, 11% surplus. Farmers have begun seeding oats in the north, anhydrous ammonia was being applied recently in central state. Oat seeding advanced to 9% complete as of March 30, compared to 12% last year, the average of 22%. Average temperature departure from normal for the month was plus or minus one and one-half degrees. Precipitation for the month ranged from one, one-half inches to nearly three inches. In the Southwest, Southeast Districts, more than half of the topsoil moisture is rated surplus. Farmers in this area have begun spreading nitrogen on their wheat crop with four wheelers as the topsoil is very saturated. Warmer weather, rain showers during the month have combined to help the wheat crop begin its spring "green up". Activities:

Finalizing farm program signup, preparing income taxes, hauling grain, spreading fertilizers, chemicals, planting peas, potatoes, preparing equipment for spring field work.

INDIANA: Dry subsoil conditions exist in most of the northern regions of the state. Warmer weather arrived the last week of March. Temperatures averaged 1.4° above normal for the state during the month. Cooler than normal weather existed in the northern regions. Precipitation averaged about 2.44 inches for March. This was 0.82 inches below normal. Fieldwork has been minimal thus far this year. Some tillage has taken place on some of the well drained lighter type soils. Farmers continued to prepare reports for the FSA farm program, sign into the DCP program. Some fertilizer, pre-plant anhydrous ammonia was applied on fields where soils were dry enough to support heavy equipment. Activities: Hauling manure, moving grain to market, cleaning out ditches, fence rows. Winter wheat is in mostly good condition. Wheat is greening up in the central, northern areas, growing in the south. Some top dressing was accomplished during the month. Livestock are in mostly good condition. Farm ponds remain low, most areas. Hay supplies are in short supply. Hay prices remain high. Good, quality hay difficult to find. Pastures improving. Lambing, calving continued. Activities: Repairing equipment, attending meetings, FSA offices, purchasing seed, fertilizer, soil testing, seeding clover, tiling fields, spreading lime, taking care of livestock.

IOWA: It appears that some snow, rain slightly improved soil moisture availability as 42% of the state was reported as being adequately supplied. State livestock producers had a great month for calving due to March's mild temperatures, relatively dry conditions. This level increased from 37% of the state being reported as adequate at the end of February. On average, there was no snow cover across area at the end of March, compared to 1 inch last month, no snow cover last year at this time. The average depth of frost penetration for the state was 4 inches, compared to 17 inches last month, 1 inch at the same time last year. Movement of grain for the state was 16% none, 37% light, 40% moderate, 7% heavy. Hog, pig losses in March were 18% below avg.; 73% avg.; 9% above avg. Cattle, calf losses were 28% below avg.; 70% avg.; 2% above avg.

KANSAS: Widespread precipitation improved topsoil moisture Statewide in March, but subsoil moisture in Western, North Central Kansas remains quite low. Topsoil 6% very short, 22% short, 67% adequate, 5% surplus. Subsoil 30% very short, 35% short, 35% adequate. Wheat 4% very poor, 14% poor, 38% fair, 37% good, 7% excellent. Winterkill of wheat is 4%. Wheat jointed is 15%. Most wheat looks pretty good to date, but considerable precipitation will be needed to sustain wheat in our drier areas. Range, pasture feeds 21% very poor, 30% poor, 34% fair, 14% good, 1% excellent. Stockwater supplies 20% very short, 30% short, 50% adequate. Hay, forage supplies 13% very short, 39% short, 47% adequate, 1% surplus. Feed grain supplies are 5% very short, 20% short, 73% adequate, 2% surplus. Calving is winding down, preparation for corn planting is underway.

KENTUCKY: Soil moisture was rated adequate statewide. March went out like a lion as two storm systems produced periods of showers, thunderstorms on two days. The second of the two systems resulted in temperature fluctuations rarely seen as the strength of it's cold front was highlighted by a 30° fluctuation of highs on the weekend. Statewide 3 to 5 days had temperatures at or above 70° earlier in the week. Temperatures hovered near freezing at the weeks end, many parts of northern, eastern state saw rain change over to light-to-moderate snowfall. Temperatures averaged 54° which was 5° above normal. Precipitation totaled 0.76 in. statewide which was 0.27 in. below normal. Rain received helped maintain adequate soil moisture. Farmers actively applied fertilizer, prepared fields for seeding. Winter wheat was rated fair to good and was greening with the warmer weather. Pasture growth increased due to the warmer temperatures, sufficient moisture. Livestock condition was considered fair to mostly good after enduring a very wet, muddy, cold winter. Some farmers spent time preparing equipment for spring fieldwork. Tobacco farmers were preparing traditional, float plant beds and seeded flats in their greenhouse.

LOUISIANA: Extremely wet conditions continued to slow field activities. State has received 3.46 inches of rain over the last 4 weeks.

Planting of corn, rice got off to a slow start but should begin to increase as weather conditions began improving at the end of the month. Sugarcane farmers were applying herbicides, destroying old stubble, draining fields. Wheat had begun to reach the headed stage in a few areas of the state. Crawfish harvest continued doing well. Harvesting of strawberries, greenhouse tomatoes also continued. Cattle producers were culling cows, testing bulls, preparing for spring breeding. Pasture feeds were beginning to show improvements from the favorable weather received in the later part of the month.

MARYLAND: Livestock, poultry are in good condition. The snow in early March hampered beef calving. Hay supplies are very short. Rain, melting snow left many fields wet, delayed preparations for the coming crop year. Small grains are starting to grow. Peaches are in good condition and beginning to bloom. Activities: Topdressing nitrogen on wheat, preparing tobacco beds, spreading manure, preparing fields for spring plantings.

MICHIGAN: Warmer weather arrived with the beginning of spring in March. Snow has melted in most areas of the State. Soil moisture levels remain low even with the addition of the snow melt. Feed supplies are variable throughout the State. Some western Upper Peninsula cattle farmers are purchasing hay from Wisconsin to get them through to spring green up. Livestock made it through the winter well. Calving on beef operations, lambing is in full force. Sheep operations are preparing to shear. Grape growers in the northwest Lower Peninsula reported a damaging freeze on March 2; temperatures bottomed out at 14 below zero. The scope of the damage remains unknown. Wheat conditions are variable depending on the amount of winter snow cover. Weather conditions have been poor for maple syrup production. Growers continued to ready equipment for spring planting and pay taxes. Greenhouse work continued.

MINNESOTA: Conditions for the month have been relatively mild with minimal precipitation, few cold days. Most of the snow cover is gone. Erosion, frost are concerns. Winter injury to alfalfa, other perennial crops is a concern. Farmers are preparing for spring field work. Feed supplies, livestock conditions are good overall.

MISSISSIPPI: Days suitable for fieldwork 4.2. Soil 57% adequate, 43% surplus. Corn 27% planted, 22% 2002, 37% avg.; 2% emerged, NA 2002, 14% avg. Wheat 58% jointing, 41% 2002, 59% avg.; 1% very poor, 6% poor, 47% fair, 43% good, 3% excellent. Hay Supply 18% short, 74% adequate, 8% surplus. Feed Grain 13% short, 83% adequate, 4% surplus. Cattle 3% very poor, 7% poor, 29% fair, 51% good, 10% excellent. Pasture 3% very poor, 17% poor, 34% fair, 39% good, 7% excellent. Watermelons 22% planted, 8% 2002, 15% avg. Corn planting made good progress last week as farmers were able to work around the scattered showers.

MISSOURI: Cool weather during much of March kept fieldwork to a minimum until late in the month when tillage was begun in many areas. Farmers have been getting ready for planting but actual acreage planted is minor. Winter wheat, pastures are green, growing but need warm weather, more moisture. Although rainfall for the State for the past 2 months has been above normal, many areas are still relatively dry. Farmers are concerned about subsoil moisture for the new crop season as well as water for stock ponds. A majority of western, northern counties are 10 inches or more below normal precipitation for the June through February period. Livestock are mostly in good condition, hay supplies are generally adequate.

MONTANA: March, precipitation has been normal to above normal. Topsoil 5% very short, 21% short, 68% adequate, 6% surplus. Subsoil 26% very short, 37% short, 36% adequate, 1% surplus. The winter wheat 2% very poor, 9% poor, 58% fair, 26% good, 5% excellent which is higher than last month's ratings of 4% very poor, 18% poor, 60% fair, 16% good, 2% excellent. Wind damage to the winter wheat crop is currently rated at the following levels: 55% none, 29% light, 14% moderate, 2% heavy. Freeze, drought damage for the crop 57% none, 26% light, 15% moderate, 2% heavy. Winter wheat is breaking dormancy 40% still dormant, 53% greening, 7% green, growing. Livestock grazing 72% open, 10% difficult, 18% closed, compared to last year when 63% open, 10%

difficult and 27% closed. Currently, 97% of the cattle and sheep are receiving supplemental feed compared to last year when 98% of cattle, 96% sheep were receiving supplemental feed. Calving, lambing are at 56%, 36% complete, compared to 58%, 28% last year.

NEBRASKA: Statewide, moisture occurred during the last week of March with largest amounts in the western half of the state. March temperatures averaged above normals the second, third weeks but below normals the first, fourth weeks of the month. Wheat 8% very poor, 20% poor, 41% fair, 30% good, 1% excellent. Hay, forage supplies were mostly adequate to short. Cattle were in mostly good condition with calving 67% done. Calf losses are mostly average to below average. Stalk fields continued to provide grazing potential, with some supplemental feeding continuing. Activities: Spring fieldwork, planting preparations, livestock care.

NEVADA: Mild weather persisted through March, heightening concerns over seasonal water supplies. Precipitation totals were generally less than an inch across the State, .2 to .6 inch below normal. Temperatures average 1 to 2° above normal. Snotel measurements showed the water content of the winter snow pack at 55 to 85% of normal with the eastern part of the State in the worse shape. The mild weather was good for calving, lambing which picked up during the month. Calving was in full swing during March, branding was getting underway. Some sheep flocks were shorn, lambing began. Notable bull sales were held during the month, marketing of yearling cattle was active. Shipping of baled, cubed hay continued. Potato processing was ongoing. Fall seeded grains and garlic were in good condition. Field preparations, spring grain planting got underway. Onions were planted, sprinkler irrigation was underway. Activities: Calving, lambing, field preparation, spring grain seeding, onion planting, equipment maintenance, fence repairs, crop marketing, ditch burning, irrigation.

NEW ENGLAND: Temperatures in state rose above normal during the latter half of March, a welcomed change from the frigid temperatures which occurred earlier in the month. The warmer days were conducive to maple sap flow, causing many maple producers to begin tapping trees. Activities: Nursery/greenhouse work, tending livestock, tapping maple trees, performing general maintenance, preparing for the spring planting season.

NEW JERSEY: Below normal temperatures continued through the first half of March in state. The highest recorded temperature during the first two weeks of the month was 52° on March 15. The lowest recorded temperature was 13° on March 3 and March 4. Warmer temperatures arrived for the second half of the month, with a high temperature of 68° on March 17 and March 26. There were small amounts of snow in south coastal regions of the state the beginning of the month. Heavy rain occurred in parts of the state on March 20, 2003 producing rainfall amounts of over 1.0 inch in central state.

NEW MEXICO: The first full week of March was dry and mild, with the statewide average temperature within 1° of normal. The second week brought warmer weather, a statewide average of 9° above normal. Lower elevations on the east hit 80° for a couple of days. Late in the week a complex storm system brought precipitation that lingered into the following week, bringing soaking rain across much of state. Areas receiving the most moisture during the third week of March were the north-central, northeast counties. Red River recorded 1.66 inches, Tucumcari reported 1.47 inches. Temperatures were mild due to the cloud cover. The last week of March began on the warm side, but some unseasonably cold air pushed into state from the northwest on Thursday, covered much of the state for the remainder of the week. Lower elevation spots in the south hit the 80's on afternoons the first half of the week, but cooled down by as much as 20° or more late in the week. Red River dipped to one degree below zero on the 29th. Measurable precipitation fell at over half the stations, but amounts were generally light. Farmers spent the month preparing fields, cleaning ditches, combating army worms, planting chile, onions. The onion planting was completed by the end of the month. Winter wheat being grazed continues to decline as cattle are being moved off of fields. Fruit trees started to bloom early due to the warm weather early in the month, have so far been free from freeze damage. Ranchers were busy calving, branding, shearing, hauling water.

Supplemental feeding is increasing, many ranchers continue to reduce their herds.

NEW YORK: Spring fieldwork was stalled by snow cover throughout most of the month. As snow melted, fields became wet, work was further delayed. Storage crops such as onions, potatoes, apples, cabbage continued moving to market after grading and packing. Maple producers contended with deep snow depths as they struggled to tap trees and maintain sap lines. Sap began flowing as weather conditions turned favorable for maple syrup production. Early reports indicate higher than usual sugar content for the sap. Tending livestock, spreading manure, machinery repair, maintenance, attending meetings and trade shows were some of the other major activities.

NORTH CAROLINA: Days suitable for field work 4.3. Soil 0% very short, short, 58% adequate, 42% surplus. Warm, spring like conditions dominated state weather, allowing field work to resume. Great progress was made applying fertilizer, pesticides, preparing fields for corn, tobacco planting. Pastures are rebounding nicely, nursery stock is budding strongly, many fruit trees are in full bloom. Some fruit crops may have been damaged by a late weekend winter blast which brought colder temperatures, snow to higher elevations. More instances of cereal leaf beetle were reported, treatment for alfalfa weevil, pasture weeds has begun. Activities: Equipment, fence maintenance; tending to tobacco greenhouses; planting potatoes, cabbage, sweet corn, snap beans; discing in last year's cotton stalks; completing Agricultural Census forms.

NORTH DAKOTA: Below normal temperatures were recorded early in the month, warming to the upper 50's to low 70's by the end of the month. The average snow cover for the state was 0.4 inches. Hay, forage supplies 5% very short, 21% short, 72% adequate, 2% surplus. Grain, concentrate supplies 1% very short, 8% short, 88% adequate, 3% surplus. Cattle conditions 1% very poor, 4% poor, 26% fair, 63% good, 6% excellent. Calf conditions 0% very poor, 3% poor, 19% fair, 67% good, 11% excellent, calving 39% complete. Sheep conditions 1% very poor, 4% poor, 25% fair, 62% good, 8% excellent. Lamb conditions 2% very poor, 4% poor, 20% fair, 67% good, and 7% excellent. Lambing was 55% and shearing was 73% complete. Ninety seven percent of the pastures, ranges were still dormant. Road conditions for travel 98% open, 2% difficult, 0% closed. One percent of the roads were drifted, 1% were icy, 13% were muddy, 85% were dry.

OHIO: The average temperature for the State was 40.9° during the month of March, 1.4° below normal. Precipitation across the state averaged 2.26 inches, 0.7 inches below normal. Livestock remains in good condition with spring calving proceeding as normal. Some producers continue to feed hay until pasture feeds improve.

OKLAHOMA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE

OREGON: Warm temperatures and mild conditions at the beginning of the month advanced the development for wheat and native pastures. However, there was minimal rainfall during the month and precipitation levels were below normal for the month. A cold front at the end of the month did bring some freezing temperatures to parts of the State. Additional rain is needed to improve crop conditions. Wheat development was ahead of the five year average and was rated in mostly good to excellent condition by month's end. Most producers who plan to harvest their wheat for grain has cattle pulled off the wheat by mid month. Range and pasture conditions were in mostly fair to good condition and livestock producers were starting to cut back on supplement feeding

PENNSYLVANIA: Temperatures across state were below normal during the first two weeks of March, while the second half of the month brought milder temperatures. Overall, the average temperature was approximately 38.6 ° 1.2° below normal. The high temperature was 71° on the 25th, the low temperature was 5°, observed on the 7th. In western state precipitation levels were between 26, 75% below normal, while central areas were 25% below or at normal levels. Eastern state precipitation levels still tended to be greater, most at normal to 25° above normal. Activities: Hauling, spreading manure, fixing fences, trimming brush, caring for livestock, repairing equipment, buildings.

SOUTH CAROLINA: The weather for the month consisted of heavy showers, scattered thunderstorms occurring throughout the month. The showers have the streams, rivers around the state at or above flood stage level. Fortunately, there were also several clear days with windy conditions throughout the state. The state enjoyed springlike conditions before the official start of spring. The warm conditions have sparked the growth in budding trees and flowers. Pollen from these trees, flowering plants painted a yellow color on everything from porches to vehicles. A cold front moved in at the end of the month bringing scattered showers, much cooler temperatures. The scattered showers washed away some of the pollen and further delayed corn planting in several areas. The showers, the warm temperatures helped add some length to the forage grasses in pastures.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Topsoil 19% very short, 37% short, 44% adequate. Subsoil 31% very short, 38% short, 30% adequate, 1% surplus. Feed Supplies 22% very short, 35% short, 42% adequate, 1% surplus. Stock water supplies 18% very short, 34% short, 46% adequate, 2% surplus. Winter Rye 10% very poor, 14% poor, 41% fair, 31% good, 4% excellent. Winter Wheat 6% very poor, 17% poor, 41% fair, 31% good, 5% excellent. Barley 1% planted. Oats 1% planted. Spring Wheat 1% planted. Winter rye breaking dormancy 54%. Cattle condition 1% very poor, 3% poor, 26% fair, 58% good, 12% excellent. Sheep condition 1% poor, 27% fair, 66% good, 6% excellent. Range, pasture 33% very poor, 30% poor, 24% fair, 12% good, 1% excellent. Winter wheat breaking dormancy by percent of acreage 75%. Cattle deaths 27% below normal, 71% normal, 2% above normal. Calving 35%. Lambing 44%. Calf deaths 28% below average, 70% average, 2% above average. Sheep and lamb deaths 16% below average, 83% average, 1% above average. Expected date to start spring field work statewide (Julian date) 98. March brought fairly average weather to South Dakota. Western parts of the state received the most moisture in March, but still have a need for more. Activities: Working on machinery, hauling grain, calving, lambing, feeding livestock.

TENNESSEE: At the beginning of March, weather was rather unsettled as several storm systems moved through the region. Temperatures ranged from slightly below normal in the East to well below normal elsewhere in the state. High pressure brought mostly cool, mild, dry conditions to the state during the next two weeks. Precipitation averaged below normal statewide, while temperatures averaged above normal. Towards the end of the month temperatures averaged near normal although two cold fronts moved across the state bringing temperatures near freezing in most areas. During the last week of the month precipitation ranged from an half an inch in the Plateau, Eastern parts to around a tenth of an inch above normal in the Middle, Western parts of the state. Winter wheat was rated in mostly fair to good condition across the state, while livestock, hay supplies were rated as mostly adequate. normal elsewhere in the state. High pressure brought mostly cool, mild, dry conditions to the state during the next two weeks. Precipitation averaged below normal statewide, while temperatures averaged above normal. Towards the end of the month temperatures averaged near normal although two cold fronts moved across the state bringing temperatures near freezing in most areas. During the last week of the month precipitation ranged from an half an inch in the Plateau, Eastern parts to around a tenth of an inch above normal in the Middle, Western parts of the state. Winter wheat was rated in mostly fair to good condition across the state, while livestock, hay supplies were rated as mostly adequate.

TEXAS: In March, state welcomed the arrival of spring but winter still lingered as cold fronts made weekly appearances. The Panhandle experienced generally normal temperatures of 60's and 70's for daytime highs, lows in the 30 to 40 degree range. When cold fronts moved through lows dropped to the 20's and teens in some locations. Precipitation was mostly in liquid form, amounted to one-half to three-quarters of an inch across the Panhandle region. There were a few areas west and north of Amarillo that received an inch or more of rain. The rest of the state recorded high temperatures from the high 50's when cold fronts moved in, up to the low 80's. Lows were generally in the 40's and 50's. North, Central, and South state received rainfall ranging from one inch to an inch and a half with most falling in the form of light drizzle. Many locations in East state recorded about two inches of precipitation.

The Edwards Plateau, Trans Pecos received a trace to an inch of rain. Western sections were drier than eastern locations. The Rio Grande Valley recorded an inch of rain with some very isolated regions receiving up to three inches. There were some occurrences of heavy downpours in Central, East state, the Upper Coast. Soil moisture was still short in the Panhandle, Trans Pecos, much of the Edwards Plateau. Moisture remained adequate in the Rio Grande Valley. As for the rest of the state, soils had dried out enough to plant corn, sorghum as producers raced against the clock. By month's end, most corn was planted in Central, Southern areas. For those producers that were too late with corn planting, sorghum became an adequate substitute. The wheat crop was varied across the state. Areas that received rain or snow were benefitting but much of the crop was short on moisture. Some producers were delaying irrigation because of high fuel prices. There was some frost damage in locations where wheat had come out of dormancy. In South state leaf rust became a problem. Land preparation continued in cotton fields and pre-watering occurred in the Panhandle. Some fields in the Coastal Bend required replanting after heavy rain. Rice planting began where conditions allowed. Crawfish harvest continued in extreme Southeast state. Range, Pasture improved with the warmer temperatures but still suffered in drier locations. Cattle producers contended with lice infestations. Spring calving, lambing, kidding continued.

UTAH: The warm weather which has characterized this winter continued throughout March. Increased precipitation in March helped raise water, snowpack levels. However, snowpack levels are still running between 65%-90% of normal. The mild weather has been good for planting, many growers have planted ahead of schedule. Potential water shortfalls have prompted some producers in Cache county who typically plant corn for silage to plant cereal forages instead. In Weber county, fruit trees are about 2 weeks ahead of normal, apricot trees have already started to bloom. Some areas have seen infestations of cut worms but with only weeds to feed on, they have not yet become a problem. Calving, lambing have been going well as a result of the mild weather.

VIRGINIA: Pasture 4% very poor, 22% poor, 45% fair, 26% good, 3% excellent. Livestock 1% very poor, 7% poor, 36% fair, 52% good, 4% excellent. Small Grain, Winter Grazing Crops 11% very poor, 22% poor, 40% fair, 23% good, 4% excellent. March brought on more rain for many parts of state. While some parts of the state reported little field work done, some areas were able to do more field work than last month. Almost all counties are reporting sufficient moisture to begin the growing season. However, some sections of the state are concerned that the wet weather could delay some planting, harvesting activities. The grass is beginning to green up in pastures, fields. The recent rains, snow have refilled many ponds, streams. Spring lambing, calving got underway during March. Hay is still being fed, supplies are very tight. Several farmers have been unable to get in their fields to topdress small grains, pastures due to the wet weather. The winter weather seems to have slowed small grain progress. As for the other farmers, fertilizer applications were in full swing. Activities: Building fence, preparing for spring planting, monitoring tobacco greenhouses, reconditioning machinery for planting, top-dressing, planting cabbage, potatoes, seeding spring pastures, tilling fields, top-dressing small grains, attending educational programs, taking soil samples, planning for the upcoming growing season. Temperatures for the month of March were chilly during the first couple of weeks, but warmed up a little towards the end of the month. However, during the last week in March, some counties received snowfall as temperatures fell. Rain continued to moisten the soil during most of the month in much of state.

WASHINGTON: Mild temperatures, above normal rainfall received during March has improved the overall cropping outlook for state. Snowpack for state continued to be below average. Winter wheat in Whitman County was enhanced by the soil moisture, was in good condition. Pastures in the eastern portion of the state have improved due to the moisture, but many remain in poor condition from the past drought conditions. In western state, persistent rainfall throughout the month resulted in two minor flood events, had most ag producers several weeks behind in field cultivation. Christmas tree growers finished tree planting, prepared equipment for herbicide applications.

WEST VIRGINIA: For the week ending March 30. Topsoil 3% short, 79% adequate, 18% surplus; Winter wheat 13% poor, 36% fair, 50%

good, 1% excellent. Cattle, calves 7% poor, 41% fair, 49% good, 3% excellent, calving 72%. Sheep, Lambs 14% poor, 48% fair, 38% good; lambing 71%. Hay, roughage supplies 6% very short, 63% short, 31% adequate. Feed grain supplies 1% very short, 14% short, 85% adequate. March was characterized by above normal temperatures, below average precipitation. A late season snow storm struck parts of the state the last weekend of March, resulting in up to a foot of snow in the mountains. Hay supplies running short in some areas of state as some farmers are looking for hay to purchase. Calving, lambing problems were reduced from February until the snow storm of the 29th and 30th. Spring calf, lamb losses are higher than normal due to these conditions. Activities: Calving, lambing, feeding livestock, purchasing, moving of hay, early spring activities.

WISCONSIN: Fieldwork has not yet begun in state. Weather for March was fairly uneventful. Temperature swings were from freezing temperatures to 70° F. Overall, the average temperature departure from the mean was 0-5° below normal for most of the month. Precipitation in the north was normal to .5 inch above normal, while southern state continued drier than normal with precipitation .5-1.0 below normal. A late season snowstorm covered northwestern state with snow, while most of the state had bare ground.

WYOMING: DATA NOT AVAILABLE
