

Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin State Stories

Released February 29, 2000, 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 Mark E. Miller at (202) 720-7621, office hours 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET.

ALABAMA: Portions of the state received rainfall, but totals fell short of normal. Land preparation has begun for planting spring crops.

ARIZONA: Areas continued to record above average temperatures with very minor precipitation during the month of February. Weather conditions have minimal impact on vegetable production as the produce is irrigated. Crop conditions also remained relatively unaffected by the lack of rain, above average temperatures. Range, pasture feeds declined with the lack of precipitation.

ARKANSAS: For the month of February, temperatures were near normal throughout the State. Precipitation was below normal for the month. Areas wheat was being fertilized for the first time, with early herbicide applications being applied. Wheat green-up progressing well, with crop potential being good to excellent. The other farming activities were: Pruning fruit trees, preparing land for next season, cleaning, maintenance of equipment. Livestock was reported in fair condition. Broiler producers still calculating losses from late January snow storm which collapsed many roofs on broiler houses.

CALIFORNIA: February's field crop activity was somewhat slow, as soil conditions were often too wet to get equipment into the fields. Continued rainfall enhanced growth, development of dryland grain, oat hay crops. Irrigated grain, silage, alfalfa plantings also benefitted from the precipitation. Fertilizer was applied to field crops. Sugarbeet planting continued throughout the month. Cotton growers were bedding up fields, applying herbicides as weather permitted. Growth of wheat in most fields was good. Occasional field flooding may have affected the wheat crop in some areas. Normal winter cultural activities, other orchard work were slowed by the wet conditions in February. Between rains, Areas fruit growers were pruning or planting trees, vines. Other activities this month included: Dormant spraying of stone fruit trees. Almonds, early varieties of stone fruits were blooming throughout the month. As March approached, many more apricot, cherry, peach, plum and nectarine trees were blossoming. Picking of grapefruit, lemon crops was active in southern areas. San Joaquin Valley navel oranges were picked during the drier periods. Recent rain was improving the citrus sugar-acid ratio, but by month's end growers were concerned about rind puff, crease. Satsuma tangerine picking was active all month. Spinach continued to make good progress under ideal growing conditions in the San Joaquin Valley. Onion, garlic plants were progressing well with ample moisture. Beds were being prepared for spring melon planting. Processing tomato fields were being prepared for planting, some areas tomato planting was delayed by wet ground conditions. The warm weather between storm fronts aided the growth, development of transplanted vegetables. Carrots continued to be harvested, planted on a year round basis. Among the vegetables harvested this month were asparagus, artichokes, broccoli, beets, cabbage, cauliflower, greens, leaf lettuce, kale, leeks, mint, radishes. As the end of February approached, rangeland pastures were in good to excellent condition in central, northern areas. In a few areas of the southern San Joaquin Valley, new grass was short on foothill pastures, some supplemental feeding was needed. Season-to-date rainfall, which had been substantially below normal in early to mid January, was above normal by the end of February. In some areas sheep were still grazing on alfalfa pastures. Muddy conditions at dairies,

feedlots affected cattle performance. Bees were pollinating almond blossoms on those sunny days between rains.

COLORADO: Temperatures were mostly seasonal to above normal for the entire month. Except the mountain areas, most of the state received limited amounts of moisture. Mountain snow pack has improved during the past few weeks, but is still below normal at this time. Some strong winds on several days during February accelerated soil moisture depletion. The 2000 winter wheat crop remains in mostly good to excellent condition but will need additional moisture in the near future. Due to the dry, warm weather, producers have done some field work around attending producer meetings, farm shows. Calving, lambing are progressing under excellent conditions.

DELAWARE: About two weeks of below normal temperatures early in the month allowed some spreading of stored manure. Eight to 12 inches of snow fall early in the month provided unusual cover for small grains for two weeks. Heavy rain/thunderstorm on February 25 provided additional, needed moisture. Small grains continue to be in good condition for the state. There have been no significant outbreaks of disease in poultry flocks.

FLORIDA: Mostly mild conditions continued. Temperatures averaged normal to 4° above. Daytime highs 60s, 70s with several localities reporting at least one high 80s. Nighttime lows 40s, 50s, 60s with some western Panhandle, northern Peninsula localities recording at least one low 30s. Most rainfall totals ranged from 0 to about 0.25 in. with Ft. Pierce recording about 0.50 in. Wildfire threat continues with State of area, Division of Forestry, local fire departments responding to brush fires statewide, including two significant fires, Alachua, Lafayette counties. Moisture is mostly short to adequate with scattered areas of very short moisture. Sugarcane grinding is winding down with mills starting to close. Farmers tending tobacco beds. Mostly dry conditions increasing need for irrigating vegetables. Plant City strawberry growers preparing for festival March 2 through 12. Major vegetables harvested: potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, endive, escarole, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, lettuce, radishes, snap beans, squash, strawberries, sweet corn, eggplant. Scattered showers brought limited rainfall all citrus areas, irrigation all areas. New growth, small bloom buds starting, some open bloom in well cared for Valencia, Navel groves. Early, mid orange harvest slowing as supplies limited. Some Valencia oranges being picked for fresh use. Grapefruit movement increasing. Caretakers cutting cover crops, hedging, topping, stacking dead trees, limbs. Pasture feed; 10% very poor, 15% poor, 70% fair, 5% good. Condition of cattle 5% very poor, 10% poor, 70% fair, 15% good. Panhandle; pasture feed improving following recent rains. North: small grain forages growing some following warmer days. Central: cool temperatures keeping permanent pasture grass from growing. West Central: cattle condition decreasing due to lack of grass, pasture feed poor due to lack of rain. Southwest: pasture being burned off in some locations; new grass showing up on earlier burned pasture. Statewide, condition of cattle, calves mostly fair.

GEORGIA: Temperatures were mild through much of February. The drought continued. The State had adequate to short soil moisture. A tornado on Valentine's Day damaged chicken houses, pecan orchards in

Southwestern counties. Rain amounts during this storm varied by location. Small grains were in fair to good condition. About 70% of the small grains had been top dressed. The warmer weather in February improved onion growth. Most of the onion crop was in good condition. Peach development was ahead of normal. The crop is vulnerable to cold snaps. Tobacco bed preparation wrapped up. Pastures were in poor to good condition. Other activities included: Land preparation for spring planting, soil testing, attending production meetings.

HAWAII: Weather conditions were generally good for agriculture during February. Abundant sunshine, cool temperatures, calm winds, adequate irrigation supplies enabled most crops to make favorable progress. The dry conditions, however, were hampering crops dependent on natural rainfall. Banana harvesting seasonally light. Fields in good condition. Papaya harvesting steady at seasonally light levels. Field conditions vary from mostly good to fair with some in poor due to disease. Head cabbage harvesting was active. Most crops in good condition. Dry onions continued to recovery from heavy rains in January. Ginger root harvesting very active; seasonally heavy.

IDAHO: February ushered in spring like conditions with above normal temperatures, minimal precipitation. Snow melt has river banks running full with minor flooding in the Weiser River Valley area. Eastern areas experienced a major wind storm mid-February damaging irrigation lines. No reported problems with disease for producers calving, lambing. Calving is 34% complete, lambing is 65%. Hay, roughage supply was reported 11% surplus, 60% adequate, 27% short, 2% very short. Winter wheat 5% excellent, 77% good, 17% fair, 1% poor. Much needed valley rain, mountain snow moved into the state the last week of February. Activities: Repairing machinery, feeding, marketing livestock, attending meetings.

ILLINOIS: The topsoil moisture condition was rated 11% very short, 51% short, 36% adequate, 2% surplus. As of February 25, Though topsoil moisture conditions have improved, there is still concern about low subsoil moisture. Welcomed precipitation, warm temperatures were reported throughout the state the last few weeks. The February rain, snowfalls across the state were much needed for the winter wheat crop. Fields are turning green with the recent moisture, warm temperatures. As of February 25, the wheat condition was rated 2% very poor, 11% poor, 43% fair, 42% good, 2% excellent. The mild weather has been beneficial for livestock, though some producers have had to haul water. With calving season just beginning, cattle producers are hoping for continued favorable weather. Other activities during the month have included: Hauling grain to market, tax preparation, visiting FSA offices, ordering seed, fertilizer.

INDIANA: Topsoil moisture is mostly adequate. Subsoil moisture remains short in most areas of the state. Precipitation was mostly snow during early February with rain arriving later in the month. Most areas of the state received 1 to over 3 inches of rain this month. Southern areas received heavier amounts causing some flooding. This has helped relieve some of the dry soil conditions. Most of the state is still about 5 inches short of precipitation. Temperatures averaged well above normal during the last two weeks with several days in the 60 to 70° range. Temperatures during early February averaged near normal. Snow covered most of the northern, central regions of the state early in the month, which helped protect the winter wheat crop. Hauling of water continues on some farms. Winter wheat is in fair to mostly good condition. Hay supplies remain short in some areas. Farmers continue to work on taxes, purchase inputs for the 2000 crop, sign up for programs at their FSA office. Livestock are in mostly good condition, but lots are muddy. Tobacco sales are winding down. Major activities: Spreading manure, lime, attending seminars, equipment cleaning, repair, hauling grain, seeding clover, feeding livestock, caring for livestock.

IOWA: With unusually warm weather, frost is gone in many parts of area. Welcome rains absorbed quickly by soil. Moisture still needed for growing season. Average depth of snow cover 0 inches. Average depth of frost penetration 4 inches. Soil moisture availability 14% very short, 56% short, 29% adequate, 1% surplus. Soil erosion 80% light to none, 19% moderate, 1% severe. Grain movement rated 15% none, 40% light, 42% moderate, 3% heavy. Availability of hay, roughage supplies for livestock feed 4% short, 79% adequate, 17% surplus; quality of hay,

roughage supplies 6% poor, 43% fair, 51% good. Livestock condition good to excellent except for central, north central area, where pseudo rabies outbreak has occurred. Utilization of stubble fields for grazing 24% none, 28% light, 32% moderate, 16% extensive. Hog, pig losses 20% below avg.; 77% avg.; 3% above avg. Cattle, calf losses 28% below avg.; 72% avg.

KANSAS: Topsoil moisture is rated mostly adequate as farmers continue top-dressing wheat, alfalfa, brome. state. Currently, topsoil moisture is rated 12% surplus, 53% adequate, 20%t short, 15% very short. The subsoil profile remains somewhat short in many areas and needs to be rebuilt to provide rangeland grass an adequate supply to produce good grazing conditions this year. Most of the State received precipitation either as rain or snow during February, according to State Agricultural Statistics, State University Reserch, Extension Service. Unfortunately, the moisture didn't cover the entire state leaving some areas in need of moisture. With the warm temperatures, wheat has broken dormancy in most areas. The winter wheat 5% excellent, 35% good, 33% fair, 20% poor, 7%t very poor. The January condition was rated 3% excellent, 30% good, 44% fair, 18% poor, 5% very poor. The percent of wheat rated good to excellent increased from 33% 40% the percent of the crop rated poor to very poor increased from 23% to 27% resulting in a mixed change from last month. The crop seems to have suffered only light freeze, wind damage during the winter. Greenbugs, Army cutworms have been reported reaching treatable levels in the southwestern part of the The recent precipitation has helped replenish topsoil moisture in some areas, however more moisture is needed. Spring calving, lambing are in full swing. The warm, dry conditions earlier this spring allowed early calving, lambing to produced good results. Cattle, calves remain on stalks with only a limited number on wheat pasture. In preparation for spring planting producers are applying fertilizer, working the seedbed for row crops.

KENTUCKY: The first full week of February 2000 continued the below normal temperatures, precipitation from the final weeks of January. Snowfall, mainly 1 to 3 inches with localized heavy snowfall in the Southeast along the Virginia border slowed farm activities. Widespread rainfall occurred during the next two weeks of February with northern, western locations receiving heavy downpours. The heavy rains brought muddy field conditions and caused flash flooding, flooding of low lying farm land. Temperatures were generally 6 to 9° above normal causing winter wheat to show some growth by months' end. The month ended with continued warm temperatures reaching into the 70's, generally light scattered showers that continued to help moisture levels recover from the previous year's drought conditions. Burley Tobacco markets held sales through the months' end with clean-up sales scheduled for March 13th thru 16th. Areas gross sales totaled 409.3 million pounds, averaged \$189.96 per hundred pounds through February 25th, with 46% of net sales going to the coop pool. Pasture feeds were generally fair to good with most producers continuing to feed extra grain, hay. Cattle were in mostly good condition due to the mild weather conditions.

LOUISIANA: Dry conditions slowed field activities. Rice producers flooded rice fields. Crawfish yields were very low. Cattlemen continue to feed.

MARYLAND: Adequate amounts of snow provided a good cover for the small grains. Small grains continued to be in good condition. State received little precipitation for the month as most counties were below average, except for western areas. Farmers were allowed some time for manure spreading due to below normal temperatures in the first part of the month. Livestock appears to be in good shape as no major outbreaks of diseases were reported in poultry or cattle.

MICHIGAN: Cold weather, snow dominated the beginning of the month creating a good snow cover for the State. For the last two weeks the temperatures have been getting warmer with record highs reported for some parts of the State. The plentiful snow cover from earlier in the month washed away as rains melted almost all of the snow. The rain, melting snow has left a surplus supply of topsoil moisture, but subsoil moisture remains below normal. Lambing is underway, calving will begin soon. Activities included: Repairing equipment, pruning fruit trees, hauling manure, attending farm meetings.

MINNESOTA: February average temperatures were about 8.7° above normal, with February 21 through February 27 averaging 20.3° above normal. As of February 24, snow cover was under 4 inches in agricultural areas of the state; the above normal temperatures at the end of the month have melted almost all snow cover. More concern is being focused on the possibility of damage to over wintered crops, a dry growing season. Statewide precipitation was 0.39 inch above normal. The mild weather and above normal temperatures have been excellent for livestock conditions, with feed supplies hardly touched.

MISSISSIPPI: Soil moisture, 31% very short, 49% short, 15% adequate, 5% surplus. Wheat 3% poor, 19% fair, 69% good, 9% excellent. Hay supply 41% very short, 54% short, 5% surplus. Cattle, 1% very poor, 6% poor, 35% fair, 50% good, 8% excellent. Feed grain 18% very short, 78% short, 4% adequate. Weather conditions have been dry for the month of February. Many producers are well into their preparations for spring planting. A few producers have planted corn. Conditions have been good for cattle in many parts of the state.

MISSOURI: Recent rains have helped restore soil moisture supplies, improving the outlook for the 2000 crop season. However, subsoil moisture is still low in many areas, more run-off is needed for stock ponds. The wheat crop came through the winter without significant losses. The exceptionally mild weather has been beneficial for starting early growth of wheat, pastures. Farmers are spreading fertilizer, getting ready for fieldwork.

MONTANA: Topsoil moisture 5% very short, 42% short, 52% adequate, 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture 21% very short, 50% short, 29% adequate, 0% surplus. The overall lack of snow cover in combination with little moisture, high winds has taken its toll on the winter wheat crop. Some areas of the state received significant snowfall towards the end of the month which provided much needed moisture, protection to the winter wheat crop, but more is needed in the major producing areas to help the crop across the state. Statewide, winter wheat 3% very poor, 6% poor, 52% fair, 36% good, 3% excellent. Wind damage to winter wheat 10% none, 56% light, 30% moderate, 4% heavy. Winter wheat protectiveness of snow cover 17% very poor, 51% poor, 24% fair, 2% good, 6% excellent. As a result of the fairly mild conditions during February, livestock is reported to be in very good condition as there have been few reported problems. Calving completed was at 27% by the end of February, which is more than 1999 estimate of 23%, the average of 16%. Lambing completed was 12% finished, which is on pace with 1999 ahead of the average of 8%. Even though there is a lot of open grazing, producers are giving supplemental feed to meet nutritional needs. At the end of the month, 98% of the cattle, calves, 94% of the sheep, lambs were receiving supplemental feed. Livestock grazing 64% open, 14% difficult, 22% closed.

NEBRASKA: Temperatures across the State averaged about 5° above normals during the first three weeks with the fourth week 10 to 18° above normals. Precipitation came in the form of snow mid-month followed by light rains across the State. Total February accumulation of 1 inch or more was recorded in Central, Southeastern districts. Winter Wheat crop 7% very poor, 13% poor, 32% fair, 46% good, 2% excellent. Hay supplies, as well as feed grain supplies, were mostly adequate. Livestock producers reported excellent calving conditions with the open winter, mild temperatures. Calving was 26% complete by the end of February, slightly ahead of 1999 23%, with calf losses at below average to average. Producer activities included: Taking cattle off stalks, preparing taxes, attending meetings, gearing up for the new cropping season.

NEVADA: NO DATA AVAILABLE:

NEW ENGLAND: During February area maple sugar growers prepared for the upcoming season. Many syrup producers started tapping trees, some started boiling syrup. Farmers stayed busy tending livestock, preparing for spring planting season. Moving apples, potatoes out of storage. The cold weather, high cost of heating oil have increased the expense of keeping greenhouses warm.

NEW JERSEY: Top soil moisture was categorized as short during the month, especially in South Area. Recent rains brought some relief by the end of the month. Above average temperatures by the end of the month permitted early land preparation activities such as plowing, disking, application of fertilizers. Some planting of lettuce, greens occurred in areas of South Area. Vegetables being wintered over are in good condition. Fruit growers are pruning their trees. Total precipitation so far in February is between 25%, 50% below average.

NEW MEXICO: NO DATA AVAILABLE:

NEW YORK: February brought heavy snowfall to most areas early in the month, mild weather at month's end. Cold weather, snow made outside activities difficult. Work was confined to tending livestock, machinery maintenance, winter chores, grading, packing onions, potatoes, apples. A variety of meetings, trade shows were held during the month. Sap for making maple syrup was running in southern regions. In northern regions producers were tapping trees, preparing for the upcoming maple season.

NORTH CAROLINA: February was mostly uneventful with mixed temperatures, adequate precipitation. Soil moisture levels are 80% adequate. Activities have been concentrated indoors as farmers work on their books, prepare greenhouse tobacco beds. Plantings for specialty crops such as Irish potatoes, cabbage began earlier this month, are currently on schedule compared to 1999.

NORTH DAKOTA: Above normal temperatures, below normal snowfall continued during the month of February, thus creating near ideal winter conditions for livestock. Average snow depth across the state was 0.5 inches. Snow cover was sufficient to protect only 11% of the alfalfa. Hay, roughage supplies were 0% very short, 2% short, 80% adequate, 18% surplus. Cattle were 0% very poor, 1% poor, 11% fair, 76% good, 12% excellent. 99% of the cattle were receiving supplemental feed. Calving was 9% complete. Cattle sales were 2% below normal, 90% normal, 8% above normal. Sheep 0% very poor, 1% poor, 8% fair, 74% good, 17% excellent. 99% of the sheep were receiving supplemental feed. Lambing was 15% complete, shearing was 26% complete.

OHIO: The average temperature for February was 34.4°, 5.8° above normal. Ohio averaged 1.61 inches of precipitation, 0.9 inches above normal. Counties in northern area experienced snowfall for most of the month, while southern counties had rain that led to flooding. Warm, dry conditions prevailed for most of the state during the last week of the month. Farming activities were minimal during February. Activities included: Selling tobacco, constructing pipelines, troughs, buying seed, fertilizer. One reporter mentioned that maple syrup production is not going as well as producers hoped. Winter wheat is reported in excellent condition throughout the state. Winter wheat could suffer from a heavy freeze, considering the lack of snow cover in the state.

OKLAHOMA: Monthly temperatures ranged from 8° at Medford on February 2nd to 84° at Burneyville on February 15th. Monthly precipitation averaged 0.33 in. Panhandle to 2.08 in. Southeast. Monthly individual Mesonet stations ranged from 0.01 in. at Goodwell and Kenton to 4.21 in. at Broken Bow. Monthly soil temperatures averaged 42° at Boise City to 53° at Burneyville. Mild temperatures, late-month rainfall boosted wheat growth, development. West, south still mostly short in moisture supplies. Cattle moved off wheat pasture which will be harvested for grain. Cattle auctions report near average marketings. Recent price for feeder steers averaged \$6 per cwt. below one month ago.

OREGON: Activities: Nursery digging of bare root plants, shipping in prime season. Pruning, training of orchards continues. Some fertilizer has been applied to winter wheat fields. Machinery repair ongoing. Farm shows are in full swing. The calving season has begun along with the lambing season. There have been no major storms recently.

PENNSYLVANIA: During the first two weeks of February, weather conditions were about normal around the State, although we had a few days of cold, bitter weather. This caused some field activities such as spreading manure and plowing to be halted. Daily precipitation ranged from 0.0 to 1.0 inches, depending on the location. Temperatures began to warm up during the third week, however a winter storm covered the State (February 18th) with several inches of snow, some areas received amounts closer to a foot. After snowing for several hours, the winds brought in warm air which changed the snow over to sleet, freezing rain. Weekly precipitation was below normal in many areas. At the beginning of the fourth week a high pressure system caused temperatures around the State to rise. Total precipitation for February was below normal in 50 of the 67 counties. The western part of the State is under a drought warning and the eastern part is under a drought watch. This decision is based upon stream flow, ground water, long-term precipitation conditions. Activities include: Hauling, spreading manure; machinery maintenance; caring for livestock; plowing; buying hay; putting hay in silos; tax preparation; attending farm organization meetings; planning for the 2000 crop season.

SOUTH CAROLINA: The state's average temperature for February averaged near normal at 47.0 Fahrenheit. Statewide precipitation was approximately 1.43 inches which is 2.53 inches below normal. Farmers were busy repairing, maintaining equipment, pruning fruit trees, caring for livestock, attending agricultural seminars, preparing records for year end totals and taxes.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Winter wheat 1% very poor, 24% poor, 41% fair, 33% good, 1% excellent. Winter rye 12% poor, 41% fair, 43% good, 4% excellent. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 6% short, 80% adequate, 13% surplus. Cattle 4% fair, 68% good, 28% excellent. Sheep 9% fair, 72% good, 19% excellent. Cattle deaths 47% below avg.; 53% avg. Calf deaths 50% below avg.; 50% avg. Sheep, lamb deaths 53% below avg.; 47% avg. Average snow depth 0.0 inch. Alfalfa snow cover 95% poor, 5% adequate. Winter wheat snow cover 99% poor, 1% adequate. Winter rye snow cover 96% poor, 4% adequate. Hay, roughage supplies 1% short, 65% adequate, 34% surplus. Accessible livestock feed supplies 97% readily, 1% difficult, 2% inaccessible. Accessible stock water supplies 94% readily, 5% difficult, 1% inaccessible. County road conditions 100% open. Township road conditions 100% open. Precipitation during the month was above average, as were temperatures. While livestock are doing well there is much concern for winter crops; winter kill, poor emergence, growth from months of drought.

TENNESSEE: Temperatures in February were unseasonably mild across the State except for a short cold snap during the first week of the month. This mild weather, ample forage from winter wheat grazing, have allowed cattle producers to stretch limited hay supplies. Despite this, many still consider their hay stocks to be short for this time of year. Cattle are currently in mostly fair to good condition. The State's wheat crop is in mostly good condition with some producers now beginning to top-dress with nitrogen. Fields sprayed with insecticides last fall have very little to no aphids presents, while parasitic insects are doing a good job controlling the pests in untreated fields. Precipitation for the month was below normal throughout the State.

TEXAS: The state experienced generally above normal temperatures with below normal rainfall throughout the month. High winds associated with these weather patterns increased wind erosion, slowed land preparation in some areas. The light rain showers that were associated with passage of the last weather front had little effect on the range, pasture feeds, no run off occurred. General livestock conditions remained poor as supplemental feeding increased, hay stocks decreased. Herd reduction, some liquidation continued as available pond water became unavailable to some producers. Winter vegetable harvest moved ahead in South Area, the Winter garden areas, planting of spring crops began. Planting began in southern areas for Cotton, Corn, Sorghum. Concern was expressed by some growers as to the number of chill hours needed for good production as fruit trees began blooming in many areas of the state.

TEXAS: Conditions were hot and dry through-out most of the state with widely scattered showers occurring in the Plains, North and East. South

received heavy rain from Hurricane Bret but very little property damage. Fall land preparation slowed due to lack of moisture in many areas. Extremely hot temperatures continue in most areas causing further decline in range and pasture feed. Grain storage problems continued in many areas due to good yields, full elevators. Haying operations continued, despite the hot, dry weather in most locations. Livestock conditions remain fair to good across the state. Supplemental feeding was required in some areas due to dry conditions and in South Area it helped to confine cattle after to heavy rains from Hurricane Bret. Seeding of wheat continued in the Plains where moisture was available. Published 2, 1998 4, Average 4. Oats, Published 2, 1998 0, Average 0. The High Plains crop continued to mature, harvest begin to expand. Silage harvest was beginning to wind down. Harvest continued in the Blacklands, Central Areas, was nearing completion. Yields have been good. Markets however were weak. Harvest was winding down along the Upper Coast, ended in the Coastal Bend, Rio Grande Valley. Statewide corn at 86% of normal compared with 64% 1999. Published 52, 1998 55, Average 52. Cotton: Good growth, development continued in the Plains, some boll opening had begun. Some boll drop continued in non irrigated fields which missed spotted showers. Irrigation remained active where possible. Bolls continued to open, some harvest began in the Blacklands, Central Areas, Upper Coast. Harvest stopped in areas of the Coastal Bend, South Areas where severe damage occurred as a result of Hurricane Bret. Harvest neared completion in the Rio Grande Valley. Statewide cotton 59% of normal compared with 44% 1999. Published 9, 1998 18, Average 14. Peanuts: Fields continued to look good in the Plains, North Central Areas, irrigation was very active. Statewide, dryland fields need more rain. Some producers were spraying for diseases. Harvest had begun in some areas of Central Areas. Statewide peanut 78% of normal compared with 63% 1999. Published 1, 1998 1, Average 1. Rice: Harvest neared completion in some areas along the Upper Coast with very good yields, excellent quality. Statewide rice 95% of normal compared with 79% 1999. Sorghum: Fields matured rapidly in the Plains under hot conditions, harvest on early fields began. Dryland fields were still stressed in many areas. Harvest was completed in the Blacklands, Central Areas but, lack of storage is still a problem. Statewide sorghum at 67% of normal compared with 46% 1999. Published 55, 1998 52, Average 56. Soybeans: Progress, development was good in the Plains, however dryland fields need rain. Irrigation remained active. Harvest in the Blacklands continued, neared completion. Harvest of early varieties was complete in areas along the Upper Coast which was not effected by Hurricane Bret. Published 45, 1998 71, Average 32. Sunflowers, Published 17, 1998 12, Average 6.

Commercial Vegetables, Fruit and Pecans: Rio Grande Valley, land preparations and planting were discontinued as heavy rains fell. San Antonio-Winter Garden, some planting of fall vegetables continued and some areas received scattered rain showers. East Areas, sweet potato, watermelon harvest continued, limited supplies of Okra, Peas, other vegetables was available but severe stress was occurring from lack off rain, some replanting occurred where scattered showers fell. High Plains, onion, potato harvest slowed down in many fields. Watermelon harvest continued. Trans Pecos, a few fields of cantaloups, melons remained, but mostly winding down. Apples were doing well. Tomatoes harvest has begun. Peaches, Production continued to decline as harvest in the Hill Country ends. East Areas Peaches were fair to good, High Plains Peaches nearing maturity, some harvest begun. Peach borer was a problem in some areas. Pecans, Hot, dry conditions continued to take a toll on a very good crop across the state. Nut drop has continued over the past few weeks. Shuck worms, weevils, black aphids web worms, scab increased in some areas. Spraying occurred where numbers were high. Rainfall is needed to maintain the current expectations.

Range, Livestock: Hay production deminished due to recent hot, dry conditions in most areas. Supplies are good across the state however Grass fires were a mounting problem, especially in Central Areas Edwards Plateau, the High Plains. Because of limited grass growth, some producers were feeding supplement to their livestock. Extremely hot temperatures continued to cause problems in poultry operations.

UTAH: Major activities include: Feeding, caring for livestock. Some early calving has begun, as has some pruning of fruit trees. Recent precipitation throughout most of the state has improved soil moisture. More moisture is still needed. Livestock is reported in fair to good condition due to mild weather this winter

WASHINGTON: Winter throughout February remained fairly mild, warm in most areas. Although the state is slightly below normal for

precipitation, it did not appear to have many adverse effects on the upcoming season at this time in central areas. Early spring field preparation for the 2000 crop season had begun. Fields were being plowed, soil fumigated, weed control measures were underway. Tree fruit pruning was winding down, grape vine pruning was underway. Trees, vines were in good condition due to the mild winter, few cold spells. Ranchers who were calving, lambing welcomed the mild weather.

VIRGINIA: Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 15% short, 73% adequate, 11% surplus. Wheat 12% fair, 80% good, 8% excellent. Cattle 2% poor, 25% fair, 72% good, 1% excellent; 31% calved. Sheep 22% fair, 75% good, 3% excellent; 22% lambled. Hay, roughage supplies 14% very short, 53% short, 33% adequate. Feed grain supplies 5% very short, 16% short, 79% adequate. Unseasonably mild weather during most of the month of February was beneficial for livestock. A total of 21 counties were hit by floods. Feeding of livestock was less than normal. However, some livestock producers are searching for alternative feed sources due to hay shortage.

WISCONSIN: During the first week of February, temperatures averaged nearly 8° F warmer than the 30-year avg. Average temperatures the second, third week of the month were 4° F, 1° F above normal. The last week of the month temperatures increased dramatically across the state. Record high temperatures helped the state average reach 18° F above normal. Cumulative precipitation since January has been slightly above normal, with the exception of Central, Southwest regions which have been slightly below normal. Snow levels ranged from 2-12 inches in Northern areas. Snow cover in the lower two-thirds of the state melted due to the warm temperatures, rainfall received the final week of the month.

WYOMING: Topsoil moisture 6% very short, 59% short, 32% adequate, 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 10% very short, 64% short, 25% adequate, 1% surplus. Average depth of snow cover 2.5 inches. Most counties have 4 inches or less. Condition of winter wheat crop 3% poor, 16% fair, 81% good. Winter wheat wind damage 61% none, 39% light. Winter wheat freeze damage 72% none, 28% light. Cattle condition 8% fair, 80% good, 12% excellent. Sheep 6% fair, 87% good, 7% excellent. Spring calves born 22%, 21% 1999, 15% avg. Farm flock ewes lambled 27%, 25% 1999, 27% avg. Farm flock sheep shorn 30%, 28% 1999, 29% avg. Hay, roughage supplies 55% adequate, 45% surplus. Spring grazing prospects 6% poor, 43% fair, 51% good. Temperatures during February were mostly above normal. The entire State received precipitation, snowfall but amounts were mostly below normal.