



# Crop Progress - State Stories

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**ALABAMA:** Temperatures in February were typical for late winter, with some reports of temperatures slightly warmer than normal. All areas of the State reported moderate to significant rainfall, which hindered some field work and delayed some planting. There were, however, no reports of flooding or water damage. Most reports indicate that farmers had adequate supplies of hay through the winter. Some farmers reported planting fewer wheat acres, or being behind in planting. Livestock, pastures, and wheat have been reported as being in fair to good condition. Precipitation estimates for the month ranged from 2.97 inches in Muscle Shoals to 7.9 inches in Haleyville. Average mean temperatures for the month ranged from 44.0°F in Moulton to 54.6°F in Mobile.

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**ALASKA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE**

**ARIZONA:** Temperatures across the State started out mostly above normal for the month of February. The temperatures were in the low 80°F in several parts of the State and a low of minus 12°F at Window Rock during the first two weeks of the month of February. The last two weeks were in the low 90°F in several parts of the State. Four of the fifty reporting weather stations finished the month of February with precipitation above 100 percent of normal. Roll and Teec Nos Pos finished the lowest at 9 and 12 percent of normal precipitation, respectively, and Bullhead City finished the highest with 119 percent of normal precipitation. Durum wheat and barley plantings were complete in February. Alfalfa harvesting was active on about two-thirds of the fields. Vegetable and citrus harvesting activities continued throughout the month of February.

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**ARKANSAS:** Throughout February temperatures were above the normal range and participation was also well above normal for the month. Weather patterns of warmer than normal temperatures have energized an early spring pattern of growth. Rainfall has provided enough moisture to begin early green up of warm season perennial forages. Producers got most all of the fields fertilized and ready for planting. Winter wheat and ryegrass has kicked off nicely. Livestock producers continued to feed hay and/or utilize winter grazing pastures.

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**CALIFORNIA:** February started with a cool, moist, wintry trend to a warmer and dry spring-like one with temperatures cooler than normal by 1 to 4°F. Much of the first week was dry, with precipitation totals averaging 1/4 inch or less. Mid-month heavy snows fell in the northern Sierras and around the Truckee/Tahoe area, where 1 foot snowfall totals were common. During the last week of the month, temperatures ranged from 40s to 80s in the mountains and in the deserts, respectively. The only area of the State that recorded any rainfall was the northern fringe of the state in the mountains north of Redding. Herbicidal sprays were applied to winter grain crops. Corn seed was received in advance of spring planting. Herbicidal sprays were applied to winter grain and alfalfa crops. Black-eyed beans were exported to foreign markets. In Colusa County, wheat fields in the county were growing at a very vigorous rate. Due to drying conditions, row crop fields were sprayed for weeds to clean them up. In Fresno County, reported warm weather was ideal for grain development. In Yuba County, rice fields were drained but rain keeps filling them up. Alfalfa hay was growing rapidly for first cutting. Warm, sunny weather assisted in drying fields so groundwork and preparation continued. Cotton beds were being prepared. Recent rains slowed citrus harvest. Citrus packing houses continued to pick and pack a variety of citrus for domestic and export markets. Grape vines were being pruned and tied. Kiwis were being trellised and new plants planted. In Sutter County, pruning of grapevines and fruit crops continued. In Fresno County, herbicides were applied to wine grapes. Seedless tangerines were netted to prevent cross pollination during the upcoming citrus bloom season. In Tulare County, nut packing houses were packing shelled and in-shell walnuts, shelled pecans, and pistachios for domestic and foreign export. In Sutter County, almonds were beginning to bloom. Warm weather aided almond bloom progression. Most almond orchards were in full bloom and the application of bloom sprays continued. Kale, mazuna, and other vegetable seed crops were fertilized. Certified Producers continued to grow winter vegetables, and selling produce such as cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots, and Brussel sprouts at the local Farmer's Markets. Summer vegetables continued

to be planted under hot-caps. Valley and foothill non-irrigated pasture grasses and forbs capitalized on the recent precipitation and the above normal temperatures with a flourish of new growth. Some early grasses were already developing seed. During the sunny days, bees were active in almond orchards. Some hives were moved into stone fruit orchards as the early varieties started to bloom.

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**COLORADO:** Topsoil moisture 9% very short, 17% short, 70% adequate, 4% surplus. Subsoil moisture 4% very short, 20% short, 69% adequate, 7% surplus. Pasture and range condition 14% very poor, 10% poor, 33% fair, 40% good, 3% excellent. Livestock condition 2% poor, 14% fair, 75% good, 9% excellent. Winter wheat condition 12% poor, 43% fair, 36% good, 9% excellent. Calving and lambing 13% and 10%, respectively. Above normal temperatures resulted in a snow cover decline throughout Colorado. The lack of snow cover protection for wintered crops remained a central concern as wheat in some eastern localities had broken dormancy. Snowfall accumulations were greatest east of the Front Range while trace amounts were received elsewhere. As of February 29, snowpack in Colorado was at 98 percent measured as percent of median snowfall.

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**DELAWARE:** For the month of February, maximum registered temperatures in some parts of the region were 67°F with a daily average high of 54°F and a minimum 8°F with daily average minimum of 24°F. Most areas saw 15 instances of precipitation with near maximum of 2.61+ inches of snow mixed with rain in one single day, which led relatively high surpluses in sub and topsoil moisture. The weather conditions also contributed to some flooding episodes, leaving soggy fields and hampering livestock feeding. The prevailing wet condition also had prevented Nitrogen application to small grain even when the date was moved back. On the other hand, a few reports were received regarding farm structures collapse from snow weight. Soil wheat has been top-dressed where possible. February goes in the books as one of a cold, rainy, and foggy month. Other farming activities for the end of the month and beginning of next month included: reading equipment, securing seed and nutrient applications plan, taking soil samples, purchasing supplies, and attending educational workshops as is usual for the month February.

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**FLORIDA:** Field work and soil preparation for spring plantings continued in Panhandle. Second week of month, standing water was present in fields. Sugarcane harvest continued in Glades, Hendry Counties. Flagler, Putnam County farmers continued planting cabbage, potatoes. By end of month, potato planting was complete. In Bradford County strawberries, onions, greens, cabbage, Swiss chard was harvested. Blueberry bushes in Marion County showed signs of blooms. Vegetable harvest in Southwest part of State slowed due to cooler weather. Third week of month, freezing weather caused concern for crops. Gadsden County farmers tilled soil in preparation for corn, peanut planting. Planting of late cabbage, harvesting of strawberries, onions, and greens occurred in Bradford County. Flagler, Putnam County farmers harvested cabbage. Some damage to vegetables noted in southwest counties due to cold wet weather conditions which reduced quality and volume. Farmers applied fungicides to protect crops from frost and wind damage. Miami-Dade County harvested green beans, pole beans, yellow squash, zucchini, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, sweet corn, boniato, malanga, avocado, bitter melon, herbs. Some pastures were in poor condition due to standing water, frost. Ranchers providing supplemental feed due to lack of forage crops. Lowest temperatures of season recorded across the citrus growing area. Abnormally dry conditions in Collier, Hendry, lower half of Indian River Counties. Citrus processing plants ran at full capacity. Early and midseason oranges were harvested and processed. Harvesting of Hamlin, Navel, and Pineapple oranges, early tangerines continued over for the season. Valencia oranges, Honey tangerines, colored grapefruit, a small amount of white grapefruit, and midseason oranges were being harvested for fresh fruit. Grove activity slow, irrigating, mowing, fertilizing, some are hedging and topping after harvest.

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**GEORGIA:** Throughout the State, producers have experienced frequent, heavy rain events during February that did not allow saturated fields to dry sufficiently before the next rain event occurred. Some flooding has occurred in the northern portion of the state. Precipitation totals for the month have ranged from 2.5 inches in the eastern central region to 7.4 inches in the northern region near Atlanta. For the majority of the state, rain and saturated soil have led to significant delays in fertilizer and pesticide applications, soil testing, field preparations, and planting. Widely fluctuating temperatures have also caused crops and pastures to suffer. Overall, above average temperatures led to increased disease and pest pressure, while cold snaps have caused frost damage to some small grains. Despite difficulties, a few producers have been able to get into their fields to begin laying plastic for spring vegetables and planting corn. In the northwestern region, pasture grasses and small grains have been in relatively good condition despite the rain and flooding. In the rest of the state, the majority of producers have experienced fair to poor pasture and small grain conditions due to saturated soil, increased disease and pest pressure, frost damage, and nitrogen deficiencies. In light of unfavorable weather and wet pasture, cattle condition is fair to good. Due to inconsistent grazing, hay supplies are adequate to depleted, depending on

the region. Fruit growers have begun pruning fruit trees. Fears have grown throughout the State about a late freeze damaging prematurely blooming fruit and nut trees. Onion condition was fair to good.

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**HAWAII: DATA NOT AVAILABLE**

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**IDAHO:** February brought much warmer weather and above normal temperatures throughout the State. Snow was melting in almost all areas and some fields were no longer snow covered with totally visible ground. There was a marked decrease in snow this month and scattered showers throughout. Blaine County had some large pools of standing water as the snow rapidly melted over still frozen ground. Crop activity was minimal in most areas, but winter wheat had begun to emerge. Some field work was getting started and many producers were preparing to begin spring plantings in the coming weeks. Gooding County reported operations spreading manure and tillage. Hay was in abundant supply. Caribou County reported that seed potatoes started to ship. Calving and lambing were underway and reports indicated things going well with no notable issues. Butte County estimated they were about halfway through calving. Ada County reported that pasture and grazing land were in high demand to obtain grass for the cattle in the coming season due to the Soda Fire last year. There were no other reports of adverse crop or livestock conditions for the month.

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**ILLINOIS:** Topsoil moisture 1% short, 79% adequate, 20% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% short, 85% adequate, 14% surplus. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 5% poor, 36% fair, 47% good, 11% excellent. Statewide, temperatures for the month of February averaged 32.7°F, 2.5°F above normal. Precipitation averaged 1.36 inches, 0.57 inch below normal. Care of livestock and calving were the main activities during the month.

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**INDIANA:** Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 3% short, 70% adequate, 26% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 7% short, 75% adequate, 17% surplus. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 5% poor, 27% fair, 54% good, 13% excellent. Temperatures for the month averaged 33.0°F, 2.6°F above normal. Statewide average precipitation was 2.69 inches, 0.42 inch above normal. The exceptional winter continued through February, which started and ended with above average temperatures. Fluctuating temperatures and sporadic winds presented challenges for many growers, interrupting fieldwork as well as creating grain storage issues. A dip in temperatures during the second week held temperatures 11.1°F below normal, on average, through the week. Total precipitation was a little below average north of Interstate 70, with the exception of Elkhart, Noble and Lagrange Counties in the northeastern part of the state. Southwestern counties bordered by the Wabash were drier than normal as well. Areas of the state received significant snowfalls on the 8th, the 14th and the 24th, but mild temperatures limited the duration of snow cover. Some burnt tips and damage was noted on wheat, and topdressing has been delayed where conditions prohibited fieldwork, but the crop remains in good condition. With calving underway, livestock are in good condition, though feedlots are getting muddy. Hay supplies are adequate in the south but tighter in the north, reflecting the opportunities for cuttings last spring and early summer when the northern part of the state received excessive rains. Mild conditions have raised concerns over insect pressure. Otherwise, growers kept busy hauling manure, spreading lime, installing tile, keeping up with paperwork and hauling grain to market.

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**IOWA:** Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 1% short, 73% adequate, and 26% surplus. Iowa experienced above normal temperatures for the month of February, which resulted in plenty of snowmelt throughout the State. There were numerous reports of drainage tile running steady, as well as standing water in low-lying areas. Fieldwork activities for the month of February were limited to scattered manure and dry fertilizer applications. Grain movement in February rated 27 percent moderate to heavy, slightly more than the previous month. Hay and roughage supplies were comparable to last year at this time. Cattle feeding was reported to be a challenge due to muddy conditions.

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**KANSAS:** Topsoil moisture supplies 5% very short, 31% short, 63% adequate, and 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture supplies 6% very short, 24% short, 68% adequate, and 2% surplus. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 5% poor, 35% fair, 51% good and 8% excellent; Hay and Roughage supplies 0% very short, 3% short, 86% adequate, 11% surplus. Stock water supplies were rated 2% very short, 12% short, 84% adequate, and 2% surplus. Cattle and Calves condition 0% very poor, 1% poor, 24% fair, 69% good and 6% excellent. Calving progress 24% calved. Cattle and calves death loss 0% heavy, 61% average, and 39% light. Sheep and Lambs condition 0% very poor, 0% poor, 31% fair, 67% good and 2% excellent. Sheep and lambs death loss 0% heavy, 66% average and 34% light. Temperatures averaged 4 to 6°F above normal. The spring-like conditions prompted winter wheat to break dormancy early. Rain was needed to support growth and development. Producers in southern counties were beginning spring fieldwork activities. The mild conditions have been good for the calving season.

**KENTUCKY:** For the month of February, the Commonwealth saw near normal temperatures and above normal rainfall. The State saw an average of 4.86 inches for February, which was over an inch above normal. The last day of February signals the end of meteorological winter and based on preliminary data, the state was on average, 4°F above normal for the season. This would make the 2015-16 winter one of the warmest on record for the State. Temperatures for the period averaged 39°F across the state which was 2°F warmer than normal. High temperatures averaged from 49 in the West to 46 in the East. Departure from normal high temperatures ranged from near normal in the West to 3°F cooler than normal in the East. Low temperatures averaged from 32°F in the West to 32°F in the East. Departure from normal low temperature ranged from 3°F warmer than normal in the West to 7°F warmer than normal in the East. Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 4.86 inches statewide which was 1.2 inches above normal and 133% of normal. Precipitation totals by climate division, West 4.02 inches, Central 5.19 inches, Bluegrass 4.66 inches and East 5.56 inches, which was -0.06, 1.22, 1.49 and 2.12 inches respectively from normal. Most tobacco producers have finished stripping their crop, but the remaining tobacco in the barns was being stripped as conditions allowed. The amount of tobacco stripped 98%. Wheat producers are optimistic about the crop. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 3% poor, 14% fair, 69% good, 13% excellent. Hay supplies have tightened for some producers, but a relatively mild winter has helped most to have adequate stocks on hand. Hay and roughage supplies 2% very short, 15% short, 77% adequate, 6% surplus. At the end of January, 86% of supplies were rated as adequate to surplus, compared to 83% currently. Livestock conditions have declined slightly from last month. Wet, muddy conditions for some producers have been stressful on livestock. Livestock condition 1% very poor, 3% poor, 17% fair, 71% good, 8% excellent. Producers marketed their grain and tobacco crops and attended various commodity meetings across the State. Farmers were busy performing routine equipment maintenance in preparation for the upcoming planting season.

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**LOUISIANA:** Wet conditions during February slowed crop producers with field preparation for spring planting. Equipment preparation was completed as producers awaited dryer conditions. Sugarcane producers clipped and plowed stubble, as well as repaired field damage from the wet harvest season. Livestock producers continued to feed hay and graze rye grass pasture as calving season wraps up. Crawfish producers continued to put out traps for harvest. Budding and flowering had begun for many fruit and shade trees.

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**MARYLAND:** For the month of February, maximum registered temperatures in some parts of the region were 67°F with daily average high of 54°F and minimum 8°F with daily average minimum of 24°F. Most areas saw 15 instances of precipitation with near maximum of 2.61+ inches of snow mixed with rain in one single day, which led relatively high surpluses in sub and topsoil moisture. The weather conditions also contributed to some flooding episodes, leaving soggy fields and hampering livestock feeding. The prevailing wet condition also had prevented Nitrogen application to small grain even when the date was moved back. On the other hand, a few reports were received regarding farm structures collapse from snow weight. Soil wheat has been top-dressed where possible. February goes in the books as one of a cold, rainy, and foggy month. Other farming activities for the end of the month and beginning of next month included reading equipment, securing seed and nutrient applications plan, taking soil samples, purchasing supplies, and attending educational workshops as is usual for the month February.

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**MICHIGAN:** Topsoil moisture 1% short, 72% adequate, and 27% surplus. Subsoil moisture 11% short, 75% adequate, and 14% surplus. Winter wheat condition rated 1% very poor, 6% poor, 31% fair, 14% good, and 14% excellent. Temperatures fluctuated widely throughout the month, moving from 8-12 °F above normal during the first week of the month to 2-5 °F below normal during the second week before returning to normal and above normal late in the month. The Upper Peninsula saw its fair share of lake effect snow throughout the month. A storm system on February 2 brought upwards of 6-12 inches of snow to the U.P., which was followed by two weeks of nearly daily snow events to the area. Some areas reported receiving more than 15 inches of snow during the second week of the month, with as much as 25.5 inches received the peak in Munising during that period. In the Lower Peninsula, heavy rains and isolated thunderstorms came across the Central region during the first few days of February. A high wind event on February 19 brought gusts ranging from 46 to 58 mph across many areas, bringing down trees and power lines, causing damage to buildings and property, and kicking up massive waves on Lake Michigan. A winter storm on February 24-25 brought significant snowfall to many areas of the Lower Peninsula, causing power outages, school closings, and even closings of State government offices; snowfall totals from this storm ranged from 6-14 inches, but warmer weather the following weekend melted much of what had fallen. Topsoil condition remained essentially unchanged from last month. No areas of the State were rated abnormally dry after the February 9 Drought Monitor, and no major icing or flooding issues were reported. Milder temperatures have kept winter wheat and rye crops from seeing significant freeze damage, and farmers

are making plans for early nitrogen applications on winter wheat, but some crop weather reporters expressed concern that wheat and rye were vulnerable to winter kill should a cold snap occur. Sugarbeet storage conditions have been poor; more than average spoilage was expected. Maple taps were going in during February and sap was running. Fruit growers kept busy pruning their orchards, although in the northwest, many orchards were still snow covered. Livestock were reported to be doing well except for some mud to contend with; the mild winter has required less forage for livestock farmers building hay supplies.

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**MINNESOTA:** Temperatures were mostly warmer than normal across the state throughout February. Two early month blizzards brought above normal snowfall to southwestern Minnesota. The February 2-3 snowstorm was the fifth largest February snowfall on record in the Twin Cities, with 9.4 inches of snow measured at The Twin Cities International Airport, and a high of 13.5 inches of snow reported in Bloomington. The February 7-8 blizzard was marked by snow and high winds, which whipped up the existing snow pack, particularly in southwestern Minnesota, where gusts of up to 58 MPH were noted. The preliminary statewide average temperature for the month was 4°F above average. High temperatures were reached on February 19th and 27th, with several locations reporting high temperatures into the 50s and 60s. A low of -36°F was reported on February 14 at Embarrass. The preliminary statewide average precipitation was slightly (.05 inch) below normal, but some areas received half an inch or more above the normal precipitation levels. With the warmer temperatures, many areas report little to no snow cover remaining. Concerns persist about possible winterkill in alfalfa and fall seeded crops. Livestock producers have continued calving and lambing. Livestock conditions are generally described as very good, with a few concerns related to muddy conditions in some areas. Feed supply continues to be more than adequate.

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**MISSISSIPPI:** The State saw a fair amount of rain for the month with some areas experiencing severe weather conditions, causing flooding and saturated ground conditions. Warmer weather coupled with welcomed rainfall made planting for some areas of the state ideal, which led to some producers preparing for spring plantings. Aerial applications of burn down herbicides have also been applied over the last several weeks. Winter wheat looked average and was in need of warmer temperatures. Cattlemen were feeding hay.

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**MISSOURI:** Topsoil moisture 11% short, 80% adequate, 9% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 7% short, 84% adequate, 8% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 8% short, 84% adequate, 8% surplus. Stock water supplies 1% short, 94% adequate, 5% surplus. Winter Wheat condition 1% very poor, 8% poor, 40% fair, 49% good, 2% excellent. Field activities included tillage and fertilizer applications.

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**MONTANA:** Topsoil moisture 10% very short, 3% last year; 29% short, 16% last year; 58% adequate, 75% last year; 3% surplus, 6% last year. Subsoil moisture 11% very short, 4% last year; 34% short, 16% last year; 52% adequate, 68% last year; 3% surplus, 12% last year. Winter wheat – wind damage 77% none, 71% last year; 19% light, 22% last year; 3% moderate, 5% last year; 1% heavy, 2% last year. Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage 79% none, 65% last year; 19% light, 25% last year; 2% moderate, 8% last year; 0% heavy, 2% last year. Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover 62% very poor, 37% last year; 22% poor, 31% last year; 11% fair, 25% last year; 3% good, 7% last year; 2% excellent, 0% last year. Livestock grazing accessibility – 64% open, 49% last year; 14% difficult, 24% last year; 22% closed, 27% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed – cattle and calves 98% fed, 96% last year. Livestock birthing – calving complete 8%, 10% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed – sheep and lambs 98% fed, 97% last year. Livestock birthing – lambing complete 6%, 5% last year. Warm temperatures and lack of snow cover have some farmers beginning spring work in their fields and are making plans for early planting according to reporters. Winter damage to winter wheat increased from the previous month as a result of decreased snow coverage. The State's snow coverage fell to 5 percent good to excellent which is slightly below last year at this time when snow coverage was 7 percent good to excellent. Livestock grazing is 78 percent open to difficult compared to 73 percent at the same time last year. Dry conditions and lack of grass have more producers providing supplemental feed at higher rates than the previous year with 98 percent of both cattle and sheep being fed, compared with 96 percent of cattle and 97 percent of sheep last year. Livestock birthing continues in mild conditions for the season with 8 percent of calving and 6 percent of lambing complete so far which is behind the five year average of 12 percent for cattle but right on the five year average of 6 percent for sheep.

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**NEBRASKA:** Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 14% short, 80% adequate, and 6% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 15% short, 80% adequate, and 3% surplus. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 3% poor, 38% fair, 49% good, 10% excellent. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 7% short, 91% adequate, and 1% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies

1% very short, 6% short, 88% adequate, 5% surplus. Cattle and calves condition, 0% very poor, 0% poor, 13% fair, 73% good, 14% excellent. Calving, 10% complete. Cattle and calves death loss, 1% heavy, 72% average, 27% heavy. Sheep and lamb condition, 0% very poor, 0% poor, 21% fair, 77% good, 2% excellent. Sheep and lamb death loss, 1% heavy, 62% average, 37% light. Temperatures averaged 4 to 6°F above normal. Snowfall occurred early in the month across much of the State, with heaviest amounts in central and northeastern counties. By the end of February, the snow had melted leaving little or no snow cover statewide. The mild conditions have been good for the calving season. The frost was coming out of the ground, leaving feedlots muddy.

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**NEVADA:** Well below normal temperatures followed the low that pushed through the last week of January, which gave way to mild temperatures by mid-week in the northern and central regions of the State the first of February. Weather conditions were clear, calm, and dry with no precipitation across the northern areas until the third week of the month, when a low front moved through bringing rain, snow, and high winds. Temperatures moderated toward the end of the week and into the final week of February. The southern portion of Nevada experienced a gradual increase in daily temperatures from the mid-40s to the high 70s. The last week of February had a slight dipping of daily temperatures from the mid-70s down into the mid-60s.

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**NEW ENGLAND:** Warm temperatures and little snow cover continued to be a concern from the last month throughout the region. Connecticut experienced heavy rains in some areas and little winter conditions. Pruning is ongoing and maple taps appeared to be doing well. In much of Maine, snow was minimal and potato crops have been a concern in some areas. Massachusetts respondents reported variable weather conditions from average to fluctuating from cold to very warm. Snow cover also was reported as minimal here in many areas. Maple taps were started in the early part of the month among some farmers in anticipation of a warm winter. In New Hampshire, the weather was reported as much the same as other states. Rhode Island did experience snowfall among rainstorms; however, warmer temperatures have been more predominant throughout. Vermont was reported as setting record warm temperatures. Additionally, Vermont had some flooding due to heavy rains. Maple farmers struggled to keep sap flowing with the fluctuating temperatures. Farm activities remained the same this past month. Orchardists continued pruning and farmers attended meetings, finished up last year record-keeping, and repaired equipment among other items.

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**NEW JERSEY:** El Nino continues to impact the State with unusually rapid fluctuations in temperature and weather. Some areas had two to three feet of snow with 5 to 10 degree temperatures which then rapidly switched to 50 to 65 degree days with about three to five inches or more of heavy rain and thunderstorms. This was good for snow removal, but not for outdoor farm activities. On the plus side of this wet and changeable weather, the large amount of rain and snow was recharging the groundwater nicely after such a dry fall. Soil testing and fertilizer planning were ongoing. Onion seeding has begun. Spinach and kale transplants are being prepared. Overwintered crops were waking up. Growers were finishing up winter tasks and preparing for spring.

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**NEW MEXICO:** February delivered above average temperatures coupled with below average precipitation to much of the State. Reporter comments from District 10 indicated an early snow melt. Average temperatures ranged from 8°F above to 1°F below normal. Daytime highs ranged from 55°F at Chama to 91°F at Roswell. Overnight lows remained below freezing at all weather stations, with several locations recording temperatures well below 0°F. Most notably, Eagle Nest recorded a low of -27°F. A relatively strong El Nino provided beneficial moisture to many locations from January into early-February, but comments indicated that precipitation accumulation had decreased in recent weeks, leading to irrigation in some wheat fields and increased concern about fire danger in native pastures that currently have ample feedstuffs available. Monthly precipitation totals were below normal for most locations. Reporter comments from Curry County indicated that winter wheat was starting to show new growth following warm temperatures toward month's end. Ranchers in the area were marketing some of their wheat-fed cattle. Elsewhere, approximately 80 percent of the winter wheat in Union County was being grazed, and 20 percent of the irrigation circles used for corn have been disked as producers prepare for the upcoming season. Topsoil moisture 30% very short, 20% short, 48% adequate, 2% surplus. Subsoil moisture 5% very short, 15% short, 80% adequate. Winter wheat condition 20% fair, 30% good, 50% excellent. Cows calved 15%, 7% last month, 4% last year. Cattle receiving supplemental feed 83%, 67% last month, 90% last year. Cattle condition 2% very poor, 3% poor, 29% fair, 57% good, 9% excellent. Ewes lambled 12%, 4% last month, 4% last year. Sheep receiving supplemental feed 77%, 78% last month, 91% last year. Sheep and lamb condition 15% very poor, 19% poor, 15% fair, 51% good. Feed and concentrate supplies 5% very short, 18% short, 57% adequate, 20% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 7% very short, 7% short, 60% adequate, 26% surplus. Stock water supplies 3% very short, 23% short, 74% adequate.

**NEW YORK:** The State experienced wide fluctuations in temperature throughout the month; a few nights of below zero temperatures were reported early in the month but by mid-February a large warm front had brought lots of rain and warmer weather. In some parts of the State very little or no snow cover was reported. Some concerns were reported over flooded fields and frost damage to alfalfa fields due to lack of snow. In addition, unusually warm and wet weather has farmers concerned about bees and fruit development. Despite these conditions some reports of manure injection were reported. Field activities for the month included tending livestock, trees, and vines, and fixing and maintaining machinery and structures.

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**NORTH CAROLINA:** Days suitable for field work 2.5. Topsoil moisture 46% adequate and 54% surplus. Subsoil moisture 46% adequate and 54% surplus. Snow, ice, and rain made for saturated soil conditions in February. This led to delays in field work and challenges in feeding livestock. Heavy winds were observed, and a severe storm with damaging winds and tornado reports occurred on February 24th. Winter wheat condition 10% very poor, 19% poor, 38% fair, 30% good, 3% excellent. Oats condition 5% very poor, 18% poor, 46% fair, 29% good, 2% excellent. Barley condition 1% very poor, 22% poor, 37% fair, 40% good. Pasture conditions 6% very poor, 24% poor, 49% fair, 19% good, 2% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 12% very short, 40% short, 46% adequate, 2% surplus.

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**NORTH DAKOTA:** Topsoil moisture 4% very short, 22% short, 71% adequate, 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 8% very short, 25% short, 65% adequate, 2% surplus. Winter wheat condition, 5% very poor, 4% poor, 37% fair, 53% good, 1% excellent. Cattle and calves condition, 0% very poor, 1% poor, 12% fair, 77% good, 10% excellent. Calving, 7% complete. Cattle and calves death loss, 0% heavy, 41% average, 59% light. Sheep and lambs condition, 0% very poor, 2% poor, 14% fair, 73% good, 11% excellent. Ewes lambing, 11% complete. Sheep and lambs death loss, 1% heavy, 38% average, 61% light. Hay and roughage supplies, 1% very short, 5% short, 81% adequate, 13% surplus. Stock water supplies, 2% very short, 9% short, 86% adequate, 3% surplus. Temperatures averaged 6 to 9°F above normal. The mild conditions have been easy on livestock and limited hay demands. Snow cover was minimal as the month closed. Producers were busy moving grain to market before spring road weight limits changed.

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**OHIO:** Topsoil moisture 5% short, 61% adequate, and 34% surplus. Subsoil moisture 12% short, 70% adequate, 18% surplus. Winter wheat condition rated 2% poor, 26% fair, 55% good, and 17% excellent. The February 2015 statewide average temperature was 30.0°F, 2.8°F above normal. Precipitation averaged 3.15 inches Statewide, which was 0.89 inch above normal for the month of February. The mild weather which has characterized this winter season continued for much of the month. Most of the state saw above normal precipitation amounts except for the northwest. Williams, Defiance, Paulding, Van Wert, Mercer, Fulton, Henry, Putnam, Allen, Lucas, Wood, Hancock, and Hardin Counties received below normal precipitation. There was a snow storm late in the month, which helped some areas with low moisture. The lack of snow cover throughout the month was not an issue due to the mild temperatures. The mild winter has produced wheat that looks to be in great condition. Some high wind events in the northern part of the state may have caused some damage to vines and fruit trees. Muddy soils and surges of precipitation contributed to soil erosion in fields without residue of cover crops.

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**OKLAHOMA:** The State experienced warm and dry weather for the month of February. The heaviest rains were received in the South Central and Southeast districts. According to the OCS Mesonet, the weather was mostly dry and warm, creating fire warnings for much of the state. The worst of which was a 17,000 acre fire north of Buffalo in Harper County. Precipitation across the state averaged 1.03 inches, ranging from 0.28 of an inch in the Panhandle district to 2.15 inches in the Southeast district. Statewide temperatures averaged in the mid 40's, with the lowest recording of 2°F at Kenton on Wednesday, February 3rd and the highest recording of 91°F at Buffalo on Thursday, February 18th. Topsoil and subsoil moisture conditions were rated mostly adequate to short.

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**OREGON:** Rain for the month of February diminished from the heavy pace of December and January allowing some field work to get done. The State experienced fairly mild conditions with the exception of a few heavy rain events across the state. Soils were saturated in the west and just beginning to dry out. Polk County reported that flooding concerns greatly subsided during the month. The west saw a good amount of snow and precipitation. Runoff started to fill some reservoirs. Lake County reported that water level was at 111% of normal since the beginning of the year. Record rainfalls this winter caused considerable field erosion, especially on newly planted fields. Producers started to evaluate the damage. Cattle and sheep appeared to have wintered well. The warm weather helped reduce livestock feed consumption. Clatsop County occasionally turned out cows from confinement, on a day to day basis. Pastures were starting to grow. Warming weather had grasses showing good signs of growth, earlier than normal. In the east, wheat had emerged and

green was visible all over. Morrow County reported winter wheat in the two, three or four leaf stage of growth. In the west, plants were showing earlier than normal. Prunes and peaches were blooming. Pears and apples had swollen buds. Hazelnuts had broken bud and producers were in the orchards pruning. Early vegetable plantings went into fields that were well drained. Nearly all perennial crops were about ten days ahead of last year's bloom.

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**PENNSYLVANIA:** February winter weather in the State, while fiercely cold for a short time, appears to have abated with icy cold mid-February temperatures giving way to a warm and rainy glimpse at what many hope to be an early spring. Across the State, most snow has melted and some fields have even had enough exposure to begin greening. Despite the abundance of mud and some reports of flooding, the opportunities presented by this early thaw are not being overlooked. Maple syrup production is largely active and the preparation and pruning of fruit trees has begun in the anticipation and hope of continued fair weather. Other field activities, limited only by wet conditions, included machine maintenance, manure hauling, soil sampling, and preparations for spring seeding.

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**SOUTH CAROLINA:** February was another wet month with windy and warmer temperatures across the State. The average high temperatures ranged from mid 50s to low 60s and the average low temperatures ranged between low 30s to low 40s. Precipitation estimates for the State ranged from 2.28 to 7.73 inches. In the northern counties small grain seeding is complete and crops are ahead of schedule due to warm winter. Some of the oats planted early have already headed. Most other small grains are progressing well. Pasture and livestock are in good condition. In the rest of the State, rain is still delaying field work. The field preparation has not started yet in some parts because the ground is too wet. The frequent rains have limited application of chemicals and fertilizers.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Topsoil moisture 4% very short, 21% short, 72% adequate, 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 8% very short, 24% short, 66% adequate, 2% surplus. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 1% poor, 30% fair, 62% good, and 7% excellent. Stock water supplies 7% very short, 21% short, 68% adequate, 4% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 1% very poor, 3% poor, 84% adequate, and 12% excellent. Cattle and calf conditions 0% very poor, 0% poor, 16% fair, 74% good, and 10% excellent. Calving progress 6%. Cattle and calf death loss 0% heavy, 52% average, 48% light. Sheep and lamb condition 0% very poor, 1% poor, 19% fair, 67% good, and 13% excellent. Ewes lambing 15%. Sheep and lamb death loss 0% heavy, 53% average, 47% light. Temperatures were 6 to 8°F above normal for many locations. The warmer weather, particularly late in the month, decreased the snow cover substantially and was beneficial for calving and lambing.

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**TENNESSEE:** Days suitable 2.3. Topsoil moisture 1% short, 56% adequate, 43% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% short, 62% adequate, 37% surplus. Winter wheat condition 4% poor, 20% fair, 61% good, 15% excellent. Pasture and Range condition 4% very poor, 18% poor, 42% fair, 33% good, 3% excellent. Cattle condition 3% poor, 30% fair, 61% good, 6% excellent. Hay supplies 3% very short, 13% short, 74% adequate, 10% surplus. The State experienced several days of measureable rainfall leading to some minor flooding and muddy conditions. This limited field activities for wheat producers such as fertilizer and insecticide applications, and early applications of nitrogen.

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**TEXAS:** The State experienced moderate weather conditions for the month of February. Precipitation throughout the State was scarce with the eastern part of the State receiving the highest levels of ranging from trace amounts to upwards of 3.0 inches. Isolated areas in East Texas experienced precipitation upwards of 5.0 inches. Hail was experienced in areas of the Edwards Plateau, North East, and South Texas. Cotton and oat harvest was concluded. Pecan harvest was on its finishing stage.

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**UTAH:** Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 1% last year; 1% short, 41% last year; 74% adequate, 58% last year; 25% surplus, 0% last year. Subsoil moisture 0% very short, 8% last year; 12% short, 39% last year; 85% adequate, 51% last year; 3% surplus, 2% last year. Pasture and range condition 3% very poor, 0% last year; 10% poor, 13% last year; 29% fair, 40% last year; 56% good, 44% last year; 2% excellent, 3% last year. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 0% poor, 1% last year; 34% fair, 24% last year; 55% good, 71% last year; 11% excellent, 4% last year. Hay and roughage supplies 0% very short, 0% last year; 0% short, 0% last year; 60% adequate, 70% last year; 40% surplus year, 30% last year. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 2% last year; 5% short, 6% last year; 89% adequate, 91% last year; 5% surplus, 1% last year. Cattle and calves condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 0% poor, 0% last year; 23% fair, 9% last year; 67% good, 77% last year; 10% excellent, 14% last year. Sheep and lambs condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 0% poor, 0% last year; 29% fair, 17% last year; 63% good, 76% last year; 8% excellent, 7% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed for cattle 63%, 57% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed for sheep 56%, 53% last year.

Cows calved 15%, 15% last year. Farm Flock Ewes Lambed 14%, 12% last year, and Range Flock Ewes Lambed 2%, 1% last year. During February, Utah received less precipitation than the historical average, with the hardest hit region being the Southwestern part of the State. Abnormally dry conditions persist in two-thirds of the State with the Southeast primarily being the only region not affected. Overall drought conditions have improved since the beginning of the year. This is indicated by topsoil and subsoil moisture content which has significantly improved from February 2015. Recent warming conditions have caused the snowpack to melt more quickly dropping it below 100% faster than anticipated.

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**VIRGINIA:** Barley conditions were 2% poor, 33% fair, 60% good, and 5% excellent. Oats conditions were 49% fair and 51% good. Winter wheat conditions were 3% poor, 38% fair, 55% good, and 4% excellent. Livestock conditions were 1% very poor, 9% poor, 30% fair, 54% good, and 6% excellent. Pasture and range conditions were 16% very poor, 25% poor, 29% fair, 27% good, and 3% excellent. Percent of feed obtained from pastures 14%. February weather conditions were predominantly wet with snow, rain, and ice. Heavy damaging winds occurred during the month, and a severe storm with tornado reports hit on February 24th. Farm activities have been limited during the month with cold, wet conditions. The resulting mud has been challenging for many livestock producers, causing concern over pasture conditions and hay supplies.

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**WASHINGTON:** It was a mild but wet late winter throughout the State. Water levels were reported as excessive and record breaking in almost all areas, especially compared to the drought conditions of the previous two years. Water forecasts were as high as 150% of normal and reservoirs were filling nicely. The western portion reported steady sheet flow and flooding in the fields. Central and eastern areas received little to no new snow this month and remaining snow cover was almost gone in all but the highest elevations. There was little to no run-off as most of the accumulated moisture was absorbed into the ground. Livestock looked good across the State. Lambing was well underway in all regions and calving season had begun. The moisture and wet conditions put most fieldwork on hold, but there was some intermittent work done throughout the month. Some spring wheat planting occurred. Orchards were pruning their trees when possible. Snohomish County reported some cane-tying being done. Adams County reported growers spraying for broadleaf and grassy weeds in winter wheat fields. Columbia County was spraying and doing some tillage work. Overall, the State was pleased with the moisture levels and preparing for an early spring.

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**WEST VIRGINIA:** Topsoil moisture was 77% adequate and 23% surplus, compared to 4% short, 72% adequate, and 24% surplus last year. Subsoil moisture was 6% short, 80% adequate, and 14% surplus, compared to 1% very short, 8% short, 73% adequate, and 18% surplus last year. Hay and roughage supplies were 1% very short, 9% short, 87% adequate, and 3% surplus compared to 3% very short, 15% short, 75% adequate, and 7% surplus last year. Feed grain supplies were 4% short, 93% adequate, and 3% surplus compared to 5% short, 89% adequate, and 6% surplus last year. Winter wheat conditions were 6% very poor, 20% poor, 24% fair, 47% good, and 3% excellent. Cattle and calves were 2% poor, 17% fair, 74% good, and 7% excellent. Calving was 24% complete, compared to 33% last year. Sheep and lambs were 2% poor, 22% fair, 71% good, and 5% excellent. Lambing was 30% complete, compared to 34% last year. This month has been a mix of cold weather with heavy snow and warm weather with rain, making muddy conditions in fields and pastures. Farming activities included calving, lambing, making plans for the upcoming planting season, and watching livestock for health issues.

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**WISCONSIN:** February temperatures at the five major weather stations ranged from 2.1 to 3.5°F above normal. Average highs ranged from 29.8 in Eau Claire to 35.0 in Milwaukee, while average lows ranged from 13.2 to 21.9 in those same cities. Precipitation ranged from 0.52 inches in Madison to 1.15 inches in Green Bay. Green Bay received the most snowfall out of the major cities with 12.2 inches. Madison received the least, with 6.0 inches of snow for the month. Significant cold and snow during early February gave way to well above normal temperatures in the second half of the month. Temperatures climbed into the 50s in many areas during the final weekend of the month and weather stations throughout the State observed record daily high temperatures on February 27th or 28th. Reporters commented that the unusually warm and dry weather has melted snow cover in any areas of the State. The weather has maple syrup producers anticipating an early sap run. Hay producers are concerned that the lack of snow cover may lead to ice damage to alfalfa.

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**WYOMING:** Topsoil moisture 3% very short, 37% short, 60% adequate. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 35% short, 63% adequate. Winter wheat condition 4% poor, 24% fair, 72% good. Hay and roughage supplies 6% short, 55% adequate, 39% surplus. Livestock condition 1% poor, 17% fair, 75% good, 7% excellent. Stock water supplies 3% very short, 28% short, 69% adequate. Pasture and range condition 7% poor, 40% fair, 53% good. Cows calved 9%, 12% 2015, 12% average. Ewes lambing 8%, 22% 2015, 14% average. Sheep shorn 13%, 22% 2015, 15% average.

## Statistical Methodology

**Survey Procedures:** Crop progress and condition estimates included in this report are based on survey data collected each week from early April through the end of November. Additionally, survey respondents are contacted four times during the winter season – once per month in December, January, February, and March. The non-probability crop progress and condition surveys include input from approximately 4,000 respondents whose occupations provide them opportunities to make visual observations and frequently bring them in contact with farmers in their counties. Based on standard definitions, these respondents subjectively estimate the progress of crops through various stages of development, as well as the progress of producer activities. They also provide subjective evaluations of crop and soil moisture conditions. Any weather data mentioned in this report is provided by outside sources such as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Agricultural Weather Information Service (AWIS).

## Information Contacts

Listed below are the commodity statisticians in the Crops Branch of the National Agricultural Statistics Service to contact for additional information. E-mail inquiries may be sent to [nass@nass.usda.gov](mailto:nass@nass.usda.gov)

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