



# Crop Progress - State Stories

ISSN: 2470-9816

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Released February 28, 2017, by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Agricultural Statistics Board, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

**ALABAMA:** While the State received more much needed rainfall during the month of February, most of the heavy rains were in the southeast corner of the State. With above average temperatures and less rainfall the last two weeks, the United States Drought Monitor is showing increased drought conditions for much of the northern half of the State. Water supplies have been replenished and pastures and crops were responding well to the increased moisture as well as the unseasonably warm temperatures. Pastures were in fair condition and have been greening very well. Cattle were in good condition and were gradually being returned to pastures. Some producers have adequate hay supplies to support their herds with the improving pastureland, but some were still very short as they have been feeding throughout the entire winter. Wheat and oats were looking good for this time of year. The mild conditions have caused some trees to bud which could be problematic if there is another frost in the near future. Preparations were being made for spring planted crops as the days suitable for fieldwork have been abundant throughout the month. Average mean temperatures for the month ranged from 50°F in Talladega to 59°F in Mobile. Precipitation estimates for the month ranged from 1.09 inches in Huntsville to 3.78 inches in Evergreen in the lower part of the State.

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**ALASKA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE**

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**ARIZONA:** At the beginning of the month all but five weather stations reported above normal temperatures across Arizona, but at the end of the month of February only 14 of 52 weather stations reported temperatures above normal. The temperature extremes were a high of 90°F in Sahuarita on the second week of February, and a low of 3°F at the Grand Canyon reported at the first week of February. Nogales had the lowest percent of normal precipitation at 40% and Teec Nos Pos finished the highest with 401% of normal precipitation. Barley and durum wheat planting was virtually completed by the end of the month. Pasture and range conditions ranged from good to fair for the entire month.

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**ARKANSAS:** The month of February saw warmer than normal weather which has caused some early greening of plants, grasses, and trees. Some limited fieldwork began to include pre-plant tilling. Burndown chemical applications being applied. Soil moisture was fair but need some rain. Livestock were in good condition and benefited from the warmer weather. Wheat has received the first application of nitrogen & herbicide applications. No other row crops were planted yet but equipment was being prepped.

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**CALIFORNIA:** The first week of February began with high pressure over the Great Basin. Widespread rains and snow fell across the northern two thirds of the State. At the beginning of month, growers continued to wait for fields to dry out sufficiently to resume planting winter grains. Rain greatly benefited the growth of already planted grains and fields crops. Some orchard pruning, discing, weed control, and pre-bloom spraying continued throughout the month. Removal of older orchards and vineyards continued in preparation for replanting with new varieties. The standing water in vineyards and orchards caused concern for the health of the trees and vines. Navel orange harvest continued as weather permitted. Tangerines continued to be harvested. Winter vegetables continued to mature. Non-irrigated pasture and rangeland continued to green up in response to the much needed precipitation and warming temperatures. Sheep grazed idle fields and dormant alfalfa fields. The second week of February, was another wet week across the State. Most days received widespread precipitation across a large portion of the State. By the second week, ground preparations continued to be hindered, with low spots in the fields showing stress from standing water. Almond buds were swelling and a few early blossoms were reported in the Southern San Joaquin Valley. In third week of February, warm and wet conditions across the State from a strong Pacific system moved inland. The system brought rain to most of the State, with mountains receiving snow. Frequent rain continued slowing the work for vegetables. Weed control continued for tomatoes. Garlic and onion planting had emerged and slowed good growth. Broccoli was growing steadily. Fields were planted with melon and sweet corn as weather permitted. The final week of February was also wet, with temperatures staying steady. Widespread freezes were reported Thursday through Saturday across the State. Cold temperatures and an active weather

pattern led to yet more snow in the mountains, with up to two feet falling in parts of the central and northern Sierras. At the end of the month olive groves were pruned. Herbicides were applied in some vineyards. Early varieties of nectarine and peach were blooming in Fresno County. Cherry bloom began in Tulare County. The Navel orange harvest resumed. Recent rains impacted the overall quality of the citrus. By the end of the month, almonds were beginning to bloom across the State. Drying conditions allowed for fields to be prepared for cultivating in Madera, Fresno and Tulare Counties. Ground was being prepped for planting tomatoes. Herbicides were being applied to onions. Strawberry fields continued to thrive. Carrots continued to be harvested. Where field conditions permitted, bee hives were staged in preparation for the pending bloom season. Non-irrigated pasture and rangeland continued to improve due to the winter's precipitation. Range was reported to be in fair to excellent condition. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued to decline as range conditions improved.

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**COLORADO:** Topsoil moisture 10% very short, 36% short, 53% adequate, 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture 12% very short, 34% short, 53% adequate, 1% surplus. Winter wheat condition 6% very poor, 21% poor, 33% fair, 37% good, 3% excellent. Cows calved 14%, 13% 2016. Ewes lambled 7%, 10% 2016. Livestock condition 4% poor, 18% fair, 71% good, 7% excellent. Pasture and range condition 13% very poor, 17% poor, 42% fair, 25% good, 3% excellent. Record high temperatures during February reduced snow cover significantly in eastern districts, although some western counties continued to receive seasonal snowfall. Warm, windy, and dry conditions were concerning for wheat and pasture condition where adequate moisture hasn't been received throughout the season. Reporters in eastern counties noted that some wheat is breaking dormancy due to warm temperatures. Warm weather has been favorable for livestock condition and early fieldwork. As of February 27, snowpack was at 138% measured as percent of median snowfall.

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**DELAWARE:** For the month of February, maximum registered temperature was 77°F with minimum of 17°F. There were 4 instances of rain and 2 instances of snow with near maximum of 0.75 inches of precipitation for the month. The temperature is unseasonably warm with low soil moisture. No freeze kill has occurred to the tillage radishes that were planted yet to date. February goes in the books as one of the mildest winter month, with morning-time foggy episodes and cloudy skies. Other than farming, activities for the month included taking soil samples, repairing equipment, purchasing supplies, spreading manure, and applying fertilizer.

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**FLORIDA:** February maintained similar weather to January for most of the month, warm and dry. Nighttime temperatures dipped during the first week, with some areas receiving frost, but they warmed up for the remainder of the month. Although the Panhandle remained free of abnormally dry conditions, central and southern Florida did not. By the second week of the month all southern counties were considered abnormally dry, with the majority in a moderate drought. Producers began planting potatoes in Flagler and Putnam Counties toward the end of the month. Sugarcane harvest continued on schedule in Broward, Glades, Hendry, and Palm Beach Counties. A wide variety of vegetables, including collards, eggplant, strawberries, and zucchini were harvested across Florida and brought to market. Pasture quality continued to decline in most counties. Brevard and Indian River Counties, however, both reported some pasture improvement beginning in the third week and continuing through the end of the month. The cattle remained in mostly fair to good condition. Early and mid-season orange harvesting activities slowed down and were nearing the end for the season. Grapefruit harvest continues at levels lower than last season, but still coming in at a fairly steady pace each week. Honey and royal tangerines continued to be harvested for the fresh market. Grove work included applying bactericides, hedging, fertilizing, and spraying. Irrigation was running heavily in all citrus growing areas.

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**GEORGIA:** Total rainfall for the month ranged from 0.7 to 6.0 inches. On average, rainfall totals were 3 inches lower than normal for the month. Although the southern half of the State remained drought free, extreme drought conditions intensified in the most northern counties of the State. On average, temperatures were 4 to 9°F warmer than normal for the month, which put some areas almost 1 month ahead in the breaking of spring dormancy. Many fruit crops were in full bloom. Insufficient chill hours had many fruit producers worried about future yields. Pecan buds started to swell. Winter grazing and small grains condition was fair to good and steadily improving with the aid of mild temperatures and sufficient rainfall. Pasture and forage growth remained delayed in the northern half of the state, but pulled ahead of schedule in the southern half. Much of the State experienced higher than normal weed growth in pastures that thinned due to drought damage and delayed growth of fall planted annual forages. Aphids and rust in fields were also reported. The Statewide hay shortage continued, and several producers struggled with depleted supplies. Late-planted small grains for forages started to provide limited grazing opportunities. Cattle condition was good despite limited grazing and rationed hay of below-average quality. Many operations continued to work on cleaning up damage from the severe storm systems in January, including fixing fences, irrigation systems, and buildings. More than 4,000 mature pecan trees were damaged

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in the storms, and producers continued to work on cleaning up their orchards. Other farm activities included fertilizing pastures and hay fields, applying pre-emergent herbicides on forages, sampling soil, spreading litter, applying lime, and breaking peanut land. Cover crop termination began in preparation for corn planting in early March. Commercial vineyards and blueberry operations began pruning. Onions were in good condition with minimal disease or insect pressure. Cabbage crop was progressing quickly. Strawberry harvest started.

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#### **HAWAII: DATA NOT AVAILABLE**

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**IDAHO:** February was a continuation of Idaho's long and snowy winter. Average temperature differences ranged from 3°F below normal to 8°F above normal. The highest temperature recorded this month was 65°F in Grand View and the lowest temperature was -6°F in Fairfield. Ground that was not covered by snow was saturated with moisture from melt offs and rain. Minor flooding was reported throughout the State. Many counties dealt with flooded fields which damaged crops and delayed field work. Idaho farmers and livestock owners had a rough month due to the abnormal winter conditions. Livestock feeders were visited more frequently by wildlife this year due to the snowy conditions. Calves showed higher than normal amounts of pneumonia and calf scours, which negatively impacted cattle owners. Like cattle, lambing also had higher than normal losses due to the winter conditions. Payette and Washington Counties reported onion sheds and outbuildings collapsed due to the roofs being unable to handle the large snow loads.

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**ILLINOIS:** Topsoil moisture 3% very short, 25% short, 69% adequate, 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 3% very short, 24% short, 71% adequate, 2% surplus. Winter wheat condition 1% very poor, 4% poor, 23% fair, 62% good, 10% excellent. Statewide, temperatures for the month of February averaged 40°F, 10.2°F above normal. Precipitation averaged 0.58 inches, 1.25 inches below normal. Warmer than usual winter temperatures were reported throughout the State.

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**INDIANA:** Topsoil moisture 2% very short, 12% short, 76% adequate, and 10% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 12% short, 76% adequate, and 10% surplus. Winter wheat condition rated 1% very poor, 3% poor, 25% fair, 56% good, 15% excellent. Record high temperatures swept across the State during the month of February, leading to a Statewide average of 40.7°F, 10.6°F above normal. Statewide precipitation was 2.11 inches, below average by 1.06 inches. The unseasonably warm temperatures coupled with reduced precipitation allowed farmers to get a head-start on spring fieldwork. Much of the month consisted of tilling, laying tile, clearing fence rows, and applying lime and fertilizers to the fields. Cover crops and winter wheat have broken dormancy throughout the State. This has many growers concerned for the health of the wheat if a cold snap occurs now that the plants have begun to grow. Pastures and hay fields have also begun to green up rapidly. Livestock have enjoyed the mild weather, with calving progressing well. Some farmers have begun to plant mint. Hay supplies were reported to be adequate in February. Other activities for the month were performing equipment maintenance, preparing for spring plantings, cleaning ditches, discussing 2017 financing, purchasing crop inputs, preparing taxes, hauling grain, and attending winter farm shows.

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**IOWA:** Snow and blizzard conditions were reported across much of the State the last week of February. However, for much of the month, Iowa experienced unseasonably warm temperatures, with areas of the State reaching the 60's and 70's. Much of the snow and ice melted quickly opening rivers, streams and ponds. In many areas field drainage tiles were running. Moisture conditions going into the planting season appear adequate. Cover crops in parts of the State were starting to green and trees were budding. The potential impact to fruit trees if there is a freeze is a concern. Fieldwork activities for the month of February included dry fertilizer, anhydrous and manure applications. Scattered reports were received of tiling and terracing. Soft gravel roads have had an impact on grain movement. With mild weather, hay supplies have been adequate. Calving continues with few issues reported. Overall, the warm weather was beneficial for cattle although the variability of temperatures created some stress and health problems. Muddy feedlots were also an issue.

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**KANSAS:** Topsoil moisture 21% very short, 34% short, 45% adequate, and 0% surplus. Subsoil moisture 21% very short, 35% short, 44% adequate, and 0% surplus. Winter wheat condition 5% very poor, 16% poor, 36% fair, 40% good, 3% excellent. Stock water supplies 2% very short, 13% short, 84% adequate, and 1% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 1% very short, 6% short, 90% adequate, 3% surplus. Cattle and calf condition, 1% very poor, 2% poor, 25% fair, 67% good, 5% excellent. Calving progress 28% complete. Cattle and calf death loss, 1% heavy, 63% average, 36% light. Sheep and lamb conditions, 0% very poor, 1% poor, 11% fair, 86% good, 2% excellent. Lambing progress 40% complete. Sheep and lamb death loss, 0% heavy, 60% average, 40% light. Temperatures averaged 6 to 12°F above normal across the entire State. Most of the State remained dry, while portions of Central and Eastern Kansas received beneficial rainfall. The mild

temperatures have been good for calving and some early field work. Fertilizer application and weed management have begun in many areas.

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**KENTUCKY:** Weather conditions were very mild during February, with well above normal temperatures and below normal precipitation for the month. Temperatures were abnormally high for most of February, continuing a similar trend from January. Overall, this winter season is progressing as one of Kentucky's warmest. Light snowfall occurred at the start of February, and intermittent rain showers and storms developed throughout the month. Temperatures for the period averaged 47°F across the State which was 10°F warmer than normal. Precipitation (liq. equ.) for the period totaled 1.6 inches Statewide which was 1.78 inches below normal and 47% of normal. Pastures have started to regenerate early as a result of unseasonably warm conditions, with some concern for potential cold weather events in March. Fertilization and spring seeding of pastures has begun on many livestock operations. Most producers still feel hay supplies are adequate, with minimal change from ratings in January. Hay and roughage supplies were reported as 5% very short, 14% short, 71% adequate, and 10% surplus. Livestock continued to be rated in mostly good condition. Livestock conditions were reported as 1% very poor, 2% poor, 18% fair, 66% good, and 13% excellent. Some fruit trees and winter wheat appear to be breaking dormancy from the extended warm weather. There is concern from producers for the most recent dip in temperatures over the weekend. Wheat fields continue to be monitored for any significant damage from the freeze. Winter wheat conditions were rated as 3% very poor, 7% poor, 18% fair, 58% good, and 14% excellent. Farmers have been preparing for spring planting and attending agricultural trade shows and conferences.

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**LOUISIANA:** For the month of February, there was unseasonable warm weather and no freezing. Soil samples were being taken and field prep is underway. The wheat crop was progressing along although there were some concerns that it will fail due to vernalize. Because of the unusually warm temperatures, rice planting has already started in Southwest Louisiana. As the temperatures continue to warm and fields start to dry up, more and more rice will be planted with the addition to corn. Burn down has been applied to most fields where corn is being planted. The majority of cattle were healthy and vegetable crops performing well with constant mild warm temperatures. Sugarcane was showing a strong early germination. Strawberry crops were picking back up from January's stormy and freezing temperatures. Overall, everything is progressing at a good rate with periodic rainfall.

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**MARYLAND:** For the month of February, maximum registered temperature was 77°F with minimum of 17°F. There were 4 instances of rain and 2 instances of snow with near maximum of 0.75 inch of precipitation for the month. The temperature is unseasonably warm with low soil moisture. No freeze kill has occurred to the tillage radishes that were planted yet to date. February goes in the books as one of the mildest winter month, with morning-time foggy episodes and cloudy skies. Other than farming, activities for the month included taking soil samples, repairing equipment, purchasing supplies, spreading manure, and applying fertilizer.

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**MICHIGAN:** Topsoil moisture 3% short, 51% adequate, 46% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% short, 57% adequate, 41% surplus. Winter wheat condition, 6% very poor, 8% poor, 20% fair, 53% good, 13% excellent. Temperatures hit record highs this past month. There was adequate rainfall to keep the ground saturated and some regions were subject to ponding in poorly drained fields. The ground was no longer frozen and snow cover was non-existent in many areas due to the extremely warm temperatures. In some areas of the State, crops began to break dormancy which has caused concerns for future outlook. It was too early to tell what effect the warm weather will have on the crops. The warm temperatures also caused concern about damage to the sugarbeet storage piles.

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**MINNESOTA:** Sixty-seven degrees Fahrenheit at Redwood Falls on the 17th is a new Statewide record for the date; and 66°F at Amboy reported on the 22nd is a new Statewide record high for the date as well. Many areas reported reduced snowpack due to the milder and warmer weather. Concerns about potential hay and fall seeded crop damage were mentioned by reporters. Cattle producers continued their calving. Livestock conditions were generally described as favorable with adequate feed supplies. There were reports of wet conditions leading to muddy pastures.

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**MISSISSIPPI:** Unseasonably warm temperatures over the last couple weeks have producers anxious to begin the 2017 planting season as burn down applications and seed bed preparation had begun. The above normal temperatures had cool season forages coming along nicely. The mild temperatures also had a positive effect on livestock performance and condition, however many were concerned about pasture recovery this spring due to the drought conditions experienced this past fall.

**MISSOURI:** Topsoil moisture 8% very short, 43% short, 44% adequate, 5% surplus. Subsoil moisture 10% very short, 36% short, 50% adequate, 4% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 2% short, 78% adequate, 20% surplus. Stock water supplies 2% very short, 23% short, 75% adequate. Winter Wheat condition 3% poor, 38% fair, 51% good, 8% excellent.

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**MONTANA:** Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 10% last year; 14% short, 29% last year; 82% adequate, 58% last year; 3% surplus, 3% last year. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 11% last year; 16% short, 34% last year; 77% adequate, 52% last year; 5% surplus, 3% last year. Winter wheat – wind damage 67% none, 77% last year; 24% light, 19% last year; 8% moderate, 3% last year; 1% heavy, 1% last year. Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage 65% none, 79% last year; 25% light, 19% last year; 8% moderate, 2% last year; 2% heavy, 0% last year. Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover 9% very poor, 62% last year; 36% poor, 22% last year; 29% fair, 11% last year; 14% good, 3% last year; 12% excellent, 2% last year. Livestock grazing accessibility – 59% open, 64% last year; 20% difficult, 14% last year; 21% closed, 22% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed – cattle and calves 99% fed, 98% last year. Livestock birthing – calving complete 8%, 8% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed – sheep and lambs 100% fed, 98% last year. Livestock birthing – lambing complete 6%, 6% last year. The month of February in Montana started off cold and snowy before temperatures warmed significantly mid-month causing a good amount of snow melt which then froze as temperatures went back below freezing at the end of the month. High temperatures ranged from the mid-40s to the lower 70s and low temperatures ranged from -38°F in Port of Morgan to the lower single digits above zero. Precipitation was mostly in the form of snowfall with some rain and was present across the State but in variable amounts, with the highest recorded this month in Heron with 6.73 inches of moisture. Other reporting stations recorded between 0.11 to 5.73 inches of moisture. Topsoil moisture conditions were 85% adequate to surplus which is above of last year's 61%. Subsoil moisture conditions were 82% adequate to surplus, well above last year's 55%. Winter damage to winter wheat increased from the previous month as a result of decreased snow coverage and drastically fluctuating temperatures. The State's snow coverage fell due to warm weather and high winds and is 26% good to excellent which is still above the coverage at this time last year when snow coverage was 5% good to excellent. Winter wheat condition is rated 51% good to excellent, compared with 53% last year, but reporters note that there is some concern about meltwater ponding and freezing in fields across the State and only time will tell what damage may have occurred. Livestock grazing is 79% open to difficult compared to 78% at the same time last year. Livestock producers were providing supplemental feed at slightly higher rates than the previous year with 99% of cattle and 100% of sheep being fed, compared with 98% of both cattle and sheep last year. Livestock birthing continues with 8% of calving and 6% of lambing complete so far, which is at the same rate as last year for both cattle and sheep.

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**NEBRASKA:** Topsoil moisture 8% very short, 17% short, 68% adequate, and 7% surplus. Subsoil moisture 9% very short, 21% short, 66% adequate, and 4% surplus. Winter wheat condition 2% very poor, 8% poor, 46% fair, 40% good, 4% excellent. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 6% short, 92% adequate, and 1% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 1% very short, 3% short, 89% adequate, 7% surplus. Cattle and calf condition, 0% very poor, 1% poor, 13% fair, 74% good, 12% excellent. Calving progress 19% complete. Cattle and calf death loss, 0% heavy, 66% average, 34% light. Sheep and lamb conditions, 1% very poor, 1% poor, 17% fair, 77% good, 4% excellent. Sheep and lamb death loss, 1% heavy, 65% average, 34% light. Temperatures averaged 6 to 8°F above normal across Nebraska. Heavy snow occurred over northern portions of the State during the month. Temperatures peaked in 70's during the third week, resulting in producers beginning preparations for spring planting.

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**NEVADA:** February was a wet month for Nevada, as weather patterns off the Pacific Coast brought above normal precipitation to the State. By month's end, flooding occurred in parts of the State. The month started with warmer temperatures, however the second half had lower than normal temperatures precluding any plant growth. Livestock continued to be fed hay, except those with winter range where carryover dry cheat grass and new growth that germinated last fall. Ranchers were in full-swing with spring calving.

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**NEW ENGLAND:** According to the United States Drought Monitor, the New England region maintained drought conditions in many areas over the past month with Massachusetts, Connecticut, and southern New Hampshire experiencing the worst conditions. Conditions were classified as D0 Abnormally Dry to D2 Severe Drought in most of these areas. Western Connecticut experienced D3 Extreme Drought over the past week. Overall, temperatures have been above normal averages at times and produced some extreme weather patterns for the region. Demand for potatoes was reported better than average and grain demand was also up. Maple syrup producers were also in full swing with "freezing nights" and warm days at times. Some of the weather affected sugaring operations in areas such as Massachusetts but overall the consensus among reporters was positive so far. This was also true of fruit growers. Trees were beginning to

bud. Some producers were concerned about winterkill due to lack of snow cover so far this year. In addition, operators worked on repairing weather damage from strong storms that passed through Massachusetts. Producers also began seeding peppers, onions, micro greens in the heated greenhouses.

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**NEW JERSEY:** High temps 60-70 F advanced crop growth too early in peach/apple/blueberry/etc. Expected freeze in the next 6 weeks could cause damage. Light hay sales attributed to the mild winter. Field crop activities were mostly quiet. Top dressing wheat. Hopefully, field crop producers will get an early start. Mild winter not killing larvae may mean extra pest pressure. Bees flying every day during recent warm weather. Keepers checked bees daily and fed them more. Peaches and plums breaking dormancy is scary in that a future cold snap would cause more damage. A south Jersey vegetable grower saw this February like a normal April. Strawberries in high tunnels were blossoming, so cold weather in March would be trouble. Greenhouse producers ramping up early, especially in south Jersey. Some optimism regarding future sales to landscapers and retailers. Temperatures have been above normal for most of the winter. Many growers have plants ready to go to the field. Land preparation is ahead of schedule and some early planting is underway. Unusually warmer February have furthered the bud development of peaches, apples and wine grapes to an advanced stage. Though early bloom brings early fruits in to market, it also increases the chances of frost damage and crop loss, more so for tree fruits than grapes. Growers praying for the cooler temperatures in the following weeks. A few growers were installing wind machines for heat application in case of temperature going below the threshold levels. Overall, growers closely monitoring the temperature. Low soil moisture, as a result of not much winter precipitation, not a challenge at this stage.

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**NEW MEXICO:** Topsoil moisture 14% very short, 46% short, 40% adequate. Subsoil moisture 12% very short, 33% short, 53% adequate, 2% surplus. Pecans harvested 95%, 55% January 29, 100% last year. Winter wheat condition 4% very poor, 18% poor, 49% fair, 26% good, 3% excellent. Cows calved 10%, 3% January 29, 15% last year. Cattle receiving supplemental feed 82%, 84% January 29, 83% last year. Cattle condition 1% very poor, 4% poor, 42% fair, 47% good, 6% excellent. Ewes lambed 10%, 1% January 29, 12% last year. Sheep receiving supplemental feed 75%, 76% January 29, 78% last year. Sheep and lamb condition 3% very poor, 8% poor, 37% fair, 49% good, 3% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 3% very short, 17% short, 71% adequate, 9% surplus. Stock water supplies 12% very short, 26% short, 57% adequate, 5% surplus. Above average temperatures continued across the State during February. Specifically, average temperatures varied from 3 to 10°F above normal. Daytime highs ranged from 53°F at Eagle Nest to 89°F at Artesia, Bitter Lakes, and Roswell. Overnight lows varied from 1 degree at Eagle Nest to 30°F at NMSU and Truth or Consequences. While precipitation was recorded at all reporting weather stations, accumulations in most locations were below average for the month. The largest precipitation total was reported at Gila Hot Spring, where 1.40 inches of moisture fell during February. Chama, at 1.22 inches, was the only other location to accumulate at least an inch of precipitation. Comments from Union County indicated that soil moisture levels were very low entering the dry, windy season, leaving fire danger extremely high. Some farmers in the county were tilling their fields ahead of planting season. Conversely, wet fields in Dona Ana County prevented vegetable growers from planting spring lettuce during the past couple of weeks. Elsewhere, some ranchers had already shipped their cattle that were grazing wheat due to the lack of quality grazing. Winter wheat condition was reported as 29% good to excellent, compared with 80% last year.

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**NEW YORK:** The Empire State experienced above average temperatures for the month of February. Many fields covered in ice or snow have melted. The warmer weather is having a negative impact on the production of Maple Syrup. Grape producers have continued to dormant prune vines during the off season. Other fruit producers are concerned that cold weather expected to come over the next few weeks will freeze and destroy crops that have started budding in the warm weather. Field activities for the month included tending livestock, trees, and vines, fixing and maintaining machinery and structures, and manure and fertilizer application.

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**NORTH CAROLINA:** Days suitable for field work 6.7. Topsoil moisture 6% very short, 44% short, 47% adequate and 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 5% very short, 20% short, 71% adequate and 4% surplus. Barley condition 1% very poor, 2% poor, 18% fair, 77% good and 2% excellent. Oats condition 0% very poor, 14% poor, 46% fair, 38% good and 2% excellent. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 7% poor, 24% fair, 57% good and 12% excellent. Pasture and range condition 3% very poor, 21% poor, 38% fair, 37% good and 1% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 8% very short, 16% short, 74% adequate and 2% surplus. Warm temperatures were helping farmers with field work, but cold dips continue. With the nice weather farmers were able to get a head start on herbicide burn-down applications while hoping for rain. If there is potential for multiple freeze events in March and April, farmers will more than likely lose some of their wheat crop. Wheat crop was growing fast due to the warm weather but was in need of rain. Farmers have not seen any measurable rainfall since mid-January.

**NORTH DAKOTA:** Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 4% short, 71% adequate, 24% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 7% short, 77% adequate, 15% surplus. Winter wheat condition, 4% very poor, 1% poor, 14% fair, 76% good, 5% excellent. Cattle and calves condition, 1% very poor, 3% poor, 21% fair, 69% good, 6% excellent. Cattle and calves death loss, 2% heavy, 66% average, 32% light. Calving progress, 10% complete. Sheep and lambs condition, 1% very poor, 3% poor, 22% fair, 68% good, 6% excellent. Sheep and lambs death loss, 3% heavy, 58% average, 39% light. Lambing progress, 20% complete. Hay and roughage supplies, 4% very short, 16% short, 78% adequate, 2% surplus. Stock water supplies, 1% very short, 5% short, 87% adequate, 7% surplus. Thawing conditions helped settle the snow, making it easier to access feed supplies. Temperatures averaged from 6°F above normal in the eastern half of the State to 8°F below normal across western North Dakota.

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**OHIO:** Topsoil moisture, 3% short, 78% adequate, and 19% surplus. Subsoil moisture, 1% very short, 6% short, 80% adequate, 13% surplus. Winter wheat condition rated 2% poor, 15% fair, 65% good, and 18% excellent. The February 2017 Statewide average temperature through Sunday the 26th was 39.8°F, 10.2°F above normal. Precipitation averaged 1.96 inches Statewide for the same period, which was just 0.14 inches below normal for the month. Accumulated precipitation was heaviest in the north central, northeastern and southeastern regions, and lightest in the west central and southwestern regions. Thunderstorms were observed at various times throughout the State. Weather conditions varied widely, ranging from cold snaps to record highs. Abnormally warm temperatures brought concerns as crops began to prematurely break dormancy. Winter wheat and other crops have done well this winter but colder temperatures in the future could negatively affect crop conditions.

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**OKLAHOMA:** For Oklahoma, February was extremely warm and dry. A few rain storms in the middle of the month did little to ease the drought or high temperatures. According to the OCS Mesonet, 2017 was one of the hottest Februaries in Oklahoma's history. Temperatures ranged from 8°F at Boise City on Saturday, February 25 to 99°F at Mangum on Saturday, February 11. Precipitation ranged from 0.16 of an inch in the Panhandle district to 3.08 inches in the Southeast district. Soil temperature averages ranged from 34°F at Kenton on Friday, February 3 to 63°F at Hugo on Sunday, February 12.

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**OREGON:** The Statewide temperature differential for the month of February ranged from 7°F below normal to 8°F above normal. A low temperature was reported at -4°F in the north central region. A high temperature was reported at 67°F in the southwestern region. Statewide, Oregon continued to experience a colder and wetter winter than normal. In addition, the cumulative precipitation levels were average to above average Statewide. Parts of the northern coastal region received cumulative monthly precipitation totals 11-13 inches above normal. Clackamas County received record amounts of rain in February. Statewide, most of the regions reported field work was behind about 2 weeks. In the northern region, it was too wet to get much done in the fields. Some minor flooding and erosion occurred on fields that did not establish fall cover crop or were overgrazed. In the north central region, livestock producers continued to lose some calves and cows. Producers used more hay than previous years and purchased more feed as well. Winter wheat looked reasonable with a small amount of snow mold in some locations. In the northeast region, the snow started to melt away. Some limited crop damage was observed, but was mostly limited to snow mold and burnt tip on wheat. In the southwest region, Coos and Curry Counties reported 15-18 inches of total rain in February, 5-11 inches above normal. Winter pruning and spraying for berry, orchard and wine grape crops were delayed. In Douglas County, winter wheat, hay and grass seed fields displayed some loss due to standing water. Fungicide sprays for fields needed to wait a few weeks for fields to dry out. In the southeast region, calving season was in full swing in several locations. Many agribusinesses were behind on chemical and fertilizer field applications. While snow melted away on many fields, the higher elevations of Crook and Deschutes Counties remained covered with snow.

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**PENNSYLVANIA:** February weather in Pennsylvania was a bit higher than normal, warmer temperatures crept up towards the month's end. Overall, temperatures ranged from a high of 73°F to a low of 13°F with a resulting February higher unusual temperature of 36°F. Above normal temperatures caused earlier than normal field activities. Tree fruit pruning progressed slightly ahead of normal, spread manure, lime application producers were busy in the fields which it could be a problem, since some estimated that we were about two weeks ahead of last year's weather in which was early as well. Fruit growers were concerned about the sudden fluctuation in temperatures this time of the year.

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**SOUTH CAROLINA:** A warm and somewhat dry month for the State as the United States Drought Monitor estimated the State at 43% drought free compared to 55% on January 31, 2017. The northwestern corner of the State was still the only area that remained under drought conditions. Comments from other parts of the State described adequate soil

moisture but more rain would be needed soon if warm weather persists. Producers in the central and eastern part of the State were preparing ground to plant corn but most were holding off from planting in an anticipation of cold snaps. Pasture and small grains have responded well to the warm weather. Comments described decreased small grain plantings due to dry conditions during early winter. Livestock was reported to be doing well across the State and clean-up from Hurricane Matthew was still ongoing. Average maximum temperatures ranged from the mid-70s in eastern South Carolina to the mid 60s in the west. Average minimum temperatures ranged from the high 40s in the east to mid-30s in west. Precipitation estimates for the month range from 2.83 inches near Allen Hills to 2 inches in Charleston.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 7% short, 90% adequate, 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 16% short, 82% adequate, 1% surplus. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 3% poor, 40% fair, 57% good, and 0% excellent. Stock water supplies 2% very short, 9% short, 88% adequate, 1% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 4% very poor, 16% poor, 76% adequate, and 4% excellent. Cattle and calf conditions 0% very poor, 1% poor, 23% fair, 71% good, and 5% excellent. Calving Progress 7% complete. Cattle and calf death loss 1% heavy, 65% average, 34% light. Sheep and lamb condition 0% very poor, 3% poor, 26% fair, 68% good, and 3% excellent. Lambing progress 20% complete. Sheep and lamb death loss 0% heavy, 72% average, 28% light. For the month of February 2017, a significant snowstorm ended a stretch of above-average temperatures for many locations. The late February storm brought 6 to 12 inches of snow to many parts of southern South Dakota. Prior to the storm, mid-February temperatures were well above normal across the State, melting a majority of the snowpack and creating muddy feedlots as calving began for some producers.

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**TENNESSEE:** Days suitable 5.1. Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 4% short, 87% adequate, 8% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 6% short, 87% adequate, 6% surplus. Winter wheat condition 2% poor, 15% fair, 65% good, 18% excellent. Pasture and Range condition 8% very poor, 25% poor, 42% fair, 23% good, 2% excellent. Cattle condition 1% very poor, 7% poor, 38% fair, 48% good, 6% excellent. Hay supplies 13% very short, 31% short, 50% adequate, 6% surplus. Pasture, soil moisture, crop and cattle conditions showed a marked decline from January. In spite of the unseasonably warm weather, producers feared a hard freeze before wheat harvest, which could be detrimental to what are expected to be good yields. A hard freeze would hurt fruit crops, which are beginning to bud and bloom because of the warm weather. Some annual ryegrass and oats have been sown as cover crops. Pastures continued to recover from the wet, muddy conditions in January.

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**TEXAS:** In the beginning of the month, the State experienced little to no measurable rainfall. Precipitation was not experienced across the State until the latter half of the month, in which isolated areas between South Central and the Upper Coast received upwards of 8 inches of precipitation. As a result, days suitable for field work decreased from nearly 7 days in the beginning of the month to approximately 5 days. Overall, the State experienced mostly warm and windy weather, with sporadic isolated showers; in contrast to the previous month, which was mainly cold and dry. Winter wheat emerged and pecan harvested was concluded.

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**UTAH:** Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 0% last year; 0% short, 1% last year; 51% adequate, 74% last year; 49% surplus, 25% last year. Subsoil moisture 0% very short, 0% last year; 1% short, 12% last year; 65% adequate, 85% last year; 34% surplus, 3% last year. Pasture and range condition 0% very poor, 3% last year; 4% poor, 10% last year; 46% fair, 29% last year; 45% good, 56% last year; 5% excellent, 2% last year. Winter wheat condition 6% very poor, 0% last year; 29% poor, 0% last year; 19% fair, 34% last year; 46% good, 55% last year; 0% excellent, 11% last year. Hay and roughage supplies 0% very short, 0% last year; 2% short, 0% last year; 86% adequate, 60% last year; 12% surplus year, 40% last year. Stock water supplies 0% very short, 1% last year; 5% short, 5% last year; 84% adequate, 89% last year; 11% surplus, 5% last year. Cattle and calves condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 2% poor, 0% last year; 27% fair, 23% last year; 70% good, 67% last year; 1% excellent, 10% last year. Sheep and lambs condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 3% poor, 0% last year; 26% fair, 29% last year; 71% good, 63% last year; 0% excellent, 8% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed for cattle 80%, 63% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed for sheep 76%, 56% last year. Cows calved 11%, 15% last year. Farm Flock Ewes Lambled 15%, 14% last year, and Range Flock Ewes Lambled 3%, 2% last year. Higher temperatures combined with significant precipitation have caused rapid snowpack melt, leading to very muddy conditions causing issues for both winter wheat and cattle. Cows calved was at 11%, sheep farm flock lambled at 15% and range flock lambled at 3%. Supplemental feeding of cattle was at 80% compared to 84% the previous month and 63% the previous year. Supplemental feeding of sheep was at 76% compared to 80% the previous month and 56% the previous year. Box Elder County reported rapid snowmelt due to precipitation and temperatures, leading to standing water in the alfalfa and winter wheat fields; reports also indicated that some peach orchards had buds damaged due to the

shifting temperatures. Weber County reported concern over livestock needing additional time on supplemental feeding, challenging hay supplies. Cache County reported standing water everywhere and there were concerns that winter wheat may need to be replanted. The persistent wet conditions have also been an issue for calving and lambing, as death loss is higher than normal. Morgan County reports reservoir levels in good shape and some standing water in fields. Beaver County reported great weather conditions and calving and lambing going very well. Hay and roughage supplies were rated 2% short, 86% adequate, and 12% surplus. Stock water supplies were 5% short, 84% adequate, and 11% surplus.

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**VIRGINIA:** Barley conditions were 16% poor, 38% fair, 45% good, and 1% excellent. Oats conditions were 11% poor, 46% fair, and 43% good. Winter wheat conditions were 1% very poor, 6% poor, 25% fair, 63% good, and 5% excellent. Livestock conditions were 1% very poor, 8% poor, 39% fair, 49% good, and 3% excellent. Pasture and range conditions were 9% very poor, 35% poor, 37% fair, 18% good, and 1% excellent. Percent of feed obtained from pastures 18%. The month of February was abnormally warm with unseasonable temperatures and little precipitation. These dry conditions caused fields to green-up allowing farmers to graze cattle. This early feeding is causing farmers to fear overgrazing. Farming activities for the month included attending lime and fertilizer spreading, equipment repair, and plowing of tobacco land.

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**WASHINGTON:** February was mostly below freezing for most of the State. Many regions reported colder than average temperatures, with some snowfall continuing late into the month. Temperatures dropped to as low as -2°F in the southeast region while the highest temperature was reported at 62°F in the southeast region as well. Average temperatures were below freezing for most of the month in the central and eastern regions. The highest reported precipitation was in the western region at 10.3 inches, while the lowest reported precipitation was in the east central region at 1.09 inches. The melting snow paired with the rain made it an extremely wet month in the western region. Some fields were too wet for work while dedicated orchards were progressing with fruit tree pruning. The fall planted grains were expected to begin growing. In the central region, it was much colder, with cattle being fed earlier to help fight off the cold. The excessive cold increased the calf mortality rate for this season. Melting snow caused extensive damage to country roads in both the central and eastern regions. Other regions were still covered in snow, with some reporting potential snow mold present on the winter wheat and canola, depending on the varieties planted. The snow caused little to no damage to crops for most operations, but livestock and infrastructure were damaged, with some sinkholes appearing. Some eastern areas reported flooding due to excessive snow thawing. Overall, crops were well, except for a few possible cases of snow mold. However, the excessive snow caused massive erosion in places and calf losses.

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**WEST VIRGINIA:** Topsoil moisture was 18% short, 76% adequate, and 6% surplus. Subsoil moisture was 17% short, 82% adequate, and 1% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies were 1% very short, 4% short, 81% adequate, and 14% surplus. Feed grain supplies were 4% short, 95% adequate, and 1% surplus. Winter wheat conditions were 9% poor, 52% fair, 32% good, and 7% excellent. Cattle and calves were 2% poor, 16% fair, 77% good, and 5% excellent. Calving was 23% complete. Sheep and lambs were 2% poor, 18% fair, 58% good, and 22% excellent. Lambing was 26% complete. Weather this month was unusually warm, spring flowers were blooming and grass was growing. The development of tree fruit buds is about three to four weeks ahead from the same period last year. Farming activities for the month included plowing and fertilizing fields.

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**WISCONSIN:** Warm weather during the week of February 19 set record high temperatures at all 5 Wisconsin reporting locations. Three of 5 locations also set records for the month of February. The warm temperatures were followed by a snow storm in northern Wisconsin late in the month. Temperatures at the five major weather stations ranged from 8.1°F above normal to 10.7°F above normal. Average highs ranged from 36.6°F in Eau Claire to 43.8°F in Milwaukee. Precipitation ranged from 0.7 inch in Green Bay to 1.73 inches in Eau Claire. Eau Claire received the most snowfall out of the major cities with 10.7 inches. Milwaukee received the least, with 1.1 inches of snow for the month. Reporters from across the State expressed concern about fruit trees budding early and about possible damage to winter wheat and alfalfa. The weather also caused a short early maple syrup run in some parts of Wisconsin.

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**WYOMING:** Topsoil moisture 12% very short, 33% short, 46% adequate, 9% surplus. Subsoil moisture 14% very short, 34% short, 44% adequate, 8% surplus. Winter wheat condition 17% very poor, 21% poor, 41% fair, 17% good, 4% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 3% very short, 36% short, 60% adequate, 1% surplus. Livestock condition 1% very poor, 3% poor, 30% fair, 65% good, 1% excellent. Stock water supplies 8% very short, 13% short, 72% adequate, 7%

surplus. Pasture and range condition 10% very poor, 26% poor, 42% fair, 22% good. Cows calved 6% 2016 9%. Ewes lambed 6%, 2016 8%. Sheep shorn 14%, 2016 13%.

## 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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James Johanson – County Estimates, Hay .....	(202) 690-8533
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Sammy Neal– Peanuts, Rice .....	(202) 720-7688
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Bianca Pruneda – Cotton, Cotton Ginnings, Sorghum.....	(202) 720-5944
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