



# Crop Progress - State Stories

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**ALABAMA:** Drought conditions have persisted in most parts of the State during the month of March. Rain has been infrequent and short, not enough to fully restore soil moisture lost in the fall. Pastures have not fully recovered, but are greening and in fair to good condition. Cattle responded well to the improved pastureland and are looking good. Despite increased grazing during March, cattle were still in need of supplemental feed but producers struggled to find more hay for their herds. While most small grains were in good condition, with some stands heading out, some of the crop sustained moderate to severe damage from recent frosts. Farmers took advantage of the mild conditions on these final days of the month by already beginning to plant corn and preparing ground to plant corn over the next few weeks. Cotton burndown also began. Most subsoil and topsoil was rated adequate. Average mean temperatures for the month ranged from 53°F in Guntersville to 63°F in Mobile. Precipitation estimates for the month ranged from 2.31 inches in Opelika to 6.03 inches in Gainesville.

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## ALASKA: DATA NOT AVAILABLE

**ARIZONA:** At the beginning of the month only 19 of the 52 weather stations reported above normal temperatures across Arizona, but on the third week of March, all of the 52 weather stations reported above normal temperatures, ranging from 6 to 17°F above normal across the entire State, with most locations more than 10°F above normal. At the end of the month all weather stations were still reporting above normal temperatures, ranging from 1 to 10°F. The temperature extremes for January were a high of 99°F at Paloma, Roll, and Yuma on the third week of March, and a low of 4°F at Grand Canyon and Flagstaff reported on the first week of March. Nogales had the lowest percent of normal precipitation at 32% and Teec Nos Pos finished as the highest with 327% of normal precipitation. Barley heading was 26% complete and durum wheat heading was 20% completed by the end of the month. Cotton planted was at 10% completed. Pasture and range conditions ranged from good to fair for the entire month.

**ARKANSAS:** The month of March saw some stormy and wet weather which mostly prevented early month planting and fieldwork from occurring. Due to big swings in temperatures, severe freeze damage has been reported on some fruits which were blooming early. Final burndown chemical applications applied in preparation for 2017 crop season. Soil moisture is in good condition from rains but some ponds remain low. Livestock are in good condition, enjoying the warmer weather, and chasing greening grass. Fertilization of wheat is complete, and continues to make steady growth despite some cooler temperatures. Even though heavy rains kept producers in several counties out of the fields, some corn, rice, and soybeans planting began late in the month.

**CALIFORNIA:** March started with a lot of variation in the weather across the State as a departing Pacific system exerted its influence onto the State. By the second week of March, temperatures warmed up between 10 and 20°F from the first week, with a drier pattern taking hold over much of the State. Rainfall was largely confined to the northern one third of the State. The third week was warm across the State, as most of the area was well entrenched into a dry pattern. At the end of the month, the weather oscillated between warm and wet to dry and cool two separate times, as early springtime Pacific systems moved through the State. Corn seed was being received in advance of planting. Cotton preparation work was almost done for planting. Field work in vineyards continued with pruning, tying, berm sanitation, and brush shredding. Cherries and late varieties of stone fruit continued to bloom. Kiwifruit were being shipped to foreign and domestic marketplaces. Late navel orange harvest was underway in some areas. Navel oranges, Mandarins, lemons, Star Ruby grapefruit, and late harvest Finger limes were being packed and exported for foreign and domestic marketplaces. Valencia orange harvest started. Orange groves were being hedge-rowed and skirted. Seedless tangerine groves continued to be netted to prevent cross pollination by bees during the coming bloom. Strawberry fields continued to thrive. Almond bloom continued to slow down. Almonds and pistachios continued to be packed and exported mainly to foreign marketplaces. Bee colonies continued to be moved into nut and stone fruit orchards for pollination. Rangeland and

dryland pasture quality continued to improve with all the recent rainfall and intervening warm weather. Some cattle ranchers have increased their herd size to take advantage of the improved forage conditions.

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**COLORADO:** Topsoil moisture 11% very short, 29% short, 58% adequate, 2% surplus. Subsoil moisture 12% very short, 32% short, 55% adequate, 1% surplus. Barley planted 4%, 2% 2016, 9% avg. Spring Wheat Other than Durum planted 3%, 2% 2016, 8% avg. Winter wheat pastured 9%, 11% 2016; 1% jointed, 2% 2016, 2% avg; 5% very poor, 32% poor, 31% fair, 30% good, 2% excellent. Onions planted 4%, 7% 2016, 10% avg. Sugarbeets planted 1%, 3% 2016, 3% avg. Cows calved 50%, 53% 2016; 56% avg. Ewes lambled 33%, 32% 2016, 43% avg. Livestock condition 4% poor, 18% fair, 69% good, 9% excellent. Cattle death loss 1% heavy, 73% avg, 26% light. Sheep death loss 29% avg, 71% light. Pasture and range condition 3% very poor, 30% poor, 31% fair, 31% good, 5% excellent. Feed and concentrate supplies 3% short, 85% adequate, 12% surplus. The month began with continued abnormally dry and warm weather, but ended with welcome precipitation received in several counties, improving moisture conditions. Resulting fieldwork was adequate. Quality concerns still exist for winter wheat stands where moisture has not been sufficient for several months. Fall planted crops came out of dormancy earlier than normal due to warm temperatures. Depleted topsoil moisture is concerning for crop and range conditions. Received moisture will help spur planting progress for some early planted crops. Livestock are in good condition. As of March 24, 2017, Statewide snowpack was 110 percent measured as percent of median snowfall. The Southwest and San Luis Valley were at 128 and 115 percent, respectively.

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**DELAWARE:** The month of March as usual started a snowy, cold, dry, breezy, rainy, and foggy pattern in most parts of the region. There were 14 episodes of precipitation with maximum of 2.92 inches of snow for a single day. Maryland registered a maximum temperature reaching 80°F and minimum temperature reaching 15°F. Delaware reported a maximum temperature reaching 79°F, and minimum reaching 14°F. Due to low temperatures small grain got some winter burn. Currently small grain is in need of some soil moisture. Pastures were greening up, and cool season weeds were starting the process of growing as well. Some reporters indicated farmers showed concerns for fruit crops due to high and then low temperature, and the threat of the avian flu. Farmers were also able to do their first fertilizer application and started to plant peas and some corn. In General, fieldwork activities included top dressing small grain, planting peas, spreading manure and fertilizer, and some early disking and ground work.

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**FLORIDA:** Warm and dry conditions persisted across Florida in the month of March with the Panhandle area continuing to be the exception. Wind damage was reported to cause higher cull rates for vegetables that were harvested in early March. Cooler temperatures and multiple frosts in the third week of March damaged fruit and vegetable crops in northern and central Florida. A wide variety of vegetables were harvested and marketed during the month. Livestock producers relied on supplemental feed for their livestock as pastures remain dry and available drinking water is becoming an issue although cattle remain in good to fair condition. Sugarcane harvest was ongoing with approximately another month left of harvesting. Corn and peanuts were planted at the end of the month. Grapefruit harvest decreased towards the middle of the month while Valencia harvest ramped up in the second half of the month. All citrus trees were in full bloom or had begun petal drop. Growers have had some success fighting greening with bactericides and pesticides and pushing dead and dying trees and adjacent groves. Groves were irrigated heavily this month and other activities include fertilizing, hedging, and general maintenance.

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**GEORGIA:** Total rainfall for the month ranged from 0.4 inch in Polk County to 4.8 inches in Rabun County. On average, rainfall totals were as much as 4 inches lower than normal for the month. According to the U.S Drought Monitor, the percentage of the State in a moderate to severe drought remained around 27 percent throughout the month. In addition to the continued drought throughout the northern most portion of the State, much the central and southern regions moved into the abnormally dry designation. Average temperatures were on par for this time of year. During mid-March, the State received several nights of below freezing temperatures that caused moderate to significant damage to blueberry, peach, and pear crops and mild to moderate damage to pastures, strawberries, and early vegetable crops. Consequently, yields were expected to be greatly diminished. Onions were largely unscathed by the cold and remained in good condition. Small grain damage varied widely. Some wheat was damaged to the point that growers were harvesting it for silage. Pastures and hayfields started to green up prior to the freeze, but were set back by the cold and frost. Some producers began harvesting rye and ryegrass crops for silage and hay. Pest pressures in pastures and small grains included leaf rust, aphids, mildew, and winter grain mites. Ability to graze winter forages remained low, and many farmers relied heavily on feeding hay. Most cattle producers were either out of hay or on their last bales with many having to feed a mixed ration. Cattle condition was fair to good, despite feed shortages. Field preparations were well under way throughout the State. Farmers

used irrigation generously on recently planted field corn and vegetables; however, many growers delayed planting while waiting on rain events to improve soil moisture.

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## **HAWAII: DATA NOT AVAILABLE**

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**IDAHO:** March was very wet in the State. Annual precipitation levels approached 200% of normal in the southeast and well above normal throughout the State. Many areas, particularly in the north and southeast regions, were still covered in snow. In areas where the snow melted or was receding, conditions were soggy. Fields were mostly wet and many held standing water. Growers were on the lookout for snow mold in winter wheat and were assessing winter kill in fields that were dry enough. Melting snow caused rivers to rise and there were some flooding issues reported in multiple southern areas. Irrigation water was expected to be in full supply for the season. The south central region was able to begin some field work late in the month. Planting of spring cereal crops and beets was just getting underway. South central pasture and range grasses greened and grew nicely. Calving progressed at a steady pace.

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**ILLINOIS:** Topsoil moisture 3% very short, 32% short, 61% adequate, and 4% surplus. Subsoil moisture 4% very short, 32% short, 62% adequate, and 2% surplus. Winter wheat condition 4% poor, 29% fair, 56% good, and 11% excellent. Statewide, temperatures for the month of March averaged 40.9°F, a degree above normal. Precipitation averaged 2.15 inches, 0.31 inch below normal.

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**INDIANA:** Topsoil moisture 2% very short, 12% short, 71% adequate, and 15% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 13% short, 74% adequate, and 11% surplus. Winter wheat condition rated 1% very poor, 3% poor, 26% fair, 57% good, 13% excellent. Statewide average temperatures remained above average at 40.2°F, 0.7°F above normal. Statewide precipitation was 2.98 inches, above average by 0.31 inch. Temperatures in March were closer to the seasonal norms in contrast to record highs seen in February. Scattered snow storms and reoccurring freezes followed by thaws had growers concerned about the winter wheat crop, which had come out of dormancy in late February. Some growers reported that the wheat had brown tips and begun to yellow somewhat, but any permanent frost damage to the crop is unclear. Most of the wheat remains in good condition throughout the State. Pastures continued to green up and grow. Hay supplies were reported to be low in March, but most are not concerned given the rapid pasture growth. Calving season has gone well this year, due to above average temperatures. Farmers have begun to apply herbicides to weeds and cover crops in preparation for the upcoming planting season. Other activities included purchasing inputs, prepping planting equipment, cleaning ditches, tilling fields, applying nitrogen to wheat, and hauling grain to elevators.

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**IOWA:** Dry weather for most of the month allowed farmers to work in fields and apply anhydrous and dry fertilizer. Recent rains left much of the State wet and muddy; causing field work and grain movement to slow down. However, southeastern Iowa farmers are concerned about the shortage of soil moisture for this time of year. Many producers have been preparing equipment for planting. Cover crops are green and have been growing since February. A few producers have started seeding oats and alfalfa. Overall, calving conditions have been good, although there were a few reports of temperature fluctuations causing cattle to become sick.

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**KANSAS:** Days suitable 5.9. Topsoil moisture 26% very short, 42% short, 31% adequate, and 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture 20% very short, 41% short, 39% adequate, and 0% surplus. Winter wheat condition 7% very poor, 18% poor, 37% fair, 36% good, 2% excellent. Winter wheat jointed 17%, 29% last year, 18% average. Corn planted 2%, 2% last year, 0% average. Stock water supplies 4% very short, 13% short, 82% adequate, and 1% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 2% very short, 5% short, 87% adequate, 6% surplus. Cattle and calf condition, 0% very poor, 2% poor, 23% fair, 67% good, 8% excellent. Calving progress 73% complete. Cattle and calf death loss, 1% heavy, 57% average, 42% light. Sheep and lamb conditions, 0% very poor, 1% poor, 14% fair, 81% good, 4% excellent. Lambing progress 85% complete. Sheep and lamb death loss, 0% heavy, 56% average, 44% light. Temperatures averaged 9 to 10°F above normal across most of the State. Large portions of Kansas received measurable rainfall, however much of the State remained drier than normal. Spring tillage was active and planting was underway in southern counties.

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**KENTUCKY:** For the month of March, the Commonwealth experienced mostly above normal temperatures and mixed rainfall amounts. Mid-March brought a return to unseasonably cold conditions in Kentucky. The coldest temperatures dipped into the middle teens to low 20s for much of the Bluegrass State. Freeze Warnings were issued multiple nights with winter wheat, plasticulture strawberries, peaches, and other fruit trees all in advanced growth stages for this time of year. For the week ending March 26, 2017, days suitable for field work was 4.4. Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 8% short, 76% adequate and 15% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 11% short, 78% adequate and 11% surplus. Wheat

fields continue to be monitored for damage resulting from the mid-March freeze. Some areas appear to have experienced significant damage. Producers will be deciding how to proceed moving forward with their wheat crop this year. Winter wheat condition rated 5% very poor, 17% poor, 35% fair, 36% good, and 7% excellent. A relatively mild winter has helped most producers to have adequate hay stocks on hand. Hay is still being fed where needed. Hay and roughage supplies 4% very short, 13% short, 71% adequate, and 12% surplus. At the end of February, 81% of supplies were rated as adequate to surplus, compared to 83% currently. Spring calving is going well. Livestock condition 1% very poor, 4% poor, 19% fair, 62% good, and 14% excellent. Alfalfa and peaches in some areas will be impacted by the mid-March freeze. 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. Some producers have applied burndown applications in preparation for corn and soybean planting. Fertilization and spring seeding of pastures continued on many livestock operations.

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**LOUISIANA:** For the month of March, there has been significant increase in fieldwork due to dry and hot conditions earlier in the month. Rice and corn plantings continue with good crop emergence. Some areas remain too wet to get into the fields. Soybean producers are going to begin planting soon, as field conditions improve. Livestock producers have begun making haylage where possible, and also spraying and topping summer pastures and hay fields for new growth. The crawfish catch remains well. Sugarcane crop is growing well for this time of the season with warm conditions. Also, about 60% of fertilizer has been applied to sugarcane and it is progressing at a rapid pace. Due to the warm winter we had, ryegrass pastures are not as productive. Heavy rains have delayed planting of many vegetables. Overall, everything is progressing at a very good rate with periodic rainfall.

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**MARYLAND:** The region experienced a category 3 on the Northeast Snowfall Impact Scale (NESIS) winter storm "Stella." The month of March as usual started a snowy, cold, dry, breezy, rainy, and foggy pattern in most parts of the region. There were 14 episodes of precipitation with maximum of 2.92 inches of snow for a single day. Maryland registered a maximum temperature reaching 80°F and minimum temperature reaching 15°F. Delaware reported a maximum temperature reaching 79°F, and minimum reaching 14°F. Due to low temperatures small grain got some winter burn. Currently small grain is in need of some soil moisture. Pastures were greening up, and cool season weeds were starting the process of growing as well. Some reporters indicated farmers showed concerns for fruit crops due to high and then low temperature, and the threat of the avian flu. Farmers were also able to do their first fertilizer application and started to plant peas and some corn. In General, fieldwork activities included top dressing small grain, planting peas, spreading manure and fertilizer, and some early disking and ground work.

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**MICHIGAN:** Topsoil moisture 1% short, 47% adequate, 52% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% short, 47% adequate, 51% surplus. Winter wheat condition, 2% very poor, 9% poor, 25% fair, 51% good, 13% excellent. Temperatures were cold and wet for the majority of March. Continued rainfall kept the soil moisture levels elevated, and put a slight damper on fieldwork. Nitrogen applications began where conditions permitted. Producers also began spreading lime, hauling manure, and preparing equipment for spring planting season. Despite the temperate winter season, most of the winter wheat remained in good condition.

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**MINNESOTA:** March was a windy month, with average daily wind speeds of 12 mph and 9 days with a peak wind gust over 30 mph. Overall weather conditions for March trended towards warmer and drier than normal. The preliminary Statewide average temperature for the month was 0.9°F above average at 33.6°F. The preliminary Statewide average precipitation was 0.02 inch below normal at 0.36 inch. However, Northeast and Northwest Minnesota had slightly greater than normal precipitation. Little to no snow cover remains throughout the State. The freezing and thawing throughout the month was reported as a concern for forage crops. Reported activities include manure and fertilizer application and readying equipment. Livestock producers have continued calving and lambing activities. The mild winter was generally good for livestock, but muddy conditions existed.

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**MISSISSIPPI:** The month of March began with consistently above normal temperatures. Winter wheat and cool season forages progressed nicely in these conditions and the mild winter made it easier than normal on livestock, with some producers having an abundance of hay inventory. Rains would help the inter annuals that survived the fall of 2016 drought, where extremely dry conditions caused nearly a 50% drop in winter annual acreages. As the rain events continued, wet soils delayed field preparations for early planting and caused pasture grass losses due to cattle bogging. The State witnessed a late freeze in mid-March, with temperatures well below normal temps (lows in the mid 20's) which greatly affected fruit orchards. Field conditions improved allowing producers to plant some corn, but many areas were still

too wet after thunderstorms swept across the State. Conditions would improve toward the end of the month and producers took full advantage of such, planting most of intended corn acres in counties across the State.

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**MISSOURI:** Topsoil moisture 10% very short, 33% short, 51% adequate, 6% surplus. Subsoil moisture 12% very short, 41% short, 44% adequate, 3% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 3% short, 81% adequate, 16% surplus. Stock water supplies 2% very short, 29% short, 69% adequate. Winter Wheat condition 3% poor, 37% fair, 53% good, 7% excellent.

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**MONTANA:** Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 25% last year; 6% short, 28% last year; 82% adequate, 47% last year; 11% surplus, 0% last year. Subsoil moisture 4% very short, 23% last year; 9% short, 41% last year; 78% adequate, 36% last year; 9% surplus, 0% last year. Winter wheat – wind damage 71% none, 77% last year; 22% light, 14% last year; 6% moderate, 8% last year; 1% heavy, 1% last year. Winter wheat – freeze and drought damage 65% none, 75% last year; 23% light, 16% last year; 9% moderate, 8% last year; 3% heavy, 1% last year. Winter wheat – protectiveness of snow cover 42% very poor, 52% last year; 15% poor, 20% last year; 30% fair, 16% last year; 12% good, 4% last year; 1% excellent, 8% last year. Livestock grazing accessibility – 77% open, 72% last year; 17% difficult, 9% last year; 6% closed, 19% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed – cattle and calves 91% fed, 96% last year. Livestock birthing – calving complete 13%, 13% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed – sheep and lambs 92% fed, 95% last year. Livestock birthing – lambing complete 9%, 11% last year. The month of March saw a return to milder, spring-like conditions with a few short lived cold spells. Precipitation was present across the State but in variable amounts, with the highest recorded this month in Heron with 5.21 inches of moisture. Other reporting stations recorded between 0.03 to 3.97 inches of moisture. Topsoil moisture conditions were 93 percent adequate to surplus which is above of last year's 47 percent. Subsoil moisture conditions are 87 percent adequate to surplus, well above last year's 36 percent. Winter wheat began breaking dormancy as temperatures warmed and snow cover dissipated. The State's snow coverage fell due to warm weather and high winds and is 13 percent good to excellent which is still above the coverage at this time last year when snow coverage was 12 percent good to excellent. Winter wheat condition is rated 62 percent good to excellent, compared with 49 percent last year. Livestock grazing is 94 percent open to difficult compared to 81 percent at the same time last year. Livestock producers are providing supplemental feed as they wait for pastures to start greening with 91 percent of cattle and 92 percent of sheep being fed. Livestock birthing continues with 13 percent of calving and 9 percent of lambing complete so far.

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**NEBRASKA:** Topsoil moisture 10% very short, 28% short, 59% adequate, and 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 12% very short, 30% short, 57% adequate, and 1% surplus. Winter wheat condition 2% very poor, 10% poor, 49% fair, 35% good, 4% excellent. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 5% short, 93% adequate, and 1% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 0% very short, 4% short, 91% adequate, 5% surplus. Cattle and calf condition, 0% very poor, 1% poor, 19% fair, 69% good, 11% excellent. Calving progress 55% complete. Cattle and calf death loss, 1% heavy, 66% average, 33% light. Sheep and lamb conditions, 0% very poor, 1% poor, 24% fair, 69% good, 6% excellent. Sheep and lamb death loss, 1% heavy, 78% average, 21% light. Temperatures averaged 2°F above normal across Nebraska, according to the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Snow fell at mid-month across many central counties. Rainfall occurred later in the month, but was limited to an inch or more over parts of southwest, central, and northeastern Nebraska. Statewide, soil moisture supplies declined during the month. Spring calving and lambing have gone well. Fieldwork preparation for spring planting was active in many counties.

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**NEVADA:** The month of March started with below average temperatures. Then mid-month temperatures improved, though at the end of the month another cool front brought below normal temperatures. Soil conditions remained wet and saturated with reports of some areas of the State still flooded. Frequent rain showers slowed a lot of field work with spring grains. Forage grasses had good early spring growth and cheat grass added several inches growth. In some areas throughout the State, livestock continued to be fed, whereas some cattle were slowly being moved to spring range.

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**NEW ENGLAND:** Throughout the month of March, New England weather alternated between snow storms and spring-like conditions throughout the region. Winter markets were still going strong, especially those with a variety of vegetables on hand. Farmers attended meetings, made marketing arrangements, and were planning for the upcoming 2017 growing season. The maple season has been highly variable throughout the region due to changing temperatures. Some tree fruit growers were also concerned about low temperatures in early March, but no significant damage has been reported. Fruit growers were finishing pruning activities. Vegetable growers were direct seeding crops in tunnels such as spinach, lettuce, cilantro, mustards and arugula. Greenhouse growers were preparing for Easter and Mother's Day, spending extra money on heat to keep the seeding houses up to temperature with these cold nights.

**NEW JERSEY:** Some south Jersey lettuce lost. Warm early weather encouraged planting followed by a cold spell. Fruit growers continued on edge with early progression due to early warm weather. The early progress in fruit trees makes them vulnerable to future cold. In high tunnels strawberries survived cold nights and were red but not ready. Nurseries had an intense March and were thankful for cold protecting tools. Bees likewise have to re cluster in cold weather after being active in warm. Further north in Warren (6 to 7 inches) and Hunterdon counties there was still plenty of snow covered fields with 10 days left in March. Although we still have some crop grounds covered with remaining snow, some crop ground is being fertilized depending on situation. It's cold and rainy. Soil temperature 45-49 F. Too cold for even peas/potatoes.

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**NEW MEXICO:** Topsoil moisture 14% very short, 62% short, 23% adequate, 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture 9% very short, 54% short, 36% adequate, 1% surplus. Chile planted 22%, 24% last year. Onions planted 33%, 54% last year; emerged 30%. Alfalfa hay condition 7% poor, 66% fair, 27% good. Winter wheat condition 3% very poor, 43% poor, 45% fair, 6% good, 3% excellent. Cows calved 15%, 10% February 26, 20% last year. Cattle receiving supplemental feed 78%, 82% February 26, 81% last year. Cattle condition 2% poor, 40% fair, 54% good, 4% excellent. Ewes lambing 15%, 10% February 26, 18% last year. Sheep receiving supplemental feed 72%, 75% February 26, 42% last year. Sheep and lamb condition 2% very poor, 13% poor, 35% fair, 49% good, 1% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 2% very short, 13% short, 78% adequate, 7% surplus. Stock water supplies 15% very short, 24% short, 57% adequate, 4% surplus. Above average temperatures coupled with below average precipitation plagued most areas across the State as producers began planting or preparing to plant their 2017 crops. Specifically, average temperatures varied from 0 to 13°F above normal, while monthly moisture deficits were recorded at all reporting weather stations except Capulin and Eagle Nest, where the departures from normal totaled 0.20 and 0.01 inch, respectively. Daytime highs ranged from 63°F at Eagle Nest to 94°F at Carlsbad. Overnight lows varied from -11°F at Eagle Nest to 36°F at NMSU and Santa Teresa. The northwest received the most widespread moisture during the month; however, total accumulations were less than an inch in these locations. Capulin and Eagle Nest in the northeastern portion of the State were the only two stations to record at least an inch of precipitation with 1.14 and 1.04 inches, respectively. In the northeast, growing conditions were deteriorating quickly under hot, dry, and windy weather. Reports from Union County indicated that winter wheat in the area had declined to the point where some producers were considering a replacement crop depending on spring conditions. Reports from NMSU indicated that alfalfa weevil presence will require greater field management in 2017 than in recent years, with larvae having been noted in some fields for approximately 3 weeks. Chile and onion planting was well underway despite dry soil conditions; however, progress was behind last year.

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**NEW YORK:** The month of March was marked by a wide range of weather events for the Empire State. Several days of unusually high temperature was reported early in the month followed by a large snowfall mid-month which still covers fields in many regions of the State. After several months of drought Livingston County is no longer listed on the U.S Drought Monitor Index. Following the fluctuating temperature fruit growers are concerned that the cold weather may result in damaged buds and loss of production. Grape producers are finishing up with pruning and are now tying canes to the trellis. Field work is expected to begin soon and will depend on field wetness. Field activities for the month include 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 6.0. Topsoil moisture 4% very short, 30% short, 65% adequate and 1% surplus. Subsoil moisture 6% very short, 27% short, 66% adequate and 1% surplus. Barley condition 1% very poor, 6% poor, 51% fair, 37% good and 5% excellent. Oats condition 1% very poor, 4% poor, 33% fair, 60% good and 2% excellent. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 9% poor, 26% fair, 60% good and 5% excellent. Pasture and range condition 2% very poor, 16% poor, 43% fair, 38% good and 1% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 9% very short, 20% short, 68% adequate and 3% surplus. March has been relatively mild with overall temperatures above normal; however, there was a cold snap mid-month that brought a small amount of snow and temperatures into the teens. Pastures are greening up rapidly with the warmer conditions and spring fertilization. Field preparations for this year's crops is well underway. Hard Freeze on wheat the last two weeks caused very little damage. Field work is progressing. Diseases are showing up due to high humidity and low ventilation. February 24- March 23 time period, the highest temperature was 80°F and lowest was 19°F. Nearly 2 inches of snow fell during this time period.

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**NORTH DAKOTA:** Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 4% short, 68% adequate, 27% surplus. Subsoil moisture 1% very short, 5% short, 76% adequate, 18% surplus. Winter wheat condition, 3% very poor, 2% poor, 16% fair, 75% good, 4% excellent. Cattle and calves condition, 0% very poor, 2% poor, 18% fair, 75% good, 5% excellent. Cattle and calves death loss, 1% heavy, 66% average, 33% light. Calving progress, 31% complete.

Sheep and lambs condition, 1% very poor, 3% poor, 23% fair, 69% good, 4% excellent. Sheep and lambs death loss, 4% heavy, 60% average, 36% light. Lambing progress, 52% compete. Hay and roughage supplies, 3% very short, 15% short, 80% adequate, 2% surplus. Stock water supplies, 0% very short, 5% short, 87% adequate, 8% surplus. Calving and ewes lambing are in full swing. The northern half of North Dakota averaged 6°F below normal, where the rest of the State averaged 6°F above normal.

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**OHIO:** Topsoil moisture, 1% very short, 3% short, 67% adequate, and 29% surplus. Subsoil moisture, 1% very short, 4% short, 84% adequate, 11% surplus. Winter wheat condition rated 2% poor, 19% fair, 64% good, and 15% excellent. In contrast to the unusually warm February temperatures, March has been a cool and wet month. The March 2017 Statewide average temperature through Sunday the 26th was 37.6°F, .8°F below normal. Precipitation averaged 3.24 inches Statewide for the same period, which was 0.77 inch above normal for the month. Above average precipitation and moisture conditions limited field work opportunities. There were some reports of freeze damage to winter wheat, but overall the winter wheat condition remains good. Severe windstorms reported at the start of the month caused some damage to fruit trees, nursery crops, and ornamentals. Observers noted that the cold temperatures in the second part of the month could also potentially affect fruit crops.

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**OKLAHOMA:** For Oklahoma, a warm, dry February stretched into March. Although a chilly rain dropped temperatures to the low 20's in the middle of the month, temperatures rebounded and averaged high 60's. A couple of spring storms brought some rainfall in March, but drought conditions continued to advance across the State. According to the OCS Mesonet, the biggest drought increase came across Eastern and North West Oklahoma. Precipitation ranged from 0.08 of an inch in the Southwest district to 2.89 inches in the Southeast district. Statewide temperatures averaged in the high 60's, with the lowest recording of 14°F at Kenton on Tuesday, March 7th and the highest recording of 98°F at Butler on Monday, March 20th. Topsoil and subsoil moisture conditions were rated mostly short to adequate. There was an average of 6.3 suitable days for fieldwork throughout the month.

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**OREGON:** The Statewide temperature differential for the month of March ranged from 1 degree below normal to 8°F above normal. A low temperature was reported at 11°F Fahrenheit in the south central region. A high temperature was reported at 74°F Fahrenheit in the northern coastal region. Statewide, Oregon continued to experience above average precipitation as the State transitioned from a cooler and wetter winter to spring. Several parts of Oregon received record amounts of precipitation this past winter. The days suitable for fieldwork have consistently stayed below 3 days or less per week for the majority of March. While pastures experienced some growth from extended day length and rising temperatures, spring crops and plantings were also delayed for many growers due to wet conditions. In the northern region, fruit trees bloomed and livestock was fed hay to avoid pasture damage. In the northeast region, spring wheat was planted. Winter wheat also looked good and was aided by the early spring moisture. In the southwest region, Coos and Curry counties started the spring season with over 100 inches of cumulative precipitation (46 inches above the 5-year average). Orchards, vineyards and berry crop fields were still too wet for spraying. Growers finished late with pruning. There is some potential for insect and disease pressure as the season progresses. In the southwest region, growers and livestock producers experienced rain and snow as March came to an end. Pastures greened up in some areas. The colder and snowy winter moved a lot of feeder hay in this region. Some parts of Cook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties are weeks behind in growing degree days compared to last year.

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**PENNSYLVANIA:** March's weather in Pennsylvania was a little colder than the previous month, lower temperatures brought snow in some areas, in other areas lots of snow. Overall, temperatures ranged from a high of 71o(F) to a low of 12o(F). Below normal temperatures have caused some concerns with productions, since the cold weather earlier this month may have affected the fruit trees. Pruning progress is ahead of normal. Small grains and hay fields were greening up, but the cold weather in early march has set them back. Producers are busy in the fields, hauling manure liming and some fertilizer spreading. Temperature fluctuation this time of the year can be a concern for Fruit Growers.

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**SOUTH CAROLINA:** A warm and dry month for the State as the U.S. Drought Monitor estimates the State at 11 percent drought free compared to 55 percent on February 28, 2017. The northwestern corner of the State remains to be under the most serious drought conditions. Comments describe fieldwork preparation ongoing during the month of March. Producers held off planting in early March in anticipation of the realized frosts with most producers beginning to plant corn during the last week of the month. Some frost damage was reported to more advanced winter wheat fields. Several nights and mornings well below freezing caused heavy damage to the State's peach, blueberry, and strawberry crops as many were in bloom or in early fruit stages. Average maximum temperatures ranged from the low 70s in eastern South

Carolina to the mid 60s in the west. Average minimum temperatures ranged from the mid 40s in the east to mid-30s in west. Precipitation estimates for the month range from 6.15 inches near Greenville to 0.77 inches in Walterboro.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA:** Topsoil moisture 1% very short, 11% short, 85% adequate, 3% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 17% short, 79% adequate, 2% surplus. Winter wheat condition 0% very poor, 3% poor, 41% fair, 56% good, and 0% excellent. Stock water supplies 1% very short, 12% short, 85% adequate, 2% surplus. Hay and roughage supplies 4% very poor, 17% poor, 76% adequate, and 3% excellent. Cattle and calf conditions 0% very poor, 1% poor, 15% fair, 79% good, and 5% excellent. Calving Progress 32% complete. Cattle and calf death loss 0% heavy, 72% average, 28% light. Sheep and lamb condition 0% very poor, 3% poor, 20% fair, 75% good, and 2% excellent. Lambing progress 65% complete. Sheep and lamb death loss 0% heavy, 70% average, 30% light. For the month of March 2017, despite periods of snow and cold, reporters indicated generally favorable conditions for calving and lambing in the State. A mid-month winter storm brought 4 to 10 inches of snow to many eastern locations. However, temperatures for most areas were average to above average for the month. Spring fertilizer application began in drier areas of central and western South Dakota.

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**TENNESSEE:** Days suitable 3.9. Topsoil moisture 2% short, 81% adequate, 17% surplus. Subsoil moisture 2% very short, 7% short, 81% adequate, 10% surplus. Winter wheat condition 6% very poor, 13% poor, 35% fair, 42% good, 4% excellent. Peaches all freeze damage 38% severe, moderate 28%, light 17%, none 17%. Strawberries freeze damage 22% severe, 40% moderate, 28% light, 10% none. Pasture and Range condition 4% very poor, 24% poor, 43% fair, 26% good, 3% excellent. Cattle condition 2% very poor, 6% poor, 33% fair, 52% good, 7% excellent. Hay supplies 12% very short, 32% short, 52% adequate, 4% surplus.

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**TEXAS:** Warm and windy conditions were experienced in most areas of the State. Strong winds caused damage to some crops in the Trans Pecos. Precipitation across the east and south of the State was between 2 and 4 inches, with some areas recording upwards 5 inches of rain. In the Plains rainfall was less than 2 inches. Wheat entered the heading stage in the lower parts of the State. Days suitable for field work remained almost unchanged throughout the month.

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**UTAH:** Topsoil moisture 0% very short, 0% last year; 3% short, 24% last year; 59% adequate, 68% last year; 38% surplus, 8% last year. Subsoil moisture 0% very short, 6% last year; 2% short, 23% last year; 76% adequate, 67% last year; 22% surplus, 4% last year. Pasture and range condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 4% poor, 4% last year; 38% fair, 41% last year; 53% good, 48% last year; 5% excellent, 7% last year. Barley planted 1%, 5% last year. Spring wheat planted 3%, 10% last year. Winter wheat condition 7% very poor, 0% last year; 18% poor, 0% last year; 19% fair, 38% last year; 56% good, 51% last year; 0% excellent, 2% last year. Hay and roughage supplies 0% very short, 0% last year; 6% short, 1% last year; 81% adequate, 80% last year; 13% surplus year, 19% last year. Stock water supplies 0% very short, 0% last year; 4% short, 8% last year; 84% adequate, 90% last year; 12% surplus, 11% last year. Cattle and calves condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 2% poor, 1% last year; 29% fair, 14% last year; 66% good, 67% last year; 3% excellent, 18% last year. Sheep and lambs condition 0% very poor, 0% last year; 3% poor, 0% last year; 28% fair, 39% last year; 69% good, 45% last year; 0% excellent, 16% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed for cattle 68%, 68% last year. Livestock receiving supplemental feed for sheep 79%, 58% last year. Cows calved 28%, 25% last year. Farm Flock Ewes Lambled 25%, 20% last year, and Range Flock Ewes Lambled 3%, 5% last year. Warm temperatures combined with precipitation have caused rapid snowpack melt, leading to very muddy conditions causing issues for both winter wheat and cattle according to the Mountain Regional Field Office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA. Box Elder County reported rapid snowmelt due to precipitation and temperatures, leading to standing water in the alfalfa and winter wheat fields. Cache County reports standing water everywhere and there are concerns that winter wheat may need to be replanted. The persistent wet, muddy conditions have also been an issue for calving as death loss is higher than normal. Beaver County reports farmer planting crops along with beginning irrigation.

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**VIRGINIA:** Barley conditions were 5% poor, 27% fair, 62% good, and 6% excellent. Oats conditions were 15% poor, 41% fair, and 43% good, and 1% excellent. Winter wheat conditions were 5% poor, 20% fair, 63% good, and 12% excellent. Livestock conditions were 1% very poor, 5% poor, 32% fair, 58% good, and 4% excellent. Pasture and range conditions were 9% very poor, 25% poor, 29% fair, 33% good, and 4% excellent. Percent of feed obtained from pastures 12%. March has been unusually warm but also included some very cold temperatures that brought with them freezes. These freezes have hurt vineyards and fruit producers. The warm-up that has since followed, plus the lack of rain and snow in the past have hindered spring planting. This also has affected pastures which are currently dealing with

overgrazing as they are desirous of rain. Farming activities for the month included lime, fertilizer, manure, and burn down herbicide applications.

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**WASHINGTON:** March brought excessive rainfall for the entire State. Many regions reported wet fields with standing water, while a few others reported some snow remained with spring arriving late. Temperatures dropped to as low as 12°F Fahrenheit in the east central region while the highest temperature was reported at 71°F in the southeast region. Days of freezing temperatures have dropped significantly, with under half of the days below freezing for the central and eastern regions while the western region had barely any. The highest reported precipitation was in the western region at 14 inches, while the lowest reported precipitation was in the central region at 0.87 inch. For most of the State, the fields were exceedingly wet with standing water preventing field work. Other regions experienced floods. Average temperatures were cooler than prior years. Orchards and berry vines on the other hand had some budding progress through the cold and wet weather. Snow mold concerns have increased in some areas. Some calves were born weak and were lost due to the freezing cold conditions while other ranchers were still using winter feed, exceeding prior year's usage. Only a select few managed to till and seed a small portion of the land. Overall crop planting was delayed significantly due to the prolonged wet winter conditions.

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**WEST VIRGINIA:** Days suitable for fieldwork 4.3. Topsoil moisture was 3% very short, 18% short, 77% adequate, and 2% surplus. Subsoil moisture was 2% very short, 22% short, and 76% adequate. Hay and roughage supplies were 1% very short, 13% short, 79% adequate, and 7% surplus. Feed grain supplies were 9% short, 88% adequate, and 3% surplus. Winter wheat conditions were 9% poor, 52% fair, 32% good, and 7% excellent. Cattle and calves were 4% poor, 19% fair, 72% good, and 5% excellent. Calving was 59% complete, 59% in 2016, 5-year avg. not available. Sheep and lambs were 3% poor, 13% fair, 79% good, and 5% excellent. Lambing was 64% complete, 69% in 2016, 5-year avg. not available. Weather this month has been on the warmer side with a mix of wintery weather in the middle of the month. Periods of below freezing temperatures mid-month have damaged some of the peach buds and possibly a few apples. Farming activities for the month included calving and lambing. There have been some reports of scours and respiratory problems in calves.

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**WISCONSIN:** March temperatures at the five major weather stations ranged from 1.5°F below normal to 1.3°F above normal. Average highs ranged from 37.7°F in Eau Claire to 42.5°F in La Crosse, while average lows ranged from 19.9 to 25.5°F. in those same cities. Precipitation ranged from 1.07 inches in Eau Claire to 2.50 inches in Milwaukee. Milwaukee received the most snowfall of the major cities with 13.6 inches. Eau Claire received the least, with 4.8 inches of snow for the month. Temperatures and precipitation were both near normal. Reporters across the State expressed concern about low sugar content from maple trees this season. Some oat and alfalfa planting reports were received from the southern part of the State.

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**WYOMING:** Topsoil moisture 12% very short, 29% short, 46% adequate, 13% surplus. Subsoil moisture 18% very short, 25% short, 45% adequate, 12% surplus. Barley planted 5% complete, 34% last year. Cows calved 18%, 21% last year. Winter wheat condition 11% very poor, 23% poor, 42% fair, 20% good, 4% excellent. Ewes lambled 16%, 19% last year. Sheep shorn 20%, 15% last year. Cattle and calves death loss 34% light, 62% average, 4% heavy. Sheep and lambs death loss 34% light, 50% average, 16% heavy. Livestock condition 1% very poor, 3% poor, 28% fair, 65% good, 2% excellent. Pasture and range condition 8% very poor, 26% poor, 32% fair, 33% good, 1% excellent. Hay and roughage supplies 11% very short, 27% short, 61% adequate, 1% surplus. Stock water supplies 8% very short, 12% short, 66% adequate, 14% surplus. Wet weather during March delayed the start of spring planting, and has caused poor calving and lambing conditions for livestock producers in some areas. Cattle and calves and sheep and lambs death loss showed an uptick when compared with estimates from a year ago. Warm temperatures melting a heavy snowpack led to flooding in certain locations, while other areas were in need of additional moisture to support the recent green up of native pastures and winter wheat. All reporting weather stations recorded some moisture during the month, with total accumulations varying from 0.03 inch at Powell to 2.65 inches at Lake Yellowstone. Twelve of the 34 stations reported over an inch of precipitation; however, year-to-date deficits currently exist at 14 stations. Average temperatures varied from 5°F below to 6°F above average. Daytime highs ranged from 47°F at Lake Yellowstone to 70°F at LaGrange, Torrington, and Wheatland. Overnight lows varied from -17°F at Powell to 14°F at Evanston. Barley seeding was underway, but well behind progress from a year ago. While estimates show hay and roughage supplies to be 62 percent adequate to surplus Statewide, comments from Uinta County indicated that many livestock producers have fed substantially more feedstuffs over the winter, and their supplies were quickly dwindling and not easily replaced due to a short supply.



## **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
Scott Matthews – Crop Weather, Barley.....	(202) 720-7621
Sammy Neal– Peanuts, Rice .....	(202) 720-7688
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Bianca Pruneda – Cotton, Cotton Ginnings, Sorghum.....	(202) 720-5944
Travis Thorson – Sunflower, Other Oilseeds .....	(202) 720-7369

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