

Alberta Crop Report



Crop Conditions as of August 7, 2018

Since mid-July, variable precipitation has occurred across the province, with enough rain in some areas, while others are under dry conditions, especially in the southern part of the province (see the Map). Hot temperatures added to the stress on crops and forages in dry areas, causing heat stress and pushing maturity quickly, resulting in lower than normal yields. Some hail damage has been reported across the province. Provincial crop condition ratings declined by three per cent to 60 per cent good to excellent, compared with the 5-year average (2013-2017) of 66 per cent and long term average (2008-2017) of 65 per cent (see Table 1). Compared to the previous week, crop conditions improved slightly in the Southern Region, due to localized shower activities, but remained below the short and long term averages. Crop conditions in the Central, North East and North West Regions fell, while the Peace Region remained unchanged. In terms of crop development, spring seeded cereals across the province are mostly in the dough development stage.

Harvest operations have just begun mostly for barley, winter wheat and dry peas in the Southern Region and winter wheat in the Central. Provincially, short term estimated dryland yield is six per cent below the 5-year average, while in line with the 10-year average. Currently, compared to the short term normal, yields for the Peace Region are above average and on par for the North East and North West Regions. However, short term yield indices show yield down by 25 per cent and eight per cent, respectively for the Southern and Central Regions. Compared to the long term normal, yields in the Peace, North East and North West Regions are above average, the Central is on par, and in the Southern Region is 25 per cent below average.

Provincial first cut dryland hay is 94 per cent complete, with average yield on dryland estimated at 1.0 ton per acre (below the 5-year average of 1.5 tons per acre), and the quality rated as 59 per cent good to excellent. Irrigated haying operations are complete, with yield at 2.2 tons per acre (down from the 5-year average of 2.4 tons per acre) and quality rated as 79 per cent good to excellent. Second cut haying operations are underway. The estimated yield for second cut hay is reported 0.7 ton per acre for dryland and 1.9 tons per acre for irrigated lands, which are lower than the 5-year averages of 1.1 and 2.0 tons per acre. Second cut hay quality is lower than normal and rated as 53 per cent good to excellent in dryland and 83 per cent in irrigated.

Table 1: Regional Crop Conditions Ratings as of August 7, 2018

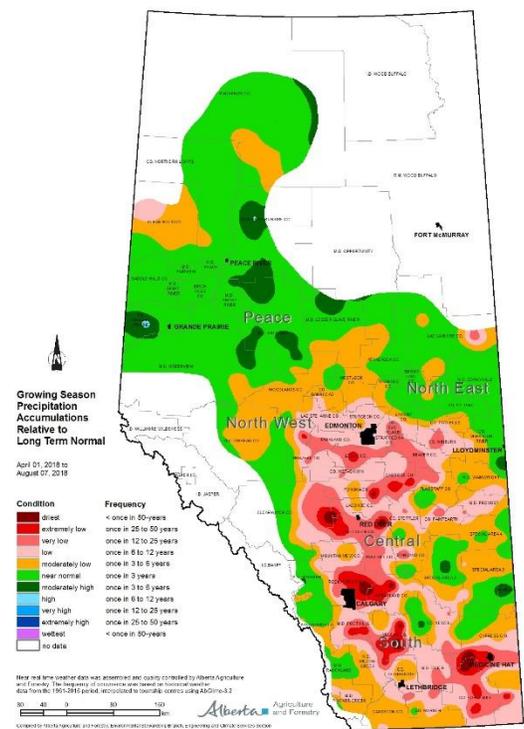
	Per cent rated in Good to Excellent Condition					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	41.8%	50.0%	78.2%	63.2%	88.5%	62.4%
Durum Wheat	39.2%	65.8%	---	---	---	42.9%
Winter Wheat	47.8%	30.1%	75.0%	---	---	46.7%
Barley	35.7%	51.3%	79.2%	62.5%	86.2%	54.9%
Oats	45.6%	53.9%	80.4%	63.2%	88.1%	69.0%
Fall Rye	49.3%	30.9%	75.0%	---	---	51.8%
Canola	37.3%	48.2%	78.1%	53.1%	84.8%	62.7%
Dry Peas	44.7%	53.6%	79.2%	62.7%	84.8%	60.4%
Lentils	36.5%	62.0%	---	---	---	40.5%
Flax	54.0%	51.9%	80.0%	---	---	57.7%
Potatoes	79.8%	33.3%	---	100.0%	---	79.2%
All Crops	40.9%	50.5%	78.4%	58.8%	86.1%	60.2%
Last Week	39.6%	51.6%	80.0%	65.9%	86.3%	62.9%
5-year average (2013-2017)	63.1%	61.2%	76.2%	68.4%	57.7%	65.8%
10-year average (2008-2017)	69.3%	64.3%	69.3%	62.7%	51.9%	65.2%

Table 2: Dryland Yield Estimates (Major Crops) as of August 7, 2018

	Estimated Yield (bushel/acre)					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	32.3	46.4	51.3	58.4	47.5	45.8
Durum Wheat	32.2	40.3	---	---	---	33.3
Barley	38.7	60.8	71.0	73.0	68.8	57.6
Oats	38.3	63.7	81.5	89.6	75.8	75.8
Canola	29.1	39.5	41.4	42.3	43.1	39.3
Dry Peas	29.3	38.8	45.3	46.4	46.3	37.8
5-year Yield Index	74.5%	91.8%	99.1%	97.8%	119.1%	93.7%
10-year Yield Index	74.9%	100.5%	107.3%	103.5%	130.8%	99.5%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey
5-year yield index compares yields to the 5-year (2013-2017) averages and 10-year yield index compares to the 10-yr (2008-2017) averages

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program. The precipitation map is compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environmental Stewardship Branch, Engineering and Climate Services Section.



REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2018 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Spotty and limited thunderstorms in some areas over the past week brought some moisture, which helped with filling kernels, while there are a lot of crops with short heads. Generally, crops continue to grow under heat stress in the region and their maturity has been sped up by hot and dry conditions, causing below average yields.
- First cut haying operations for both dryland and irrigated land are virtually done, with 45 and 71 per cent rated as good to excellent quality, respectively. Preliminary average yield on dryland is estimated at 0.9 ton per acre and 2.3 tons per acre on irrigated land. Second cut haying operations are underway for irrigated lands, with 34 per cent complete. While there won't be second cut dryland hay, due to dry conditions, yield for second cut hay in irrigated lands reported at 1.9 tons per acre. A lot of producers will be baling and cut their crops for feed.
- Both pasture and tame hay conditions are in poor conditions, with only 25 per cent of pasture and 23 per cent of tame hay fields have been rated as good to excellent growth condition.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- The whole region experienced high temperatures over the past week, which can potentially lead to lower than normal yields, due to crops maturing too quickly. Southwestern counties in the region had numerous thunderstorms bringing some shower activities to maintain soil moisture. Other areas that did not receive moisture or very little, continue to have heat stress, limiting crop growth and not filling well. Livestock producers have to graze or cut some of the crops in order to get enough feed.
- First cut haying operations are 96 per cent complete for dryland and completed for irrigated land. Average dryland yield is estimated at 0.9 ton per acre, while irrigated at 2.0 tons per acre. Quality is rated as 65 per cent good to excellent for dryland hay and 90 per cent for irrigated. Second cut hay in dryland has just started, with low yield expected.
- Pasture and tame hay fields have been under heat and moisture stress. Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions are shown in brackets) are now reported as 22 (25) per cent poor, 37 (39) per cent fair, 39 (35) per cent good and 2 (1) per cent excellent.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Most counties in the region received precipitation which slowed down haying operations, but maintained crop conditions. At the same time, warm and dry weather benefited maturity for spring seeded crops.
- First cut haying operations are 86 per cent complete on dryland. Average yield is estimated at 1.0 ton per acre for dryland hay, with quality rated as 63 per cent good to excellent. However, second cut hay has very low quality and quantity. Yield for the second cut hay is estimated at 0.5 ton per acre, with quality rated as 75 per cent poor and 25 per cent fair.
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions are shown in brackets) declined from the previous week and are rated as 15 (20) per cent poor, 28 (29) per cent fair, 54 (50) per cent good and 3 (1) per cent excellent.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Recent hot weather has raised concerns of immature ripening in cereals and reducing pod development for canola in some areas. Isolated showers and hail storms were reported in the region over the past week.
- Hay and pasture growth conditions are very poor and regressed due to the hot conditions, with very little second cut hay is predicted. First cut hay is 95 per cent complete on dryland, with the average yield estimated at 1.1 tons per acre (below the 5-year average of 1.9 tons per acre and quality rated as 63 per cent good to excellent).
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions are shown in brackets) reported as 38 (40) per cent poor, 43 (40) per cent fair and 19 (20) per cent good.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Some light scattered showers were reported over the past week, but weather remained hot and humid. Crops are progressing nicely in most areas of the region.
- First cut haying operations are 94 per cent complete on dryland with the average yield estimated at 1.4 tons per acre, which is in line with the 5-year average. Quality is rated as 72 per cent good to excellent.
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions are shown in brackets) reported as 20 (22) per cent fair, 68 (66) per cent good and 12 (12) per cent excellent.

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