

# Alberta Crop Report



## Crop Conditions as of October 2, 2018

The month of September has been exceptionally cold across the province and, for many areas, unusually wet. Although cool damp weather conditions have halted harvest operations in many areas, this has led to normal precipitation accumulations for most areas of the province (see the Map). Adding to this was the large snowfall event in the southern and western parts of the province. The cold weather is predicted to persist into next week, but weather permitting, farmers who have access to grain dryers are likely to be combining, with priority given to higher valued crops.

Provincially, about 40 per cent of crops have now been harvested, 24 per cent are in the swath and another 36 per cent still remain standing. When compared to the 5-year average (2013-2017), provincial harvest progress is 40 per cent behind (See Table 1). Regionally, harvest is behind in all regions. In the Peace Region, harvest progress is 58 per cent behind the 5-year average, in the North West Region 47 per cent, in the North East Region 50 per cent, in the Central Region 36 per cent and in the Southern Region 24 per cent. Provincially, nearly 49 per cent of spring wheat, 41 per cent of barley, 65 per cent of oats and 27 per cent of canola are standing. As well, about 53 per cent of canola across the province are in swath.

Dryland yield estimates remained similar to the previous estimates reported on September 18, with yields six per cent lower than the short term averages and in line with the long term averages (See Table 2). The provincial average yields for potatoes on dryland and irrigated fields are estimated at 7.1 and 15.8 tons per acre, respectively. Yields for irrigated dry beans and sugar beets are reported at 25.6 cwt per acre and 28 tonnes per acre, respectively.

Since the end of August, crop quality has started to deteriorate due to the wet conditions and is now expected to decline further. Provincially, about 78 per cent of hard red spring wheat and 85 per cent of durum wheat are now graded in the top two grades, which is still above their short and long term averages. About 23 per cent of barley is eligible for malt and 60 per cent graded as Number 1. For oats, about 48 per cent is graded in the top two grades, which is lower than their short and long term averages. Almost 92 per cent of harvested canola is in the top two grades, with only 76 per cent graded as Number 1, lower than average.

**Table 1: Estimates of Crop Harvest Progress as of October 2, 2018**

	% of Combined					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat *	68.0%	46.6%	27.6%	22.8%	31.0%	41.9%
Durum Wheat	68.5%	47.5%	---	---	---	65.6%
Winter Wheat	95.1%	98.3%	100.0%	---	---	95.5%
Barley *	82.0%	41.5%	14.4%	17.2%	29.3%	45.7%
Oats *	70.6%	28.3%	9.2%	6.1%	24.3%	19.5%
Fall Rye	93.4%	98.3%	100.0%	---	---	97.3%
Canola *	51.5%	27.8%	10.8%	2.4%	10.8%	20.3%
Dry Peas *	94.2%	98.2%	94.0%	93.3%	50.2%	86.9%
Lentils	97.5%	82.5%	---	---	---	95.1%
Flax	56.4%	3.8%	---	---	---	38.1%
Potatoes	72.0%	6.3%	---	80.0%	---	69.3%
All Crops	70.5%	42.6%	22.0%	15.7%	22.8%	40.1%
Major Crops	70.2%	42.3%	22.1%	15.6%	22.8%	37.8%
Last Week (Major Crops)	69.2%	41.0%	12.8%	12.3%	12.9%	32.9%
5-year average (2013-2017)**	94.5%	78.5%	71.8%	62.7%	80.7%	79.8%

\*: Major crops (reported for abbreviated survey), \*\*: All crops

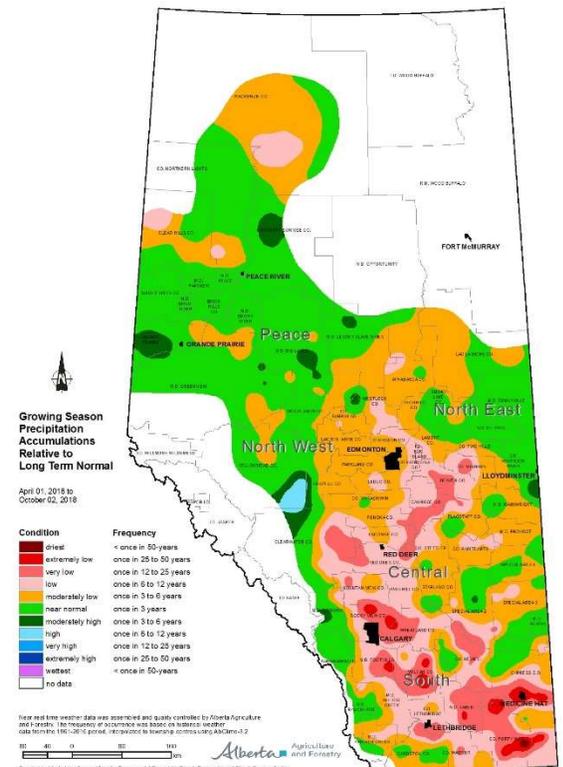
**Table 2: Dryland Yield Estimates as of October 2, 2018**

	Estimated Yield (bushel/acre)					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	33.0	47.4	50.3	59.9	48.2	46.1
Durum Wheat	30.6	42.0	---	---	---	32.2
Barley	37.3	62.0	71.1	75.6	66.8	57.7
Oats	38.7	65.7	82.7	90.4	75.0	76.6
Canola	27.2	39.6	42.5	42.9	42.2	39.2
Dry Peas	30.8	41.6	45.5	46.4	50.4	39.7
5-year Yield Index	73.3%	93.4%	99.5%	99.8%	118.9%	94.1%
10-year Yield Index	73.7%	102.3%	107.9%	105.6%	130.6%	100.0%

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.



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## **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)**

- Poor weather conditions including cloudiness, fog, showers and light frost have been delaying harvest progress. In most areas, the recent heavy snowfall is expected to delay harvest even more with the flattening of standing crops. In this region, 71 per cent of the crops are in the bin, 11 per cent in swath and 18 per cent still standing.
- Crop quality remains above the provincial 5-year averages for malt barley and the top two grades of hard red spring wheat, durum wheat, oats and dry peas. About 79 per cent of canola is graded as Number 1 and 17 per cent as Number 2, slightly lower than the 5-year average.
- About 72 per cent of potatoes have now been harvested, with yields on dryland and irrigated fields at 6 and 15.8 tons per acre, respectively.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as 19 (34) per cent poor, 43 (49) per cent fair and 38 (17) per cent good.

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

- Harvest has been halted in the region due to rain and snow. Snow has also flattened crops that are still standing. Warmer and windy days are needed to dry up fields. About 43 per cent of crops are in the bin, 23 per cent in swath and 34 per cent still standing.
- For all crops, quality is below their provincial short and long term averages. About 21 per cent of barley is eligible for malt, which is above the long term average, but lower than the short term average.
- About six per cent of potatoes have been harvested, with dryland yield at 9 tons per acre.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as zero (13) per cent poor, 18 (24) per cent fair, 51 (51) per cent good and 27 (12) per cent excellent, with four (0) per cent excessive.

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

- Cold damp weather conditions have brought harvesting operations to a standstill. The quality of cereal crops are continuing to decline, due to poor drying conditions. Nearly 22 per cent of crops are in the bin, 32 per cent in swath and 46 per cent still standing.
- Crop quality for the top two grades of the spring wheat, canola number 1 and Barley Number 1 are above their short and long term provincial averages, while only 11 per cent of barley is eligible for malt. Quality for the top two grades of oats is markedly below both the short and long term provincial averages.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as 3 (10) per cent fair, 50 (44) per cent good and 46 (45) per cent excellent, with one (one) per cent excessive.

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

- Cold weather coupled with nightly frosts have made harvest quite challenging. Only limited acres of crops have been harvested by those producers with access to grain dryers, as crop moisture content remains very high. Almost 16 per cent of the crops are in the bin, 37 per cent in swath and 47 per cent still standing.
- To date, crop quality for the top two grades of spring wheat, barley Number 1 and Canola Number 1 is above both their short and long term provincial averages. Only two per cent of barley is eligible for malt and 40 per cent of oats are graded as top two grades, which is lower than the short and long term averages.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as zero (15) per cent poor, 15 (40) per cent fair, 62 (18) per cent good and 23 (27) per cent excellent.

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

- Conditions were dry enough to facilitate some harvesting operations over the weekend, before the light snow started on Monday. Overall, harvest progress in the region advanced 10 per cent, despite nightly frosts and short harvesting days. Currently, about 23 per cent of crops are in the bin, compared to 13 per cent a week ago, while 32 per cent are still in swath and 45 per cent standing.
- Quality for all harvested crops is below their short and long term provincial averages, with the exception of the top two grades of dry peas and barley Number 1, which are above.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as zero (2) per cent poor, zero (8) per cent fair, 64 (60) per cent good and 26 (24) per cent excellent, with 10 (6) per cent excessive.

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