

Alberta Crop Report



Crop Conditions as of July 21, 2015 - Abbreviated Report

Over the past week most of the province received upwards of 20 mm of rain, which helped dry areas and somewhat alleviated moisture stress on cereals and oilseeds crops. Localized areas around Calgary, Red Deer, Rocky Mountain House, Valleyview/High Prairie and Smoky Lake received over 50 mm of precipitation. Scattered hail storms were reported in a few areas with some crop damage. Areas missed by the recent rains included northern and western parts of the Peace Region and the south east area of the South Region, where both locations received less than 10 mm of rain.

Due to the recent rainfall, surface soil moisture ratings across the province improved by 10 per cent this week to 30 per cent good to excellent. However, soil moisture conditions remain extremely low through many areas, especially north of Edmonton and through much of northern and eastern Peace Region. Sub-surface soil moisture conditions are on par with last week, rated as 28 per cent poor, 47 per cent fair, 23 per cent good and two per cent excellent (see Table 1). Significant rain would still be welcome to help crops fill as well as improve hay and pasture conditions, especially in the areas with low soil moisture reserves.

Provincially, crop growing conditions did not change significantly from last week and are rated as 27 per cent poor, 43 per cent fair, 29 per cent good and one per cent excellent. Spring wheat is rated as 26 per cent poor, 41 per cent fair, 32 per cent good and one per cent excellent, and canola is at 33 per cent poor, 42 per cent fair, 24 per cent good and one per cent excellent (see Table 2). Some producers are cutting crops for greenfeed in anticipation of low winter feed supplies.

Tame hay and pasture continue to show the full effects of the dry spring and summer conditions, although the recent rain helped turn pasture green in some regions. Provincially, hay and pasture conditions are reported as 48 per cent poor, 38 per cent fair and 14 per cent good. Grasshoppers remain an issue in many areas across the province, with the most damage being reported in the Peace Region.

Table 1: Estimates of Sub-Surface Soil Moisture Conditions, Alberta

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
As of July 21, 2015					
Southern	26.9%	39.4%	29.3%	4.4%	0.0%
Central	29.6%	44.5%	25.9%	0.0%	0.0%
North East	21.2%	59.6%	18.8%	0.4%	0.0%
North West	53.2%	43.6%	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Peace	20.0%	47.7%	30.4%	1.9%	0.0%
Alberta	27.8%	47.3%	23.4%	1.6%	0.0%
As of July 14, 2015					
Alberta	30.1%	47.6%	20.8%	1.5%	0.0%

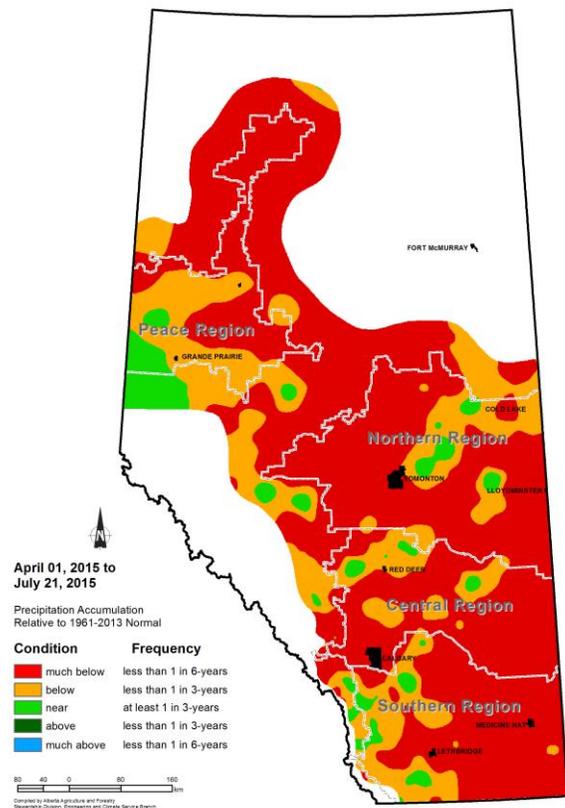
Table 2: Estimates of Crop Conditions, Alberta

	% Rating of Good/Excellent					
	Southern	Central	North East	North West	Peace	Alberta
As of July 21, 2015						
Spring Wheat	42.5%	18.5%	43.5%	15.4%	25.0%	32.9%
Barley	43.5%	21.5%	36.9%	12.5%	23.8%	30.6%
Oats	48.9%	22.3%	39.2%	13.2%	26.5%	27.2%
Canola	40.5%	19.2%	31.2%	12.5%	16.9%	25.2%
Dry Peas	41.9%	21.9%	49.2%	18.1%	31.5%	37.0%
All Crops	42.2%	19.7%	37.5%	13.5%	21.1%	29.7%
As of July 14, 2015						
Alberta	43.8%	16.8%	36.0%	13.5%	26.0%	30.3%

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Forestry

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 Division, Technology and Innovation Branch.



REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2015 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

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

- Most areas, especially in the Wheatland and Vulcan Counties and M.D. of Foothills received much of the needed rain that alleviated heat stress on crops and allow help them to fill. Some poorer crops are being grazed or baled in anticipation of winter feed shortage.
- Surface soil moisture conditions improved by 13 per cent from a week ago and are now rated as 61 per cent poor to fair. Sub-surface soil moisture conditions are rated as 66 per cent poor to fair, unchanged from last week.
- Regionally, between 41 and 49 per cent of spring wheat, barley, oats, canola and dry peas are in good to excellent condition.
- Pasture conditions have declined by five per cent from a week ago due to the recent hot weather and are now reported as 82 per cent poor to fair, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

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

- Varying amounts of rain, upwards of 50 mm in Red Deer, Stettler, Lacombe and Clearwater Counties, helped replenish soil moisture during the past week.
- Surface and sub-surface soil moisture conditions improved by seven per cent from a week ago and are now rated about 73 per cent poor to fair. Rain would still be welcome to help crops fill and improve hay and pasture conditions, where soil moisture reserves are low.
- Regionally, between 19 and 22 per cent of spring wheat, barley, oats, canola and dry peas are in good to excellent condition. Grasshoppers are becoming an issue in a few areas.
- With the recent rain, pasture and tame hay conditions have improved and are now rated as 84 per cent poor to fair, compared to 87 per cent a week ago.

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

- Light to heavy rain fell over most areas of the region, which improved soil moisture conditions and allow help crops to fill. Localized hail storms have caused some crop damage in a few areas. Some crops will be cut for greenfeed, because of an anticipated shortage of feed supplies.
- Surface soil moisture conditions improved 17 per cent from a week ago, and are now rated as 72 per cent poor to fair. Sub-surface soil moisture conditions are rated as 81 per cent poor to fair, up seven per cent from a week ago.
- Regionally, about 37 to 49 per cent of spring wheat, barley, oats and dry peas are in good to excellent condition, while canola is at 31 per cent. Grasshoppers have caused some crop damage.
- Pasture conditions have improved by six per cent from the previous week and are now rated as 91 per cent poor to fair, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

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

- Some areas of the region received much needed rain over the past week. The recent precipitation alleviated heat stress on crops and will help them to fill, especially in the previously dry areas. Localized hail storms have caused some damage in a few areas.
- Overall, surface moisture conditions are rated as 90 per cent poor to fair, compared to 95 per cent a week ago. Sub-surface soil moisture conditions remain unchanged and are rated as 97 per cent poor to fair.
- About 13 to 18 per cent of spring wheat, barley, oats, canola and dry peas are in good to excellent condition. There has been some crop damage due to grasshoppers.
- Pasture conditions remain unchanged from a week ago and are reported as 98 per cent poor to fair, with the same ratings reported for tame hay.

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

- Cooler weather and spotty thunder showers during the past week have slowed crop development. Many producers are reporting issues with grasshoppers causing heavy crop damage.
- Even with the recent rain, surface and sub-surface soil moisture conditions dropped marginally from a week ago and are now rated as 66 per cent and 68 per cent good to excellent, respectively.
- Regionally, between 17 and 27 per cent of spring wheat, barley, oats and canola are in poor to fair condition, while dry peas are at 32 per cent.
- Pasture conditions have declined five per cent from last week and are reported as 75 per cent poor to fair, with the same ratings reported for tame hay.

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