

Alberta Crop Report



Crop Conditions as of May 15, 2018

In the first half of May, temperatures have been the warmest since 1961 in most parts of the province, with most areas receiving less than 10 mm of moisture. This has provided the ideal weather for quick ground thaw and allowed for seeding operations to be in full swing across the province. Provincially, as of May 15, about 38 per cent of crops have been seeded (see Table 1), compared with the five-year average (2013-2017) of 60 per cent and the long term normal (2004-2017) of 68 per cent by this time. Producers are almost a week behind. Regionally, seeding progress is most advanced in the Southern Region at 54 per cent, followed by the North West Region with 36 per cent, Peace Region at 32 per cent and the North East and Central Regions, both at 30 per cent.

Soil moisture reserves are highly variable across the province (see map). Although a large percentage of wet areas have dried, making seeding possible, there is still standing water in some areas across the province. Provincially, surface soil moisture is rated (sub-surface soil moisture ratings shown in brackets) at three (four) per cent poor, 18 (17) per cent fair, 42 (44) per cent good, 31 (31) per cent excellent, and six (four) per cent excessive (see Table 2 for Regional rates).

Pasture and tame hay conditions improved from a week ago, due to warmer temperatures. However, the lack of moisture has caused a slow start to pasture and tame hay growth in some areas. Rain will soon be needed to improve pasture and tame hay conditions, as well as for the fall seeded crops. Pasture conditions (tame hay conditions are in brackets) across the province are reported as six (five) per cent poor, 30 (32) per cent fair, 57 (56) per cent good and seven (seven) per cent excellent. Some of the fall seeded crops have reported winter kill and will need to be re-seeded. Provincially, fall seeded crop conditions are rated as three per cent poor, 22 per cent fair, 66 per cent good and nine per cent excellent.

Table 1: Alberta Seeding Progress as of May 15, 2018

| | % Seeded | | | | | Average |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | South | Central | N East | N West | Peace | |
| Spring Wheat | 53.7% | 38.7% | 39.8% | 50.7% | 37.2% | 43.9% |
| Durum Wheat | 52.8% | 29.0% | --- | --- | --- | 49.5% |
| Barley | 50.9% | 22.9% | 11.1% | 17.5% | 26.3% | 29.0% |
| Oats | 42.5% | 11.0% | 7.9% | 16.4% | 24.8% | 16.3% |
| Canola | 51.3% | 20.6% | 21.5% | 27.5% | 29.2% | 28.8% |
| Dry Peas | 67.5% | 58.2% | 82.7% | 76.5% | 34.7% | 63.0% |
| Mustard | 54.3% | 19.4% | --- | --- | --- | 42.7% |
| Flax | 30.0% | 11.8% | 0.0% | --- | --- | 22.0% |
| Potatoes | 75.0% | 0.0% | --- | 10.0% | --- | 65.3% |
| Dry Beans | 0.0% | --- | --- | --- | --- | 0.0% |
| Lentils | 60.0% | 33.4% | --- | --- | --- | 55.8% |
| Corn | 56.0% | 36.3% | --- | --- | --- | 30.8% |
| Average | 53.8% | 29.6% | 30.2% | 35.5% | 32.0% | 37.7% |
| Last Week | 24.8% | 4.1% | 1.6% | 0.9% | 0.9% | 7.7% |
| 5 Year Ave | 75.8% | 61.8% | 49.5% | 51.7% | 49.3% | 59.9% |
| Long-term Ave | 78.7% | 68.4% | 60.9% | 62.5% | 57.8% | 67.5% |

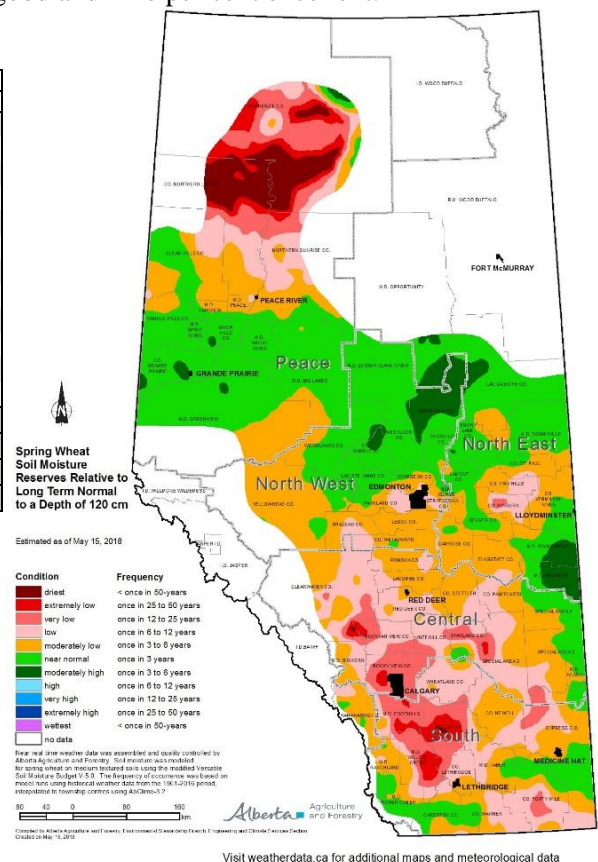
Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey
5-year average refers to 2013-2017; Long term average refers to 2004-2017

Table 2: Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of May 15, 2018

| | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent | Excessive |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| South | 6.2% | 24.1% | 48.1% | 15.6% | 6.0% |
| Central | 5.3% | 31.5% | 54.4% | 7.9% | 0.9% |
| North East | 1.5% | 3.5% | 30.2% | 55.2% | 9.5% |
| North West | --- | 8.2% | 13.9% | 64.4% | 13.4% |
| Peace | --- | 19.2% | 48.1% | 29.1% | 3.6% |
| Average | 3.4% | 18.3% | 41.4% | 30.7% | 6.2% |
| Last Week | 2.4% | 10.1% | 37.4% | 36.5% | 13.7% |

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

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, Technology and Innovation 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)

- Warm and mostly dry weather conditions over the past week have been favorable for seeding progress. While there are still some low fields with standing water, rain is still needed in some fields for even germination and spur pasture and hay growth. Overall, seeding is estimated at 54 per cent completed, up 34 per cent from a week ago, with about eight per cent of crops emerged.
- About 54 per cent of spring wheat, 53 per cent of durum, 51 per cent of barley, 51 per cent of canola, 68 per cent of dry peas, 56 per cent of corn, 89 per cent of sugar beets and 75 per cent of potatoes have now been seeded.
- Pasture and tame hay fields are in good condition, but more moisture is needed. Pasture conditions are rated as 13 per cent poor, 15 per cent fair, 64 per cent good and eight per cent excellent, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.
- Fall seeded crops conditions are reported as one per cent poor, 15 per cent fair, 68 per cent good, and 16 per cent excellent.

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

- Seeding is progressing well in the Region, with 30 per cent now completed (up 26 per cent from last week), despite some rain shower activities which slowed down seeding progress.
- About 39 per cent of spring wheat, 29 per cent of durum wheat, 23 per cent of barley, 21 per cent of canola, 58 per cent of dry peas and 36 per cent of corn are reported as seeded. Also, three per cent of crops have emerged.
- Forages, pasture and hay fields are in good shape. Pasture conditions are now rated as 74 per cent good to excellent (compared to 57 per cent from a week ago) and 26 per cent poor to fair (compared with 43 per cent last week), with similar ratings reported for tame hay.
- Regionally, fall seeded crops are rated as three per cent poor, 18 per cent fair, 69 per cent good, and 10 per cent excellent.

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

- Warm and dry weather contributed to seeding progress at 30 per cent, up 28 per cent from a week ago. However, there are still parts of some fields with standing water. Surface and sub-surface soil moisture is rated at 10 and nine per cent excessive, respectively.
- Nearly 40 per cent of spring wheat, 11 per cent of barley, 22 per cent of canola and 83 per cent of dry peas are reported as seeded.
- Both pasture and tame hay conditions have improved from last week. Pasture conditions (tame hay conditions shown in brackets) are now rated as three (four) per cent poor, 50 (52) per cent fair, 43 (41) per cent good and four (three) per cent excellent.
- For fall seeded crops, conditions are reported as five per cent poor, 35 per cent fair and 60 per cent good.

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

- Favorable warm and dry weather over the past week has allowed for a seeding progress of 35 per cent, with now 36 per cent of seeding completed.
- About 51 per cent of spring wheat, 18 per cent of barley, 28 per cent of canola, 77 per cent of dry peas and 10 per cent of potatoes are reported as seeded.
- Although hay and pasture conditions have improved from a week ago, growth is still somewhat slow. Rainfall and warmer weather is needed to promote good growth. Pasture conditions (tame hay conditions shown in brackets) are rated as three (three) per cent poor, 53 (63) per cent fair and 44 (34) per cent good.

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

- While dry hot and windy days have facilitated seeding, the down side has been some diminished surface soil moisture reserves. Seeding for the Region is now 32 per cent completed, compared to one per cent from a week ago.
- Almost 37 per cent of spring wheat, 26 per cent of barley, 29 per cent of canola and 35 per cent of dry peas have now been seeded.
- Pasture and tame hay conditions are rated as 21 per cent fair, 67 per cent good and 12 per cent excellent.

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