

Alberta Crop Report



Crop Conditions as of July 14, 2015

During the past week scattered thunderstorms have brought very spotty precipitation to many areas, with some experiencing significant, localized rainstorms. Large amounts of precipitation (10 to 45 mm) were received in some parts of the North East Region (northern part of the Lac La Biche County) extending to most parts of the Central and Southern Regions (east of Calgary, Wheatland and Vulcan County). Isolated pockets in the northern and central east portion of the Peace Region received some precipitation (5 to 10 mm). The situation is extremely variable in terms of describing areas with very dry conditions. Previously dry areas may have received precipitation while areas that previously received some rain, have been without any precipitation. Dry conditions continue to persist in the northern part of the Peace Region (Mackenzie County), some areas of the North East and North West Regions (Beaver, Brazeau, Camrose County, Westlock and Leduc,) and throughout the Special Areas of the Southern Region.

Crop development, crop conditions and moisture ratings vary across the province and continue to be significantly affected by the hot and dry weather. Most spring cereal crops are entering the flowering stage, and around 73 per cent of the canola crop is flowering, while 17 per cent is podding. About 28 to 38 per cent of spring wheat, barley, durum, lentils and dry peas are in good to excellent condition, while canola is at 25 per cent (see Table 1). Provincially, crop conditions improved by four per cent from a week ago due to the recent spotty precipitation. Significant rain is still welcomed in many areas to help cereal crops to develop. Some poorer crops are being grazed or baled to help with the anticipated low fodder production. Sub-surface soil moisture ratings remained unchanged from a week ago and are rated as 22 per cent per cent good to excellent (Table 2).

Despite limited plant growth, first cut dryland hay is 70 per cent complete across the province. Preliminary average provincial yield on dryland is estimated at 0.7 ton per acre, down 1.0 ton from a year ago. Quality of the first cut is rated as 62 per cent good to excellent. Irrigated haying operations are 95 per cent complete with yield reported at 2.4 tons per acre and quality rated as 85 per cent good to excellent. Some producers might be grazing their tame hay as they run out of pasture. Grasshoppers are an issue in a few areas in the North East, North West and Peace Regions.

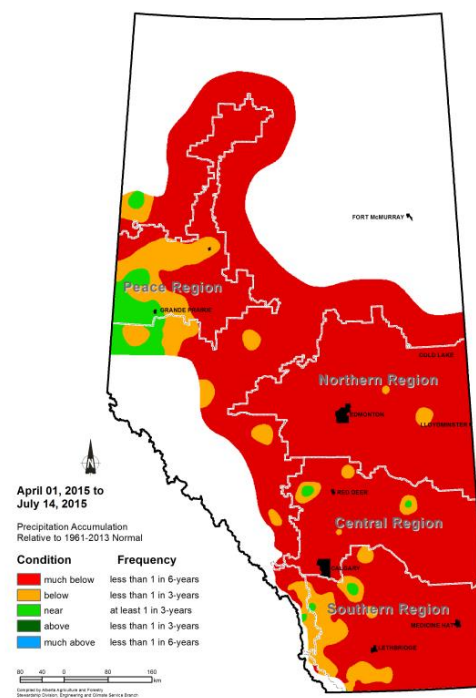
Table 1: Estimates of Crop Conditions, Alberta

	Per Cent Rated in Good to Excellent Condition					
	South	Central	NE	NW	Peace	Alberta
	As of July 15, 2015					
Spring Wheat	41.2%	17.0%	42.0%	16.1%	29.6%	32.4%
Durum	43.2%	4.2%	-	-	-	37.7%
Barley	43.5%	20.1%	36.5%	12.1%	25.4%	30.1%
Oats	48.3%	16.5%	36.9%	13.2%	28.8%	25.8%
Canola	43.3%	14.3%	29.6%	12.1%	22.7%	25.4%
Dry Peas	42.7%	21.5%	47.0%	17.7%	36.5%	37.5%
Lentils	33.0%	5.7%	-	-	-	28.3%
Potatoes	86.0%	30.0%	80.0%	35.0%	-	78.5%
Sugar Beets	86.8%	-	-	-	-	86.8%
Dry Beans	82.0%	-	-	-	-	81.4%
Alberta	43.8%	16.8%	36.0%	13.5%	26.0%	30.3%
	As of July 7, 2015					
Alberta	38.8%	14.0%	28.5%	13.5%	30.7%	26.5%

Table 2: Estimates of Sub-Surface Soil Moisture Conditions,

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
		As of July 15, 2015			
South	24.9%	40.9%	29.6%	4.6%	0.0%
Central	35.8%	44.9%	19.3%	0.0%	0.0%
North East	29.6%	58.1%	12.3%	0.0%	0.0%
North West	51.1%	46.4%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Peace	16.5%	46.9%	35.0%	1.5%	0.0%
Alberta	30.1%	47.6%	20.8%	1.5%	0.0%
	As of July 7, 2015				
Alberta	32.4%	44.3%	21.6%	1.7%	0.0%

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)

- Heavy showers east of Calgary improved soil moisture conditions; however eastern parts of the region remain extremely dry. Sub-soil moisture is rated as 66 per cent poor to fair, on par with last week.
- Regionally, between 41 and 44 per cent of spring wheat, canola, barley and dry peas are in good to excellent condition. In terms of crop development, most spring cereals are flowering or entering the milk development stage. Feed shortages remain a concern in the region as dryland hay yields are expected to be below average.
- First cut haying operations are underway, with 95 per cent of irrigated and 90 per cent of dryland complete. Preliminary average yield on dryland is estimated at 1.0 ton per acre and 2.4 tons per acre on irrigated. Hay quality is rated as 82 per cent good to excellent for dryland and 86 per cent on irrigated. Pasture conditions are reported as 77 per cent poor to fair, with same ratings reported for tame hay.

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

- Scattered showers brought some much needed moisture, especially to areas south east of Red Deer, improving soil moisture conditions. Sub-soil moisture conditions remain very dry and are rated as 80 per cent poor to fair, up five per cent from a week ago.
- Regionally, only 14 to 22 per cent of spring wheat, canola, barley and dry peas are in good to excellent condition. In terms of crop development, most spring cereals have just completed head emergence and are starting to flower.
- First cut haying operations are 90 per cent complete on irrigated and 63 per cent on dryland. Preliminary average yield on dryland is estimated at 0.7 ton per acre and 2.2 tons per acre on irrigated. Hay quality is rated as 39 per cent good to excellent for dryland and 70 per cent for irrigated hay. Pasture conditions are reported as 87 per cent poor to fair, with similar ratings reported for tame hay.

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

- Spotty showers were most welcomed in some areas over the past week, while other areas experienced dry and hot weather. Sub-soil moisture conditions declined five per cent from a week ago and are now rated as 88 per cent poor to fair.
- Regionally, between 37 and 47 per cent of spring wheat, barley and dry peas are in good to excellent condition, while canola is at 30 per cent. In terms of crop development, most spring cereals are completing head emergence stage. Grasshoppers and gophers have caused some crop damage.
- First cut dryland hay operations are underway with 58 per cent completed across the region. Preliminary average yield is estimated at 0.5 ton per acre and quality is rated as 68 per cent good to excellent. Pasture conditions are reported as 97 per cent poor to fair, with same ratings reported for tame hay.

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

- Scattered rainfall brought much needed moisture to some parts of the region (M.D. of Lesser Slave River, County of Athabasca, Yellowhead County). However, sub-soil moisture conditions remain extremely dry and are rated as 98 per cent poor to fair.
- About 12 to 18 per cent of spring wheat, barley, canola, and dry peas are in good to excellent condition. Most spring cereals have just completed head emergence and starting to flower. Grasshoppers have caused some crop damage.
- First cut dryland haying operations are 67 complete. Average yield is estimated at 0.6 ton per acre. Quality is rated 81 per cent good to excellent. Pasture conditions are reported as 98 per cent poor to fair, with same ratings reported for tame hay.

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

- Isolated showers were most welcomed in some areas over the past week, while other areas experienced hot and windy weather. Sub-surface soil moisture conditions declined six per cent to 64 per cent poor to fair.
- Regionally, between 23 and 30 per cent of spring wheat, barley and canola are in good to excellent condition, while dry peas are at 37 per cent. Most spring cereal crops are in the flowering stage. Grasshoppers and lygus bugs are an issue and causing some crop damage.
- First cut dryland haying operations are 72 per cent complete. Average yield is estimated at 0.8 ton per acre. Quality is rated 41 per cent good to excellent. Pasture conditions are reported as 70 per cent poor to fair, with same ratings reported for tame hay.

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