

Crop Conditions as of May 6, 2013

Producers are off to a slow start in all regions of the province this year. Abundant snowfall this winter, cool temperatures in April and several snow/sleet storms this spring have resulted in a slow snow melt and delayed soil “dry down” and warming.

As of May 6, less than three per cent of the province has been seeded. Seeding is most advanced in South Region, with over nine per cent being completed, followed by the Central Region with close to one per cent. The remaining regions have done little to no seeding (see Table 1).

Excessive moisture is a problem in most regions, especially in North East, North West and Peace Regions. Standing water was also reported in some regions.

Provincially, surface soil moisture conditions are rated at four per cent fair, 39 per cent good, 42 per cent excellent and 15 per cent excessive (see Table 2). Subsoil moisture conditions are at four per cent fair, 39 per cent good, 46 per cent excellent and 11 per cent excessive.

If warm and dry weather continues, this should lead to ideal conditions for seeding across the province. Forage growth should improve significantly given the moisture, but warmer temperatures are still needed.

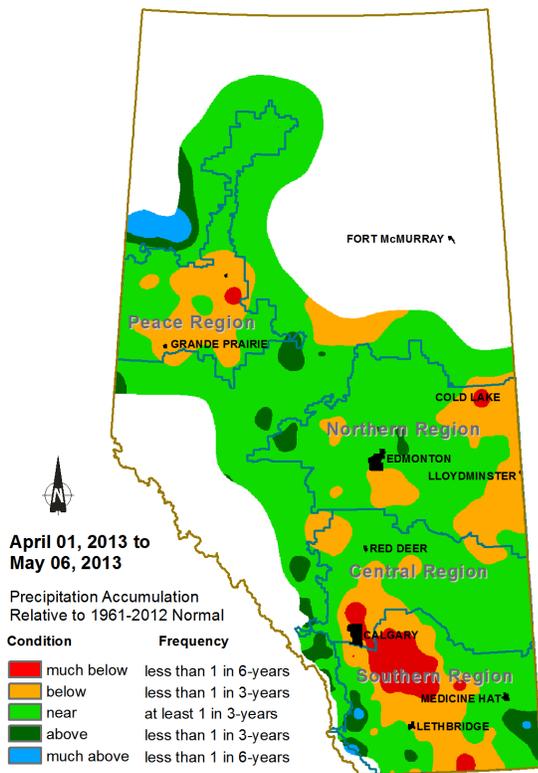


Table 1: Seeding progress, as of May 6, 2013

	% Seeded (May 6/13)					Provincial Weighted Average
	South	Central	NE	NW	Peace	
Spring Wheat	8.4%	1.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%
Durum	8.1%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.0%
Barley	7.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%
Oats	4.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Canola	6.1%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Dry Peas	24.5%	1.9%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	8.3%
Mustard	4.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%
Flax	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%
Potatoes	52.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	43.4%
Sugar Beets	58.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	58.8%
Dry Beans	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Chickpeas	8.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%
Lentils	8.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.8%
Mixed Grain	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Alberta	9.3%	0.8%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Table 2: Surface Moisture Conditions, as of May 6, 2013

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive	Total
Southern	0.7%	11.8%	67.4%	19.8%	0.4%	100%
Central	0.6%	5.0%	52.8%	37.1%	4.4%	100%
North East	0.0%	0.0%	27.3%	56.5%	16.2%	100%
North West	0.0%	0.0%	42.5%	26.8%	30.7%	100%
Peace	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	73.5%	26.5%	100%
Alberta	0.3%	3.5%	39.1%	41.9%	15.2%	100%

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

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 Rural Development, Environmental Stewardship Division, Technology and Innovation Branch

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2013 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

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

- Seeding started in late April due to cool spring temperatures and some snowfall.
- Seeding is approximately nine per cent completed. Spring wheat, durum and barley are between seven to eight per cent completed. Canola is six per cent seeded and sugar beets and potatoes are at 59 per cent and 52 per cent completed, respectively.
- Soil moisture ratings show the effect of the spring snowfall with surface moisture rated one per cent poor, 12 per cent fair, 67 per cent good and 20 per cent excellent. Subsoil moisture is rated 14 per cent fair, 67 per cent good, and 19 per cent excellent. Crops will need warm temperatures to take advantage of the abundant moisture.

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

- Cooler weather has delayed seeding in the Central Region. Some producers still have snow on the ground and only a few have started seeding. Seeding is expected to be in full progress this week.
- Overall, seeding is estimated at nearly one per cent completed. Spring wheat, canola and barley are around one per cent completed and dry peas are at about two per cent. Warm weather is needed to advance seeding progress.
- Surface moisture conditions are rated one per cent poor, five per cent fair, 53 per cent good, 37 per cent excellent and four per cent excessive. Subsoil moisture is three per cent fair, 53 per cent good, 40 per cent excellent and four per cent excessive.

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

- Due to the long winter, large amounts of snow and a late April snowfall, producers have delayed seeding.
- With the exception of some spring wheat and dry peas, producers have not yet fully started seeding. Total seeding is estimated at 0.1 per cent completed regionally. Seeding is expected to be in full progress by the middle of May.
- Surface soil moisture is rated at 27 per cent good, 57 per cent excellent and 16 per cent excessive. Subsoil moisture is rated 36 per cent good, 55 per cent excellent and nine per cent excessive, indicating that more dry and warm weather is needed to advance seeding progress.

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

- The long winter and large volume of snow has delayed an early start to seeding this spring. There have been reports of standing water in some areas. The recent warm and dry weather is helping the soil dry up. Producers are expected to start seeding in 5-10 days.
- Excessive moisture is a problem in most areas of the region. Surface soil moisture is rated 42 per cent good, 27 per cent excellent and 31 per cent excessive. Subsoil moisture is rated 34 per cent good, 37 per cent excellent and 29 per cent excessive.

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

- Seeding has not yet begun, and is not expected to start for another week or two, due to the slow snow melt. Some areas (e.g. Mackenzie County) still have 6 to 8 inches of snow. Warm and dry weather is needed to dry up the soil. Producers across the region hope to start seeding in 5-15 days.
- Excessive moisture is a problem in most areas of the region. Surface soil moisture levels are at 74 per cent excellent and 26 per cent excessive. Subsoil moisture is rated 88 per cent excellent and 12 per cent excessive.

**Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
Economics and Competitiveness Division
Statistics and Data Development Branch
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**Lukas Matejovsky, Crop Statistician
E-mail: lukas.matejovsky@gov.ab.ca
Phone: 780-422-2887**

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