

Alberta Crop Report

Crop conditions as of May 30, 2023

A provincial state of emergency was declared on May 6, 2023, due to numerous wildfires. Albertans who require assistance can call 310-4455 for wildfire related information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Survey responses from the North West, North East and Peace regions indicated that wildfire activity has affected some crop and pasture land.

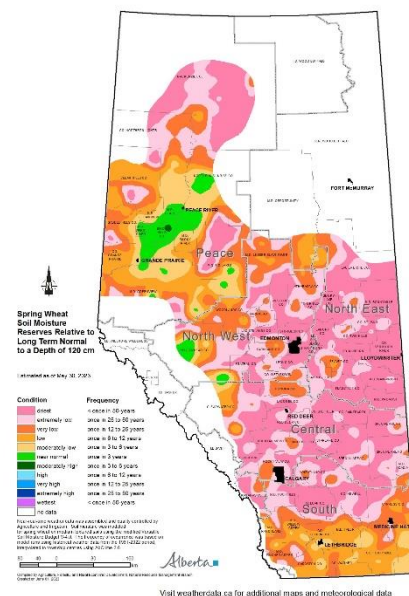
Over the past week, seeding of major crops progressed 12 per cent to 97 per cent complete, slightly ahead of the 5-year and 10-year averages. The South is currently furthest ahead in seeding at nearly 100 complete, followed by the North East (98 per cent), the North West (97 per cent), the Central (96 per cent) and the Peace (94 per cent complete). Currently, all regions are ahead of their respective 5- and 10-year averages, except for the Central Region which is only 2 per cent behind the 5-year average.

Provincially, emergence is 14 per cent ahead of the 5-year average at 77 per cent for major crops. Dry peas (90 per cent) and spring wheat (86 per cent) are furthest along in total emergence for major crops. Oats (67 per cent emerged) and canola (67 per cent emerged) are both ahead of their 5-year averages of 44 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively. Emergence in the South, Central and North East Regions are only slightly ahead of their 5-year averages, whereas the North West and Peace Region are 32 and 36 per cent ahead of their 5-year averages, respectively.

Table 1: Alberta Seeding Progress as of May 30, 2023

	% Seeded					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat*	99.8%	99.1%	99.9%	99.0%	98.2%	99.4%
Durum	99.5%	95.0%	---	---	---	98.8%
Barley*	99.4%	95.5%	95.4%	91.8%	92.4%	96.0%
Oats*	99.3%	91.5%	93.3%	88.6%	91.3%	91.5%
Canola*	99.4%	93.7%	97.6%	98.6%	90.9%	96.0%
Dry Peas*	99.8%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.7%	99.7%
Mustard	98.3%	90.6%	---	---	---	96.5%
Flax	98.7%	100.0%	99.2%	---	---	99.0%
Potatoes	100.0%	100.0%	---	87.7%	---	98.9%
Chickpeas	100.0%	100.0%	---	---	---	100.0%
Lentils	100.0%	100.0%	---	---	---	100.0%
Corn	84.6%	100.0%	85.0%	---	---	90.3%
Major Crops, May 30	99.6%	96.4%	98.2%	97.1%	93.8%	97.3%
All Crops (*), May 30	99.5%	96.3%	98.2%	97.0%	93.8%	97.4%
Major Crops (*), May 23	89.4%	83.3%	85.0%	82.7%	85.0%	85.4%
5-year All Crops (2018-2022)	98.9%	98.6%	96.5%	93.8%	88.3%	96.3%
10-year All Crops (2013-2022)	98.9%	97.4%	93.6%	93.7%	89.4%	95.5%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey



Surface soil moisture continues to decline across the province as provincial conditions fell 18 per cent to 65 per cent poor to fair and 35 per cent good to excellent (see Table 2). The Peace is the only region that had surface soil moisture above 50 per cent rated good to excellent with 71 per cent good to excellent and 26 per cent poor to fair. These ratings decreased only 5 per cent from the previous week. Sub-surface soil moisture ratings in the Peace stayed relatively steady during the hot weather due to heavier rains scattered across the Region (as seen on the map to the right). All regions had a decrease in surface soil moisture due to the hot and dry weather, except the North East which saw an increase of 4 per cent in surface soil moisture conditions.

Table 2: Alberta Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of May 30, 2023

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	20.8%	53.2%	23.3%	2.6%	0.1%
Central	23.6%	42.4%	34.1%	0.0%	0.0%
North East	22.7%	42.1%	34.3%	0.9%	0.0%
North West	33.6%	44.3%	18.6%	3.4%	0.0%
Peace	6.0%	20.2%	44.2%	26.7%	2.9%
Alberta	21.8%	43.6%	30.1%	4.1%	0.3%
5-year (2018-2022) Avg	12.4%	25.9%	45.0%	15.2%	1.4%
10-year (2013-2022) Avg	10.4%	21.6%	41.7%	23.3%	3.0%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Pasture and tame hay conditions across the province have decreased slightly, except for the North East and the Peace Regions which were either stable or increased by up to 2 per cent (see Table 3). Overall, 60 per cent of the province's tame hay is rated as poor to fair and 40 per cent good to excellent. For pasture growth, 53 per cent is rated as poor to fair and 47 per cent is rated as good to excellent. Provincially, pasture weed growth is below the 5-year and 10-year averages, as 12 per cent of Alberta is reporting moderate pasture weed growth.

Table 3: Pasture Growth Conditions as of May 30, 2023

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
South	15.3%	34.6%	49.2%	0.9%
Central	18.6%	29.4%	52.0%	0.0%
North East	25.1%	30.7%	43.3%	1.0%
North West	30.7%	51.1%	17.9%	0.3%
Peace	11.1%	41.4%	37.9%	9.6%
Alberta	19.1%	34.3%	45.5%	1.1%
5-year (2018-2022) Avg	14.6%	30.5%	49.3%	5.6%
10-year (2013-2022) Avg	12.0%	27.0%	51.6%	9.5%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Regional Assessments:

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

- Seeding is virtually complete for most crops in the South region, with the exception of corn (85 per cent complete) and dry beans (90 per cent complete). The overall progress is slightly ahead of the respective 5-year and 10-year averages.
- Crop progress has moved along quickly with the hot weather and light showers. Emergence for major crops is at 78 per cent which is ahead of the 5-year average (72 per cent) and the 10-year average (75 per cent).
- There have been a few fields re-seeded for spring crops due to grasshopper, wireworm, and cutworm damage. As well, spraying for grasshoppers and flea beetles is active, where high numbers are present after their peak year in 2022.
- Scattered showers have not been enough to improve soil moisture reserves. Surface soil moisture (sub-surface soil moisture in brackets) is rated at 21 (22) per cent poor, 53 (34) per cent fair, 23 (41) per cent good, 3 (3) per cent excellent.

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

- Seeding is near completion in the Central Region at 96 per cent of major crops complete, 2 per cent behind the 5-year average.
- Growing conditions are dry and plants have started to show signs of stress. Emergence for major crops is 75 per cent, 9 per cent ahead of the 5-year average and 10 per cent ahead of the 10-year average.
- Spraying has begun in most areas around the region as flea beetles are becoming a potential threat and there has been some grasshopper damage in the southern part of the region as well.
- The limited rain received has been enough to keep crops alive in the Central Region, however soil moisture conditions decreased over the past week, as more precipitation is needed. Currently, surface soil moisture reserves (sub-surface soil moisture reserves) are rated as 24 (32) per cent poor, 42 (41) per cent fair, 34 (27) per cent good, 0 (0) per cent excellent or excessive.

- Hay crops and some pastures are showing signs of growth regression, while some areas are holding on quite well. Currently, pasture (tame hay in brackets) is rated as 19 (19) per cent poor, 29 (34) per cent fair, 52 (47) per cent good 0 (0) per cent excellent.

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

- Seeding is practically complete, and crop emergence is progressing although some canola is sitting in dry soil and unable to germinate until a quality rain arrives. Seeding progress is at 98 per cent, 2 per cent ahead of the 5-year average and 5 per cent ahead of the 10-year average. Emergence is at 77 per cent for all crops, 10 per cent ahead of the 5-year average, and 12 per cent ahead of the 10-year average.
- Flea beetles, cutworms and grasshoppers are beginning to show themselves in the forage and annual crops. Cutworm damage has resulted in some re-seeding, while other fields have been sprayed. Most spraying is delayed as producers do not want to add extra stress to crops.
- There have been a few showers around the region, but any moisture attained has been reported to be absorbed quickly and conditions remain dry. The surface soil moisture reserves (sub-surface soil moisture) are rated as 23 (15) per cent poor, 42 (40) per cent fair, 34 (43) per cent good, 1 (2) per cent excellent and 0 (0) per cent excessive.
- Pasture conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) are rated as 25 (32) per cent poor, 31 (36) per cent fair, 43 (33) per cent good and 1 (0) per cent excellent.

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

- Seeding is 97 per cent complete in the region, 3 per cent ahead of the 5- and 10-year averages. Emergence is currently at 79 per cent for all crops which is 32 per cent ahead of the 5-year average and 25 per cent ahead of the 10-year average.
- Pests are reported as minor, with some flea beetle and gopher damage. There has been a small amount of reseeded due to cutworms or washouts. Some producers are reporting delayed spraying for weed control, to minimize stress to the crops.
- A mixture of rain and hail has not improved overall soil conditions over the past week and has created some crusting issues, resulting in canola with spotty emergence. Currently, surface soil moisture conditions are rated as 34 (14) per cent poor, 44 (58) per cent fair, 19 (28) per cent good, 3 (0) per cent excellent and 0 (0) per cent excessive.
- Hay and pasture development is still behind and showing stress from the heat. Pasture specifically is struggling, while tame hay is managing due to deep tap roots. Pasture conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) are rated as 31 (28) per cent poor, 51 (44) per cent fair, 18 (27) per cent good and 0 (1) per cent excellent.

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

- Seeding of all crops is 94 per cent complete, 5 per cent ahead of the 5-year average and 4 per cent ahead of the 10-year average.
- Emergence is at 78 per cent for all crops in the Peace Region, 36 per cent ahead of the 5-year average and 29 per cent ahead of the 10-year average.
- While some areas of the Peace saw showers that helped emergence, soil moisture conditions still decreased. Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface soil moisture in brackets) is rated at 6 (7) per cent poor, 20 (26) per cent fair, 44 (48) per cent good, 27 (19) per cent excellent, and 3 (1) per cent excessive.
- Pasture conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) were rated as 11 (11) per cent poor, 41 (41) per cent fair, 38 (38) per cent good and 10 (10) per cent excellent.

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