

Alberta Crop Report

Crop conditions as of August 8, 2023

Precipitation in the past 30 days has been near normal for the majority of the province. The Peace and North West Region have experienced once in 6-to-12-year highs while small pockets across the province have received once in 3-to-25-year lows as seen on the map below. These scattered showers have helped crop maturing slow down and spring cereals are on average in early dough stage, fairly on track with the 5- and 10-year average. Similarly, podding of broadleaf crops is at 89 per cent complete across the province, consistent with the 5-year average.

Provincially, conditions rated good to excellent are currently at 43 per cent, 15 and 19 per cent below the 5- and 10-year average respectively. These conditions are stable from the last report on July 25. Regionally, only the North East and North West Regions saw an increase in conditions rated good to excellent as they both increased by 1 per cent while the South, Central and Peace Regions saw decreases of 1 to 2 per cent. The poorest rated regions remain the South and Central which are 22 and 28 per cent below their 5-year average, respectively. The North East and Peace are 8 and 4 per cent below their 5-year averages, respectively. The North West is the only region above their 5-year average at 2 per cent above.

Harvest progress has begun in both the South and Central Regions. Currently, 11 per cent of the crop is combined in the South, 7 per cent ahead of the 5-year average. Only 2 per cent of the crop is harvested in the Central Region, consistent with the 5-year average. Fall-seeded crops and pulses are currently being combined.

Table 1: Regional Crop Condition Ratings as of August 8, 2023

	Per cent rated in Good to Excellent Conditions					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat*	25.1%	36.0%	60.4%	56.4%	56.7%	44.9%
Durum	33.1%	22.9%	-	-	-	31.6%
Barley*	23.2%	36.1%	59.1%	58.5%	52.2%	40.1%
Oats*	20.5%	41.8%	66.2%	64.1%	52.6%	56.6%
Canola*	18.9%	34.7%	55.3%	36.6%	53.9%	42.0%
Dry Peas*	27.1%	40.3%	70.7%	64.2%	53.8%	45.6%
Mustard	33.3%	24.4%	-	-	-	31.2%
Flax	26.5%	3.1%	90.0%	-	-	33.9%
Potatoes	94.0%	65.0%	-	82.4%	-	91.9%
Chickpeas	44.5%	32.3%	-	-	-	43.6%
Lentils	36.8%	36.3%	-	-	-	36.7%
All Crops, August 8	28.2%	35.3%	58.6%	49.2%	54.4%	42.8%
Major Crops (*), August 8	23.0%	35.9%	58.6%	49.2%	54.4%	43.2%
All Crops (*), July 25	29.2%	36.0%	57.4%	48.2%	55.9%	43.1%
5-year All Crops (2018-2022)	49.9%	63.4%	67.0%	47.7%	58.8%	58.0%
10-year All Crops (2013-2022)	56.1%	63.4%	71.5%	58.2%	58.3%	62.0%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

The majority of yield estimates are below both the 5- and 10-year averages in all regions except the Peace Region. Provincially, the estimated dryland 5-year yield index of major crops is 84.7, indicating that provincial yields are estimated at 15.3 per cent below the 5-year averages (See Table 2). Regionally, the 5-year yield index is the best in the North West Region where yields are estimated to be 7.1 per cent above the 5-year averages. The next highest are the North East and the Peace Regions where yields are 6.7 and 9.6 per cent below the 5-year averages, respectively. The 5-year yield index estimates are reported the lowest in the South and Central where they are 33.3 and 26.6 per cent below the 5-year average, respectively. The strongest 5-year yield index estimates are for winter wheat, oats and mixed grains; the poorest are for fall rye, spring triticale and chickpeas.

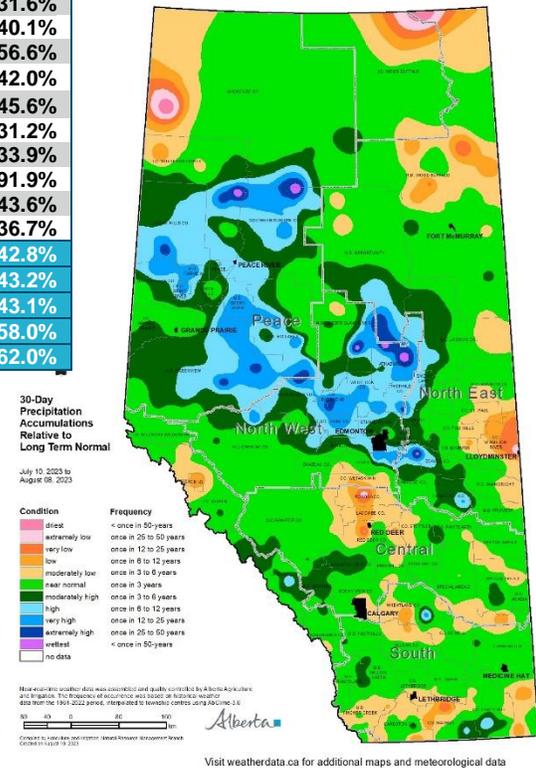


Table 2 below contains bushel/acre yield estimates for major crops across regions. The 5-year yield index can be interpreted as the following; if the estimated dryland 5-year yield index of major crops in the South Region is 66.7, that indicates that provincial yields are estimated at 33.3 per cent *below* the 5-year averages or 66.7 per cent of the 5-year average.

Table 2: Regional Dryland Yield Estimations as of August 8, 2023

	Estimated Dryland Yield and Index for Major Crops (bushels/acre)					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	25.1	36.9	42.6	53.4	42.3	38.6
Barley	30.3	57.5	72.5	76.1	53.0	54.0
Oats	30.1	57.3	87.1	99.6	61.1	77.4
Canola	19.0	31.8	37.1	37.9	31.4	32.2
Dry Peas	23.6	33.5	44.2	38.9	41.0	34.2
5-year Yield Index	66.7	73.4	93.3	107.1	90.4	84.7
10-year Yield Index	59.2	72.8	91.9	99.0	94.0	82.1

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

While surface soil conditions were quite stable from the end of June until the beginning of August, conditions have declined 5 per cent from last report. Currently, 39 per cent of the province is rated to have good to excellent surface soil moisture. Surface soil moisture is rated 29 per cent poor, 31 per cent fair, 29 per cent good, 9 per cent excellent and 1 per cent excessive. The South and Central Regions have very dry conditions, while 10 per cent of the North West Region is rated as having excessive soil moisture. Sub-surface soil moisture is rated as 36 per cent good to excellent, down four per cent from last report. Provincial sub-surface soil moisture is rated as 31 per cent poor, 33 per cent fair, 28 per cent good, and 8 per cent excellent.

Table 3: Alberta Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of August 8, 2023

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	64.5%	28.3%	7.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Central	25.8%	44.5%	26.8%	2.9%	0.0%
North East	6.6%	29.9%	52.9%	10.1%	0.5%
North West	0.0%	13.7%	50.1%	26.0%	10.3%
Peace	6.4%	19.5%	37.1%	36.1%	0.8%
Alberta, August 8	29.4%	30.7%	29.2%	9.3%	1.3%
Alberta, July 25	27.0%	27.8%	29.5%	14.1%	1.6%
5-year (2018-2022) Avg	20.8%	25.0%	37.0%	13.4%	3.8%
10-year (2013-2022) Avg	17.1%	23.4%	39.8%	16.5%	3.2%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Pasture and tame hay growing conditions have been slowly decreasing since the beginning of the growing season and both fell another two per cent (rated good to excellent) since the last report. Provincially, pasture growth conditions are rated 36 per cent poor, 35 per cent fair, 28 per cent good, and 1 per cent excellent. Tame hay is rated 28 per cent poor, 37 per cent fair, 33 per cent good, and 3 per cent excellent. Provincially, 95 per cent of dryland hay is cut with an average yield of 0.9 tons per acre, down from the 5-year average of 1.4 tons per acre. The highest yield estimates were from the Peace (1.1 tons per acre) and the lowest was in the South (0.8 tons per acre). Provincially, 40 per cent of acres are estimated to get a second cut and are currently 9 per cent complete, also averaging 0.9 tons per acre. First cut irrigated hay in the South and Central Regions is complete and second cut is 16 per cent completed. Both first and second cut irrigated hay estimated yields are 2 tons per acre, similar to the 5-year averages of 2.2 and 1.7 tons per acre, respectively. Due to poor annual crop conditions, there are reports of some crops being cut for feed, especially in the Central Region.

Regional Assessments:

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

- Dryland crops are ripening quite fast, nearing or already harvested, with 11 per cent now harvested. Winter/fall seeded crops and pulses are first to be combined. Spring cereals are already in hard dough stage, ahead of the 5-year average. Broadleaf crop maturity is consistent with the 5-year average stage.
- Dry conditions continue as soil moisture ratings decreased and are currently rated at (sub-surface in brackets) 65 (63) per cent poor, 28 (29) per cent fair, 7 (8) per cent good, 0 (1) per cent excellent and zero per cent poor.
- Dryland first cut hay is virtually complete and yielded on average 0.8 tons per acre, below the 5-year average of 1.1 tons per acre. There is no dryland second cut in the South Region. Irrigated first cut yielded 2.2 tons per acre and second cut yielded 2 tons per acre.
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) are rated as 61 (65) per cent poor, 32 (29) per cent fair, 7 (6) per cent good, and 0 (0) per cent excellent.
- Grasshoppers are reported to be over threshold on 14 per cent of acres and are impacting dryland yields.

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

- A few reports of showers around the region are helping pods and kernels to fill. Currently 2 per cent of all crops are harvested, as combining of fall seeded crops and pulses has started. Spring cereals are on average entering soft dough, ahead of their 5-year average between late milk and early dough. At 90 per cent podding, staging of all broadleaves is consistent with the 5-year average.
- Poor yields are reported in the southeast part of the region resulting in some crops being cut for feed.
- First cut dryland hay is nearly complete, averaging 0.9 tons per acre, below the 5-year average of 1.4 tons per acre. Second cut will happen in an estimated 33 per cent of fields and is currently 16 per cent complete.
- Showers have been scattered across the region, but surface and sub-surface soil moisture conditions have still declined. Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface in brackets) is currently rated at 26 (28) per cent poor, 45 (42) per cent fair, 27 (30) per cent good, 3 (1) per cent excellent and zero per cent excessive.
- Major crop quality is rated as 36 per cent good to excellent, down 1 per cent since last report.
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) are rated as 27 (23) per cent poor, 39 (35) per cent fair, 35 (41) per cent good, and 0 (1) per cent excellent.

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

- Currently 59 per cent of crops are rated in good to excellent condition, highest in the province. Spring cereals are just entering early dough, slightly ahead of their 5-year average staging. Compared to their 5-year average of 96 per cent, only 89 per cent of all broadleaf crops are podding in the North East.
- A few showers have been reported over the last week and currently 63 per cent of surface soil moisture is rated as good to excellent, but low areas in the north part of the region are reported to have standing water.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface in brackets) are currently rated at 7 (15) per cent poor, 30 (38) per cent fair, 53 (41) per cent good, 10 (6) per cent excellent and 1 (0) per cent excessive.
- Lodging, secondary growth and volunteer plants in cereal fields may cause challenges during harvest.
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) are rated as 20 (23) per cent poor, 37 (46) per cent fair, 43 (29) per cent good, and 1 (2) per cent excellent.
- Dryland first cut hay yield estimates are 1 ton per acre, down from the 1.5 tons per acre 5-year average.

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

- Conditions have been generally wet but mild as the sun helps some areas dry up while others remain saturated. Surface soil moisture (sub-surface soil moisture in brackets) is currently rated at 0(3) per cent poor, 14(25) per cent fair, 50 (52) per cent good, 26 (21) per cent excellent and 10(0) per cent excessive.
- Crop development is inconsistent as cereal crops are on track with 5-year averages but have second growth which will present some challenges during harvest. Major broadleaves in 32 per cent of the region are still flowering (compared to the provincial average of 11 per cent).
- First cut hay is 92 per cent complete, although progress has been difficult in the past week due to rain showers around the region. Dryland first cut hay yield estimates average 0.9 tons per acre, down from the 5-year average of 1.7 tons per acre.
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) are rated as 15 (12) per cent poor, 34 (37) per cent fair, 50 (46) per cent good, and 1(6) per cent excellent.

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

- Spring cereal staging is on track with the 5-year average in early dough stage and 97 per cent of all broadleaves are podding, 11 per cent ahead of the 5-year average.
- Surface soil moisture (sub-surface soil moisture in brackets) is currently rated at 6 (5) per cent poor, 20 (19) per cent fair, 37 (40) per cent good, 36 (36) per cent excellent and 1 (0) per cent excessive.
- First cut dryland hay is 92 per cent complete and estimated yields are averaging 1.1 tons per acre, below the 5-year average of 1.4 tons per acre.
- Pasture growth conditions (tame hay conditions in brackets) are rated as 15 (15) per cent poor, 38 (38) per cent fair, 41 (41) per cent good, and 6 (6) per cent excellent.

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