

Alberta Crop Report

NOTE – Crop Reports will be released bi-weekly in July and August



Crop Conditions as of July 26, 2022

This week's crop report is the first of the season with reporters submitting yield expectations. The highlights of the report are the above average expectations for both provincial crop growing conditions and yield. On average across the province, major crops are rated as 74 per cent good to excellent growing conditions (compared to a 10-year average of 66 per cent) with yield expectations of 110 per cent of the 10-year provincial yield average. All regions of the province are reporting yield estimates relatively consistent with, or ahead of, long term normal.

Year-over-year June rainfall has made a significant difference. At this time last year only 20 per cent of all crops were rated as good or excellent and yield expectations were only 60 per cent of the 10-year average.

However, as can be seen on the map to the right, areas of the Peace, North West and North East have experienced a dry July and are moving back to below long-term normal soil moisture levels. One month ago, in the June 27, 2022 crop report, this same map was largely green, dark green and blue. With such low subsoil moisture levels at the beginning of the growing season, continued precipitation beyond what was received in June is needed to keep soil moisture at normal levels for expanding areas of the province.

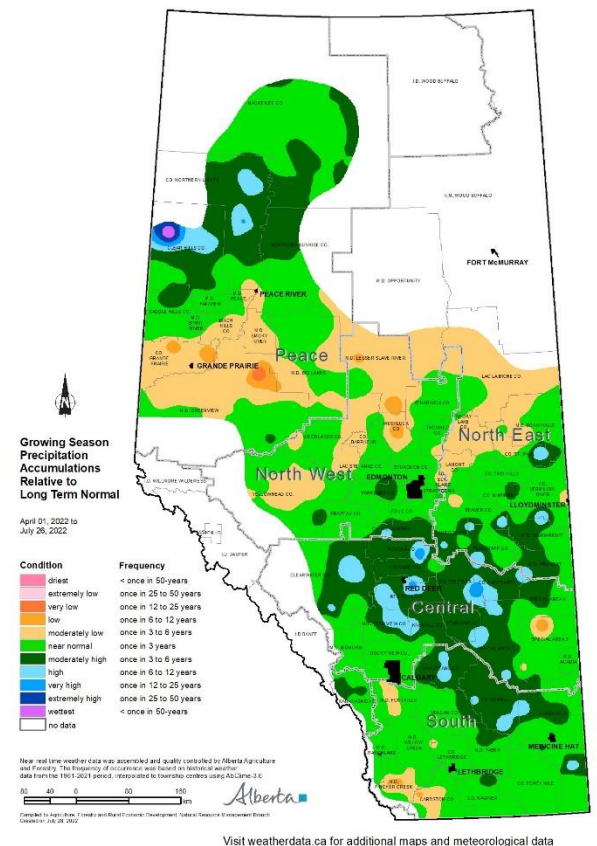


Table 1: Regional Crop Condition Ratings as of July 26, 2022

	Per cent rated in Good to Excellent Condition					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat*	59.8%	87.5%	87.5%	92.9%	77.4%	80.1%
Durum Wheat	46.1%	60.0%	--	--	--	48.0%
Barley*	50.9%	88.8%	86.6%	78.1%	66.5%	73.2%
Oats*	61.6%	84.3%	90.5%	83.3%	67.0%	81.0%
Canola*	54.5%	69.1%	76.5%	69.0%	72.8%	69.3%
Dry Peas*	61.0%	85.3%	86.9%	70.4%	66.7%	72.3%
Mustard	47.9%	58.1%	--	--	--	50.8%
Flax	64.5%	88.7%	90.0%	--	--	73.9%
Potatoes	65.0%	60.0%	100%	85.0%	--	66.1%
Chickpeas	45.7%	55.1%	--	--	--	46.3%
Sugar Beets	65.0%	--	--	--	--	65.0%
Lentils	46.7%	72.1%	--	--	--	50.7%
All Crops, July 26	54.4%	80.4%	82.7%	79.1%	72.6%	72.0%
Major Crops(+), July 26	56.4%	81.4%	82.7%	79.0%	72.6%	74.2%
All Crops, July 27, 2021	23.7%	16.1%	20.7%	19.6%	15.0%	19.7%
5-year (2017-2021) Avg	49.8%	62.2%	69.7%	47.6%	58.7%	58.3%
10-year (2012-2021) Avg	61.9%	65.6%	73.8%	62.1%	61.9%	65.6%

Source: AFRED/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey



Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen and staff of AFSC for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.



The climate map is compiled by Alberta Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development, Natural Resource Management Branch.

Table 2: Dryland Yield Estimates as of July 26, 2022

	Estimated Yield (bushel/acre)						5 yr ave	10 yr ave
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta		
Spring Wheat	45.3	59.1	51.1	52.6	53.4	52.3	45.4	45.2
Barley	56.9	82.7	77.4	61.7	74.8	71.1	59.6	63.8
Oats	58.4	83.2	92.9	74.5	83.0	82.7	72.2	75.5
Canola	35.2	43.7	41.9	40.8	39.7	40.6	37.5	38.0
Dry Peas	37.1	50.1	48.9	40.3	53.1	45.5	37.2	39.5
5-year Yield Index	119%	116%	108%	101%	125%	114%		
10-year Yield Index	107%	116%	110%	96%	122%	110%		

Source: AFRED/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Plant development for most crops is right in line with long-term averages. Province-wide, spring cereals are rated at 70 on the Zadok growth scale and right on track with the 71 10-year average. Podding of pulses is modestly behind long-term normal with dry peas at 74 per cent podding compared to 82 per cent on a 10-year average. This is largely due to regional differences in development, with pulses in the North West and Peace delayed.

The notable exception in crop development is canola. The provincial canola crop is at only 28 per cent podding compared to the 10-year average of 56 per cent for this time in the season. Comparing to other oilseed growth, mustard is 76 per cent podding, relatively normal for its 10-year average of 80 per cent. Crop reporters are referencing a widely variable canola crop in quality and some are reporting field-specific lack of pod formation. Crop reporters will continue monitoring and reporting on canola pod formation and even in the last two weeks are anecdotally commenting on the recent growth and resiliency of canola, albeit still highly variable and inconsistent.

First-cut of dryland hay is 71 per cent complete across the province with average yields reported at 1.6 tons/acre, modestly ahead of the 10-year average of 1.5 tons/acre. This yield is regionally variable with a low of 1.1 tons/acre reported in the South and a high of 2.3 tons/acre in the Peace. Dry July conditions have been favorable for hay harvest and 75 per cent of this dryland first-cut hay is rated as good or excellent in quality. Irrigated first-cut is averaging 2.2 tons/acre, modestly behind 2.4 tons/acre on a 10-year average. Pasture is rated as 54 per cent good or excellent across the province, compared to 58 per cent on a 10-year average. In the South region, pastures are notably struggling with 80 per cent rated as poor or fair.

Flea beetles are the significant pest of concern so far in the season. Fifteen per cent of acres across the province are rated at moderate or over threshold levels for flea beetles. Normally this is reported at only one per cent on a five-year average. The over threshold reports of flea beetles are predominantly in the South. Grasshoppers are so far not a reported concern but root maggots are being reported in the Peace where five per cent of land is over threshold.

Regional Assessments:

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

- Precipitation and heat has crops advancing but there are reports of significant hail damage in several areas over the past two weeks. Yield expectations are 107 per cent of the 10-year average, but these estimates are the most highly variable of the province.
- Flea beetles are extreme and rated at 31 per cent moderate or over threshold.
- First-cut dryland hay is yielding 1.1 tons/acre. Pasture conditions are the poorest of the province with 80 per cent rated as poor or fair.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as six (12) per cent poor, 34 (56) per cent fair, 54 (32) per cent good, and six (zero) per cent excellent.

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

- Continued precipitation and heat across large areas of the region with localized hail damage is being reported. Yield expectations are 116 per cent of the 10-year average.
- First-cut dryland hay is yielding 1.5 tons/acre. Pastures are rated at 76 per cent good or excellent.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as three (eight) per cent poor, 14 (18) per cent fair, 61 (56) per cent good, and 14 (14) per cent excellent, with seven (four) per cent excessive.

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

- Dry conditions are reported across the region for July and crop reporters are consistent in communicating the need for more precipitation through the growing season. Yield expectations are 110 per cent of the 10-year average
- First-cut dryland hay is yielding 1.4 tons/acre. Pastures are rated at 66 per cent good or excellent.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as six (18) per cent poor, 23 (22) per cent fair, 49 (47) per cent good, and 19 (12) per cent excellent, with two (two) per cent excessive.

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

- Dry conditions are reported through the last two weeks. Yield expectations are 96 per cent of the 10-year average. This is the only region of the province with yield expectations below the 10-year average, although only modestly.
- First-cut dryland hay is yielding 1.9 tons/acre but with very dry conditions after cutting, second-cut regrowth expectations are low. Pastures are rated at 81 per cent good or excellent which are some of the best in the province.
- Canola specifically is reported as highly variable in quality.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as two (zero) per cent poor, 15 (21) per cent fair, 65 (67) per cent good, and 18 (12) per cent excellent.

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

- No meaningful precipitation was reported in the past two weeks and, for the first time in the growing season, Peace area crop reporters are communicating the need for more moisture. Yield expectations are 122 per cent of the 10-year average.
- Root maggots are rated as 31 per cent moderate and five per cent over threshold.
- First-cut dryland hay is yielding 2.3 tons/acre, significantly the highest in the province. Pastures are rated at 60 per cent good or excellent but with 50 per cent moderate or heavy weed pressure.
- Surface soil moisture conditions (sub-surface shown in brackets) are rated as 21 (six) per cent poor, 24 (22) per cent fair, 48 (57) per cent good, and seven (15) per cent excellent.

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