

Alberta Crop Report

Crop conditions as of June 18, 2024

As seeding finishes up across the province, the majority of crops need warm weather. Even though some areas still need more rain, many areas around the province have reported surplus moisture and require consecutive hot days to aid in crop development and health. Each region, except the Peace, had reports of light frost that could affect young plants but full effects on crops will be known in the upcoming weeks. As well, there were reports of snow in the South Region and minor to damaging hail across the province. Crop conditions are still ahead of the historical averages as, provincially, 73 per cent of all crops are rated in good to excellent condition compared to the 5-year average (10-year average) of 69 (70) per cent good to excellent (See Table 1). Currently, crop growth stages of spring cereals are slightly behind in all regions except for the Peace which is significantly ahead. The province is on track for cereal growth staging compared to the 5-year average. As for major broadleaf crops, the Central and North West Region tend to have more crops in early leaf/node stages than the 5-year average but the South, North East, and Peace Region trend ahead of the 5-year staging average.

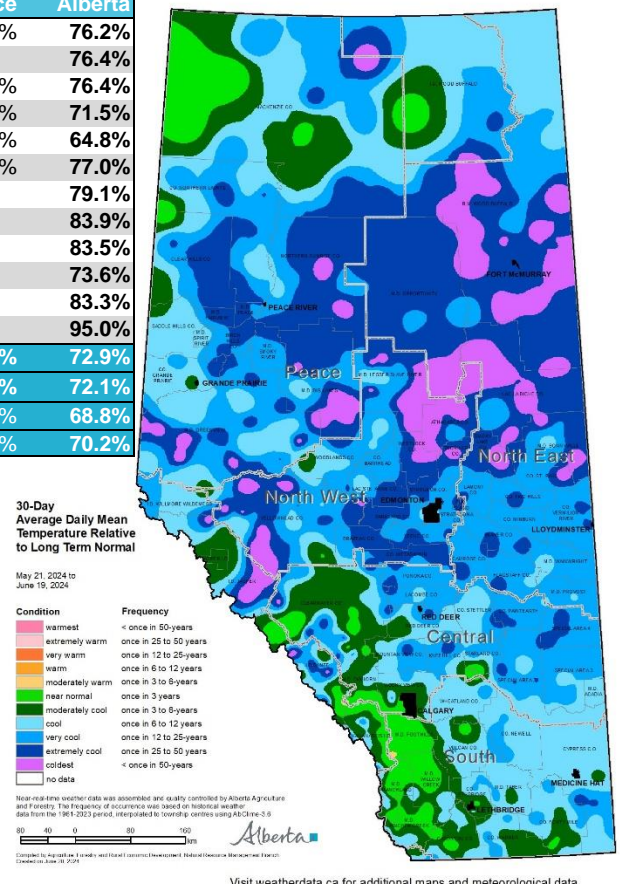
Similar to the 5- and 10-year average of 98 per cent, 96 per cent of the province has reportedly started post-emergent spraying. The common theme is that spraying is progressing slowly due to rain, wind, and wet fields. Currently, 49 per cent of projected spraying is complete. With reports of excess moisture this year, there is a chance of increased disease pressures. As for pest pressures, wireworms and root maggots are the only pest reported with moderate or over threshold presence above the 5-year average. However regionally, the South has a strong presence of gophers, grasshoppers and flea beetles as does the Central Region with gophers.

Table 1: Regional Crop Condition Ratings as of June 18, 2024

	Per cent rated in Good to Excellent Conditions					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat *	75.3%	82.4%	74.5%	69.1%	75.8%	76.2%
Durum	72.0%	99.9%	-	-	-	76.4%
Barley *	75.2%	85.3%	63.9%	77.4%	76.4%	76.4%
Oats *	85.5%	82.7%	63.1%	69.3%	73.9%	71.5%
Canola *	65.9%	61.8%	67.4%	47.3%	75.3%	64.8%
Dry Peas *	73.1%	87.5%	76.2%	64.8%	77.1%	77.0%
Mustard	73.4%	100.0%	-	-	-	79.1%
Flax	83.1%	60.8%	95.0%	-	-	83.9%
Potatoes	85.0%	58.4%	-	76.3%	-	83.5%
Chickpeas	71.1%	100.0%	-	-	-	73.6%
Lentils	80.5%	95.7%	-	-	-	83.3%
Dry Beans	95.0%	-	-	-	-	95.0%
All Crops, June 18	73.9%	78.2%	70.0%	61.8%	75.7%	72.9%
Major Crops (*), June 18	72.7%	77.0%	70.0%	61.5%	75.7%	72.1%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	63.3%	70.7%	76.1%	61.6%	70.2%	68.8%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	69.4%	68.9%	77.8%	61.3%	67.9%	70.2%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Precipitation continued this week with most areas receiving at least 5-10 mm. Areas in the Peace Region, south west part of the Central Region and north west part of the South Region had 30-80 mm of precipitation. While some areas still need more rain or are content with current rainfall, the cool month has left crops unable to reach full potential given the current moisture (See map). Areas in the Peace, North West and North East Regions have reported standing water as seen by the large amount of excessive surface soil moisture reported in Table 2. Reports in the Peace stated that some crops were turning yellow. However, incoming forecasts predict mid to high 20-degree weather around the province that could help improve these growing conditions.



Currently, provincial surface soil moisture (5-year average) is rated as 3 (16) per cent poor, 18 (23) per cent fair, 61 (40) per cent good, 15 (19) per cent excellent, 3 (3) per cent excessive (See Table 2). For provincial sub-surfaces (5-year average) conditions are rated as 9 (17) per cent poor, 29 (27) per cent fair, 49 (38) per cent good, 12 (16) per cent excellent and 2 (2) per cent excessive.

Table 2: Alberta Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of June 18, 2024

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	3.2%	30.1%	54.9%	11.7%	0.2%
Central	3.6%	16.9%	76.7%	2.8%	0.0%
North East	3.6%	9.5%	67.0%	18.4%	1.4%
North West	0.4%	11.4%	55.7%	25.5%	7.0%
Peace	1.8%	6.4%	30.8%	42.1%	18.9%
Alberta	2.9%	18.0%	60.9%	15.1%	3.1%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	15.8%	22.6%	39.7%	19.3%	2.6%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	12.5%	21.5%	40.4%	22.6%	2.9%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Pasture and tame hay continue to be very green around the province but as with the crops, need heat to reap the full benefits of the moisture. Tame hay conditions rated good to excellent increased in all regions except for the North East which decreased 2 per cent. Currently, tame hay conditions (5-year average) are rated as 76 (58) per cent good to excellent provincially, 69 (52) per cent good to excellent in the South Region, 81 (64) good to excellent in the Central Region, 70 (49) per cent good to excellent in the North East Region, 85 (68) per cent good to excellent in the North West Region and 69 (54) per cent good to excellent in the Peace Region (See Table 3). Some areas reported pasture grass heading out and tame hay flowering due to lack of warmth to encourage more growth. In the South, Central and North West Regions there are reports of dairy silage and first cut hay starting to be knocked down. The majority of pastures are reported to be green but may be lacking optimal growth due to few high temperature days. In the South and Peace Region, some pastures do not have enough plant canopy to compete with hardy weed growth that has also been accelerated by the rain. Pasture weed growth is heaviest in the South where 12 per cent of the region is considered to have heavy growth, and the Peace at 3 per cent. All other regions are rated under one per cent heavy growth. Currently, pasture growth conditions (5-year average) are rated as 75 (55) per cent good to excellent provincially, 68 (49) per cent good to excellent in the South Region, 80 (58) per cent good to excellent in the Central Region, 77 (56) per cent good to excellent in the North East Region, 84 (64) per cent good to excellent in the North West Region and 70 (54) per cent good to excellent in the Peace Region

Table 3: Tame Hay Conditions as of June 18, 2024

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
South	5.0%	26.3%	63.5%	5.1%
Central	4.0%	15.0%	79.7%	1.3%
North East	1.1%	28.6%	62.2%	8.1%
North West	0.0%	15.2%	54.3%	30.4%
Peace	6.7%	24.3%	57.3%	11.7%
Alberta	3.4%	21.1%	64.6%	10.8%
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	15.5%	26.3%	48.3%	9.9%
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	14.1%	24.8%	48.8%	12.4%

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Regional Assessments:

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

- Crops are progressing slower than normal due to cool weather and wind. The majority of spring cereals have entered stem elongation with first node detected though growth stages are widespread across the region.
- While some areas have not received much rain in the past week and still need more moisture, some areas received an inch of rain as well as snow and hail that did minimal damage. Surface soil moisture (sub surface) was rated as 3 (8) per cent poor, 30 (40) per cent fair, 55 (46) per cent good, 12 (7) per cent excellent, and 0 (0) per cent excessive.
- Pasture and tame hay in the south are rated higher than historic averages, though some areas are still recovering from previously thin years. Some grass is heading out and alfalfa is flowering.

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

- Re-seeding was reported in several areas of the region due to wind erosion on hills. Spring cereals on average have four tillers, on track with the 5-year average and 54 per cent broadleaves are in 1-3 node stage ahead of the 5-year average of 40 per cent.
- Frost was reported around the region with some areas also reporting hail. Time will tell the effects of these events on crop health.
- Farmers have had to spray in the evening or during the night to avoid winds.
- Precipitation was welcome to help stabilize moisture conditions, but crop growth has slowed as a result of cool wet days. Surface soil moisture (sub surface) was rated as 4 (12) per cent poor, 17 (33) per cent fair, 77 (53) per cent good, 3 (1) per cent excellent, and 0 (0) per cent excessive.
- Some dairy operations have started silaging or baling first cut and many other farms will start cutting soon.

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

- Cool and wet weather has delayed crop growth around the region. Spring cereals are slightly below the 5-year average for growth stage and on average have 2 tillers. Broadleaf crops are marginally ahead of their 5-year average growth stages.
- Spraying progress has been slow due to wind and rain. When farmers can spray, ruts are being left in the field due to soft ground.
- Excessive rainfall has resulted in standing water in some areas and therefore unseeded acres. Surface soil moisture (sub surface) was rated as 4 (10) per cent poor, 10 (19) per cent fair, 67 (57) per cent good, 18 (13) per cent excellent, and 1 (1) per cent excessive.

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

- Growth staging variability is reported due to cool weather causing delays in crop growth. Spring cereals are just entering tillering, slightly behind their 5-year average. Broadleaves (canola and dry peas) are behind their historical node staging as they are currently 38 per cent in 4-6 node compared to the 5-year average of 53 per cent.
- Some reports of flea beetle damage on canola.
- Multiple days of rain have resulted in standing water and unseeded acres. There were also reports of frost and hail. Surface soil moisture (sub surface) was rated as 0 (7) per cent poor, 11 (22) per cent fair, 56 (47) per cent good, 26 (24) per cent excellent, and 7 (0) per cent excessive.
- Some dairy farms have started silaging and baling first cut hay.

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

- Some areas in the region reported only 5 mm of rain over the week while others reported up to 80 mm. Standing water and excessive moisture is already causing yellow spots in fields. Hail was also reported in parts of the region. Surface soil moisture (sub surface) was rated as 2 (2) per cent poor, 6 (7) per cent fair, 31 (34) per cent good, 42 (40) per cent excellent, and 19 (17) per cent excessive.
- The rain over that past week has accelerated crop growth but also weed growth. Spring cereals on average currently have 6 tillers ahead of their 5-year average for this time of year of nine or more leaves unfolded and just preparing to enter tillering.
- Hay that had a slow start to the season due to dry conditions has improved due to rains, but many thin areas are being taken over by weed growth.
- Spraying progress has been slow due to the consistent rain.

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