

Crop Conditions as of May 24, 2007

Welcome to the 2007 Alberta crop reporting series. The delivery of the Alberta Crop Reporting Program is again being done in partnership with Agriculture Financial Services Corporation (AFSC) and a number of Agricultural Fieldmen. The release schedule of 2007 Alberta crop reports is available on the Ropin' the Web at: [http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd4191](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd4191)

Rain and snow have brought various amounts of precipitation across Alberta during the last two weeks, hindering field operations and causing further delays in seeding. As a result, many producers may have to switch to shorter season varieties of canola or barley for feed and forage production. Some of the acreage intended for crop production will likely end up not being seeded because of saturated fields. This is the case particularly in the Peace Region, and to a lesser extent, the North West Region and western parts of the Central Region. Provincially, seeding is estimated at 56% complete. This is seen as significant progress from 8% two weeks ago, but far below the average progress rate of about 85% at this time, in most years. Early seeded crops have emerged or are emerging, and some light crop damage have been reported from frost. Spraying for post-emergent weed control has just begun in the Southern Region, mainly on fall-seeded crops and early seeded cereals. Table 1 below presents estimates of seeding progress to date, for major crops by region in Alberta.

Excessive soil moisture remains the major challenge for most producers. Provincially, surface moisture is rated as 2% fair, 37% good, 36% excellent, and 25% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is 4% fair, 39% good, 41% excellent, and 16% excessive. There are reports of standing water in low-lying areas. It should be emphasized that warm, dry weather is needed to allow seeding to progress rapidly.

With the adequate moisture reserves, pasture and tame hay in most areas are off to a good start. Provincially, pasture is rated as 5% poor, 10% fair, 56% good, and 29% excellent, with a similar rating reported for tame hay. Fall-seeded crops are mostly in good to excellent condition.

With regard to soil erosion from winter/spring run-off, 2% of survey respondents have reported none, 47% light, 47% moderate, and 4% heavy. Also, several areas have reported moderate soil erosion from winds. Most producers in Alberta have adequate supplies of feed grains and forages.

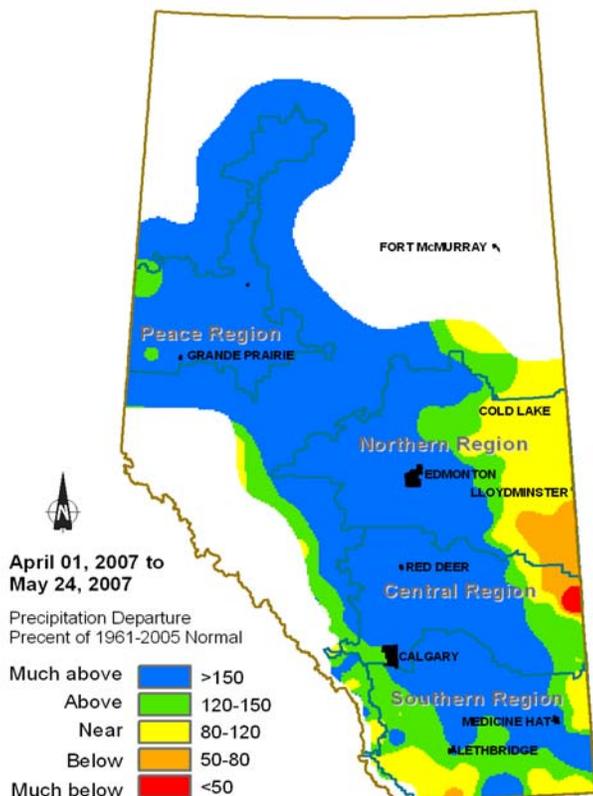


Table 1: Estimates of Regional/Provincial Crop Seeding Progress

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	79%	75%	64%	73%	18%	64%
Durum Wheat	79%	85%	90%	0%	0%	77%
Oats	56%	34%	29%	36%	5%	31%
Barley	76%	48%	33%	33%	8%	49%
Canola	76%	70%	68%	76%	19%	58%
Dry Peas	86%	75%	81%	83%	10%	70%
All Crops	77%	60%	55%	54%	15%	56%

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Food, Statistics and Data Development Unit

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

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2007 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

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

- Rain showers and snow received this week have caused further delays in seeding operations in the region. Seeding progress for major crops ranges from less than 50% to 75% complete in the western half of the region, while in the eastern half of the region, seeding is virtually completed. Overall, seeding is estimated at 77% complete. Re-seeding occurred in some fields, due mainly to soil crusting caused by the heavy rainfall in early May.
- Soil moisture conditions are generally favorable. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 2% fair, 51% good, 41% excellent, and 6% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is 5% fair, 57% good, 34% excellent, and 4% excessive.
- Estimates of planting progress for specialty crops are 71% for mustard seed, 87% for potatoes, 72% for dry beans, 91% for chickpeas, 71% for lentils, and 86% for corn.
- There are reports of spraying for weed control on fall-seeded crops and early seeded cereals.
- Given favorable moisture conditions, pasture and tame hay are growing quite well.

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

- The recent rains and snow have brought various amounts of precipitation to the region. Many fields are saturated, with standing water in low-lying areas, especially in the western parts of the region. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 32% good, 36% excellent, and 32% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is 36% good, 37% excellent, and 27% excessive.
- Seeding is near completion for areas along the Saskatchewan border, while for the western parts of the region, seeding ranges from 25% to 55% complete. Overall, seeding is estimated at about 60% complete in the region. Due to delayed seeding, many producers may have to switch to shorter season varieties of canola or barley for feed and forage production. Also, some fields may end up not being seeded due to excessive moisture.
- Fall-seeded crops, pasture and tame hay are showing good growth.

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

- Rain showers continue to hinder seeding operations. Overall, seeding is estimated at about 55% complete in the region. Most northern parts of the region lag behind in seeding, with only 20% to 45% complete.
- In general, moisture conditions remain favorable in the region, but some fields are too wet for seeding. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 3% fair, 64% good, 24% excellent, and 9% excessive. Sub-surface moisture is reported as 13% fair, 62% good, 21% excellent, and 4% excessive.
- Pasture and tame hay growth is slow due to cool temperatures.

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

- Producers made good progress in seeding prior to the rains and snow received this week. Overall, seeding is estimated at about 54% complete in the region.
- Soil moisture reserves are mostly favorable, but some fields are saturated. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 2% fair, 25% good, 53% excellent, and 20% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is reported as 4% fair, 42% good, 44% excellent, and 10% excessive.
- Pasture and tame hay are generally rated as good or excellent, but growth is slow due to cool temperatures, snow and frost.

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

- It has been cold and wet in the Peace Region, with rain, snow and frost this week causing further delays in seeding. As such, producers may have to switch to shorter season varieties of canola or barley. Overall, seeding is only 15% complete, with a significant amount of acreage likely ending up not being seeded.
- Overall, surface moisture is rated as 12% good, 27% excellent, and 61% excessive, while sub-surface moisture is 68% excellent, and 32% excessive.
- Pasture and tame hay growth is slow, due to low temperatures.

**Alberta Agriculture and Food
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