

Crop Conditions as of October 7, 2010

Weather conditions during the last two weeks have been mainly warm and dry, although many areas have received rain showers. Producers in most areas of the province have made good progress in crop harvest. Provincially, about 50 per cent of the crop is in the bin, compared to 13 per cent two weeks ago, and 95 per cent at this time, in most years. Additionally, there is another 30 per cent of crop in swath. Some grains have been taken off damp and tough, and need to be dried. Table 1 below presents estimates of harvest progress by region, while Table 2 shows the percentage of crops in swath. Just to note, following the completion of this crop reporting survey on October 7, harvest has been progressing rapidly and could reach about 70 per cent for the province after the Thanksgiving long weekend.

Harvest is most advanced in the Peace Region at 91 per cent complete, but lags behind in the Central Region at 27 per cent. Elsewhere in the province, combining is estimated at 40 per cent complete in the Southern Region, 51 per cent in the North East Region, and 52 per cent in the North West Region. In general, estimated crop yields range from average to above average, with the exception of the southern and central areas of the Peace Region, where yields are significantly below average due to dry conditions.

There are major concerns with crop quality, mainly as a result of cool, damp conditions in September, frost damage, and to some extent, the rain showers received in October. Bleaching and sprouting in swath are reported in many areas across the province. Overall, crop quality could be below average for both cereals and oilseeds.

In general, hay yields this year are above average. Exceptions are the southern and central areas of the Peace Region where yields are significantly below average. Rain showers in many areas of the province have resulted in some quality deterioration for hay in swath. Overall, hay quality ranges from poor to excellent.

Some pasture has been overgrazed, as the delayed harvest has reduced the availability of stubble fields. Pasture is in fair to good condition in most areas of the province, but is mostly rated as poor in the Peace Region. Additionally, soil moisture reserves are adequate, with the exception of the Peace Region.

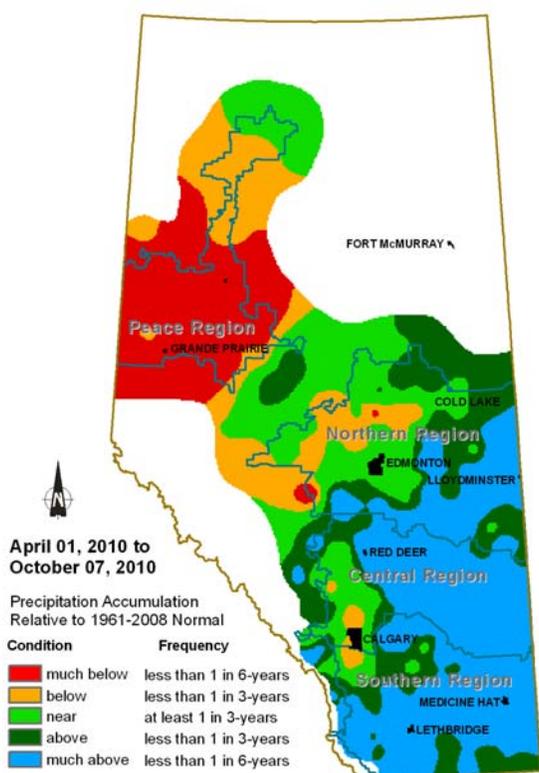


Table 1: Alberta Crop Harvest Progress, as of October 7, 2010

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	34%	27%	48%	52%	94%	45%
Durum Wheat	40%	28%	47%	52%	93%	39%
Oats	27%	15%	40%	45%	92%	45%
Barley	44%	26%	49%	53%	96%	45%
Canola	32%	25%	50%	48%	87%	51%
Dry Peas	93%	86%	93%	95%	100%	93%
All Crops	40%	27%	51%	52%	91%	50%

Table 2: Alberta Crops in Swath, as of October 7, 2010

	South	Central	N. East	N. West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	35%	27%	27%	13%	1%	25%
Durum Wheat	30%	34%	27%	13%	1%	30%
Oats	28%	34%	36%	17%	1%	24%
Barley	32%	28%	32%	19%	1%	27%
Canola	60%	68%	48%	50%	13%	45%
Dry Peas	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%
All Crops	35%	35%	34%	27%	6%	30%

Source: Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program. The next Alberta Crop Report is scheduled for release on October 26, 2010

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2010 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

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

- Weather conditions during the last two weeks have been mainly warm and dry, allowing crop harvest to progress. Overall, about 40 per cent of the crop is in the bin, compared to 11 per cent two weeks ago. The Cardston area lags behind with only 10-15 per cent complete. In general, estimated crop yields are mostly above average. Due to bleaching, sprouting in swath and fusarium, there are major concerns with crop quality, especially for spring cereals. Some cereals still need about three more weeks of favorable weather to mature, mainly as a result of late seeding caused by excessive moisture. Winter cereals seeded this fall are off to a good start. Also reported are weed infestations in some areas.
- Harvest progress of specialty crops under irrigation is estimated at five per cent for dry beans, 25 per cent for sugar beets, and 55 per cent for potatoes.
- Rain showers have resulted in some quality deterioration for hay in swath from the second cut. Some producers have started the third cut for hay under irrigation. Pastures and soil moisture reserves are mostly in good condition.

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

- Producers have made some progress in crop harvest, despite rain showers hindering field operations. Overall, about 27 per cent of the crop is in the bin, compared to five per cent two weeks ago. Some grains have been taken off damp and tough, and need to be dried. Overall, crop yields are mostly above average. With respect to quality, grade estimates are expected to be below average, due to frost damage, bleaching and sprouting in swath.
- Hay yields are significantly above average, while quality ranges from poor to good. Pasture conditions vary, mostly rated as fair to excellent. Soil moisture reserves are adequate.

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

- Producers have made good harvest progress, although rain showers have hampered field operations. Combining in the region is estimated at 51 per cent complete, compared to six per cent two weeks ago. Overall, estimated crop yields are above average, while quality is expected to be below average. There are some reports of high levels of ergot in cereals, and problems with lodging in some fields.
- Overall, hay yields are above average, and quality ranges from poor to good. Some pasture has been overgrazed due to the limited availability of stubble fields resulting from the delayed harvest. In general, pasture conditions are mostly rated as fair to good. Soil moisture reserves are adequate.

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

- Weather conditions during the last two weeks have been mainly warm and dry, allowing crop harvest to progress. Overall, about 52 per cent of the crop is in the bin, compared to eight per cent two weeks ago. Estimated crop yields are mostly above average. Crop quality has deteriorated, mainly as a result of the cool, damp conditions in September, frost damage, and rain showers received in October. Also there are reports of weed infestation in some areas, and problems with lodging, especially for barley.
- Hay yields range from average to above average, while quality is rated as poor to good. Pasture conditions are reported as 14 per cent poor, 39 per cent fair, 40 per cent good and seven per cent excellent.
- In general, moisture reserves at the surface level are adequate, but sub-surface moisture is low in some areas.

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

- With 91 per cent of the crop in the bin, harvest is nearly complete in the region. Crops still in the field are mostly canola, due to high green seed counts. Estimated crop yields range from average to above average in the northern parts of the region, but below average in the central and southern areas. There are some concerns with crop quality, due to frost damage and sprouting in swath.
- In the central and southern areas of the region, hay yields this year are significantly below average and supply remains a concern. As well, pasture and sub-surface moisture are generally rated as poor in these areas.
- Overall, surface moisture reserves in the region are reported as 25 per cent poor, 42 per cent fair, 22 per cent good and 11 per cent excellent. The rating of sub-surface moisture is 84 per cent poor, 14 per cent fair and two per cent good.

**Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
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October 13, 2010**

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