

Crop Conditions as of June 23, 2005

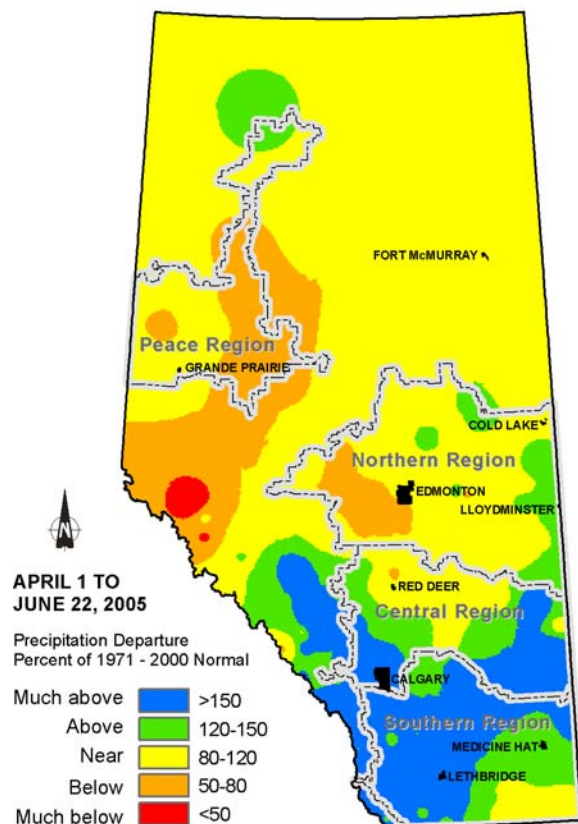
The recent rains have brought various amounts of precipitation across Alberta, and improved soil moisture conditions. Provincially, surface moisture is rated as 1% poor, 9% fair, 46% good, and 44% excellent, while rating of sub-surface moisture is 3% poor, 22% fair, 52% good, and 22% excellent. However, in some areas, heavy rainfall has caused localized flooding, fertilizer leaching, development of leaf diseases, and crops turning yellow in low-lying fields.

Major and specialty crops are mostly in good to excellent condition, although cool weather conditions have slowed crop development. Spring cereals in the Peace Region are mostly tillering, while early seeded canola and dry peas in the Southern Region have begun flowering. Provincially, spring wheat is rated as 3% poor, 19% fair, 64% good, and 14% excellent. Canola is reported as 5% poor, 22% fair, 61% good, and 12% excellent. Rating of dry peas is reported as 4% poor, 16% fair, 65% good, and 15% excellent. About 70% of winter cereals are in good to excellent condition. Warm temperatures are needed to advance crop development.

Being delayed by the cool, damp weather conditions, spraying operation for post-emergent weed control is only three-quarters complete in Alberta. Some fields may end up not being sprayed, due to wet field conditions and advanced stage of crop development.

Pasture and tame hay are improving across Alberta, because of good moisture conditions. Provincially, pasture and tame hay are rated as 6% poor, 25% fair, 59% good, and 10% excellent. Haying operation has just begun on irrigated land in the Southern Region.

With the improved moisture conditions, grasshopper infestations (so far this season) are confined to several local areas in the Northwest and Peace Regions. Gophers are causing problems in many areas. In addition, there are reports of concerns and problems with flea beetles, diamond back moth and larvae, lygus bugs, army cutworms, wireworms, and root maggots.



Special thanks go to members of the Association of Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen and staff of AFSC for their contributions to the crop report.

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2005 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

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

- Soil moisture and crops are rated mostly as good to excellent in the region. However, producers in the western areas of the region have reported losses of crop acres caused by flooding in early June, as well as leaf diseases, fertilizer leaching, and crops turning yellow.
- Due to late germination of some canola seeds, crop development is variable.
- Hailstorms have caused damage to major and specialty crops in many areas.
- Pasture and tame hay are improving. Pasture is rated as 3% poor, 31% fair, 50% good, and 16% excellent.

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

- The recent rains have brought significant precipitation, and improved soil moisture conditions. In the western parts of the region, heavy rainfall has left some water standing in low-lying fields.
- Cool, damp weather conditions have delayed spraying operations and crop development. Overall, spring wheat is rated as 7% poor, 30% fair, 56% good, and 7% excellent, while rating of canola is 6% poor, 21% fair, 67% good, and 6% excellent
- Pasture and tame hay are improving, and are reported as 14% poor, 43% fair, 41% good, and 2% excellent.

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

- With the timely rain showers received, soil moisture conditions continue to improve. Overall in the region, over 95% of surface moisture and 80% of sub-surface moisture are in good to excellent condition. There are reports of flooded out spots in some areas.
- Spring wheat and barley are rated as 2% fair, 81% good, and 17% excellent, while rating of canola is 14% fair, 73% good, and 13% excellent.
- Over 90% of pasture and tame hay are in good to excellent condition.

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

- Rain showers have brought one to three inches of precipitation in most areas of the region. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 2% poor, 9% fair, 56% good, and 33% excellent, while sub-surface moisture is reported as 5% poor, 18% fair, 62% good, and 15% excellent. There are reports of standing water in low-lying fields.
- Over 85% of spring cereals and oilseeds are in good to excellent condition.
- Pasture and tame hay are improving, and are rated as 5% poor, 12% fair, 70% good, and 13% excellent.

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

- Recent rain showers have improved soil moisture conditions in the region, although some areas are still fairly dry. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 3% poor, 23% fair, 55% good, and 19% excellent, while sub-surface moisture is reported as 2% poor, 30% fair, 55% good, and 13% excellent.
- Spring wheat is rated as 3% poor, 42% fair, 49% good, and 6% excellent, while rating of canola is 10% poor, 36% fair, 47% good, and 7% excellent.
- Over 60% of pasture and tame hay are in good to excellent condition.
- Localized infestations of grasshoppers and flea beetles are reported.

**Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
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