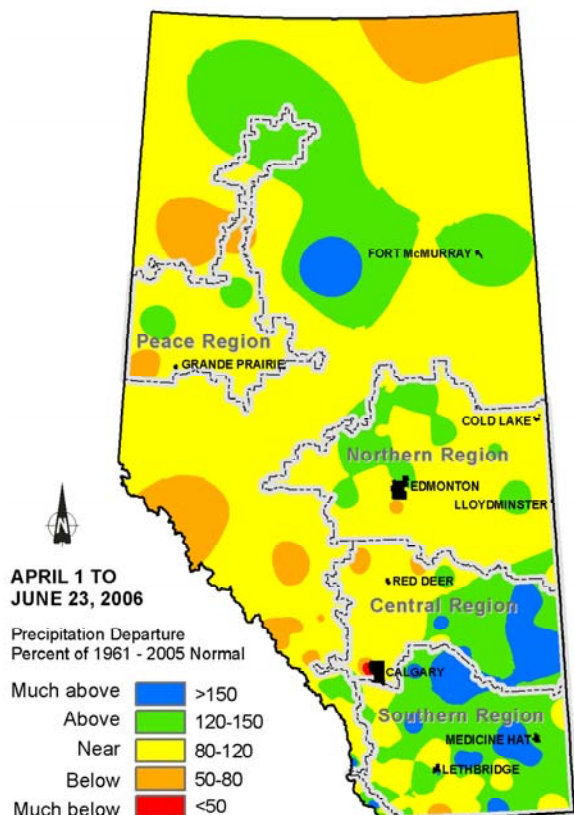


Crop Conditions as of June 22, 2006

Precipitation received during the last two weeks varied considerably across the province. Heavy rainfall has caused localized flooding in the Southern and Central Regions, while most areas of the Peace Region have received only scattered rain showers. In the North East and North West Regions, rains have brought significant amounts of precipitation, and moisture conditions continue to improve. Provincially, surface moisture is rated as 2% poor, 8% fair, 45% good, and 45% excellent, while sub-surface moisture is 5% poor, 15% fair, 47% good, and 33% excellent.

Overall, given favorable moisture conditions, most producers in the province probably have the best start for their crops in many years. Provincially, crop condition for spring wheat is rated as 1% poor, 11% fair, 54% good, and 34% excellent. Canola is reported as 2% poor, 13% fair, 52% good, and 33% excellent. Rating of dry peas is 1% poor, 9% fair, 54% good, and 36% excellent. Over 90% of winter cereals are in good to excellent condition. In terms of crop development, crops this year are about one week ahead of normal in most areas of the province. To offer some perspective, in the Central Region, early seeded spring cereals are in the flag leaf stage, while canola has begun flowering. However, in some areas, due to excessive moisture, leaf diseases are showing up and crops in low-lying fields are turning yellow.



Pasture and tame hay are showing excellent growth, due mainly to adequate moisture. Provincially, pasture and tame hay are rated as 3% poor, 16% fair, 48% good, and 33% excellent. The first cut haying operation has just begun in the Southern Region.

However, rains have caused major delays in spraying for weed control. Provincially, spraying is estimated at only three-quarters complete. Some fields may end up not being sprayed, due to excessive moisture and advanced stages of crop development.

Pest problems this year are less severe, compared to most years. Gophers are causing problems in many areas. Additionally, there are reports of localized infestations of grasshoppers, flea beetles, lygus bugs, army cutworms, and wireworms. Crop damage from hail is also reported.

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

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2006 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

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

- During the last two weeks, heavy rainfall has brought substantial amounts of precipitation, causing localized flooding and water standing in low-lying areas. Overall, soil moisture is rated generally as good or excellent.
- Major and specialty crops are developing quite well, with most in good to excellent condition. However, with the excessive moisture, leaf diseases are showing up, and crops are turning yellow in low-lying areas. Also reported are small amounts of reseeding and crop damage from hail and pests.
- Additionally, rains have been hampering weed spraying and haying operations. The first cut haying operation has just begun, and is expected to be well underway in 7-10 days, if weather permits. Over 90% of pasture and tame hay are reported as good or excellent.

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

- Rains have brought large amounts of precipitation in the region during the last two weeks, causing major delays in seeding, weed spraying and hay cutting. Some crops may end up not being sprayed for weed control, due to the advanced stages of crop development. Overall, soil moisture in the region is rated as good or excellent, although some fields are saturated.
- Crops are generally progressing very well, and are in good to excellent condition. Some fields intended for wheat and canola have been left unseeded due to wet conditions. There are also reports of crops turning yellow in some low-lying fields and crop damage from hail.
- Pasture and tame hay are developing quite well, and are reported as good or excellent.

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

- Rains have brought various amounts of precipitation across the region, delaying seeding and spraying for weed control. Excessive moisture conditions have some fields being left unseeded.
- Overall, moisture conditions in the region are good or excellent, although some fields are saturated. In some areas, heavy rainfall has caused localized flooding.
- In general, major cereals and oilseeds, pasture and tame hay are developing very well, and are rated as good or excellent.

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

- With the recent rains, soil moisture conditions have been improving in the region. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 4% poor, 9% fair, 58% good, and 29% excellent, while sub-surface moisture is reported as 7% poor, 19% fair, 58% good, and 16% excellent.
- About 85% of cereals and oilseeds are rated as good or excellent, while over three-quarters of pasture and tame hay are in good to excellent condition. Producers have just started cutting hay.

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

- In general, due to lack of rain, soil moisture conditions have been deteriorating in the region. However, the exceptions are the southern and northern parts of the region, where rains have brought significant amounts of precipitation. Overall, surface moisture is rated as 6% poor, 34% fair, 48% good, and 12% excellent, while sub-surface moisture is 18% poor, 51% fair, 28% good, and 3% excellent.
- Crop conditions vary across the region. Overall, spring wheat is rated as 1% poor, 26% fair, 56% good, and 17% excellent, while canola is 6% poor, 35% fair, 43% good, and 16% excellent.
- Pasture and tame hay are mostly in fair to good condition.

**Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development
Statistics & Data Development Unit
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