

# Alberta Crop Report



## Crop Conditions as of May 4, 2021

Most areas of Alberta have received lower than normal spring precipitation. The map on page 2 shows one-in-six year lows or less with orange to pink shading. While the lack of precipitation is a concern, it has allowed seeding of the spring crops to get off to a fast start. Provincially, (Table 1) seeding is ahead of schedule with 17 per cent of the crop planted. Most areas are ahead of the previous five-year average. Producers in the South have planted 46 per cent of their crop; the Central area has planted 12 per cent of the acres; North East has planted seven per cent of the acres and the North West has planted four per cent of the acres. The Peace is slightly behind schedule with less than one per cent planted.

**Table 1: Alberta Seeding Progress as of May 4, 2021**

	% Seeded					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat	45.2%	16.1%	5.3%	8.2%	1.5%	17.6%
Durum Wheat	63.0%	25.0%	---	---	---	57.9%
Barley	39.4%	7.9%	0.9%	2.0%	0.0%	15.4%
Oats	32.1%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Canola	21.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.4%	3.8%
Dry Peas	61.7%	42.9%	22.9%	10.3%	0.8%	34.7%
Mustard	39.7%	2.0%	---	---	---	28.4%
Flax	27.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	---	19.2%
Potatoes	64.5%	0.0%	25.0%	0.0%	---	60.6%
Chickpeas	75.9%	45.0%	---	---	---	74.5%
Lentils	65.8%	53.4%	---	---	---	63.9%
Mixed Grain	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	---	0.2%
<b>Average</b>	<b>45.5%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>
<b>Last Year</b>	<b>28.1%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>9.4%</b>
<b>5-year Average</b>	<b>28.8%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>
<b>10-year Average</b>	<b>26.4%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Lower than normal precipitation in March and April has resulted in reduced levels of surface soil moisture (Table 2). Observers estimate 54 per cent of the province as having good or excellent surface soil moisture. This is 14 points below the previous five-year average. There have been a few reports of excessive moisture in a few areas of the Peace.

**Table 2: Surface Moisture Rating as of May 4, 2021**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	10.7%	33.4%	49.9%	5.8%	0.2%
Central	11.6%	42.6%	44.8%	1.0%	---
North East	5.3%	46.2%	47.5%	1.0%	---
North West	24.2%	25.6%	50.2%	---	---
Peace	2.6%	15.9%	64.0%	15.6%	1.9%
<b>Average</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>35.5%</b>	<b>49.7%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
<b>5-year Average</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>39.9%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

The lack of moisture and cool temperatures has resulted in generally poor pasture (Table 3) and tame hay growth. Provincially, 63 per cent of pasture (72 per cent of hay) is being reported as fair or poor. Forage and feed grain reserves feedback indicates that approximately 90 per cent of producers have adequate or surplus forage and 83 per cent have adequate or surplus feed grain reserves to get them through until grazing begins.

**Table 3: Pasture Growth as of May 4, 2021**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
South	12.1%	30.6%	50.1%	7.2%
Central	25.7%	34.0%	40.3%	---
North East	75.4%	20.0%	4.6%	---
North West	61.8%	31.4%	6.8%	---
Peace	58.2%	11.5%	28.1%	2.2%
Average	35.0%	28.3%	33.9%	2.9%
5-year Average	22.6%	27.3%	45.2%	4.9%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

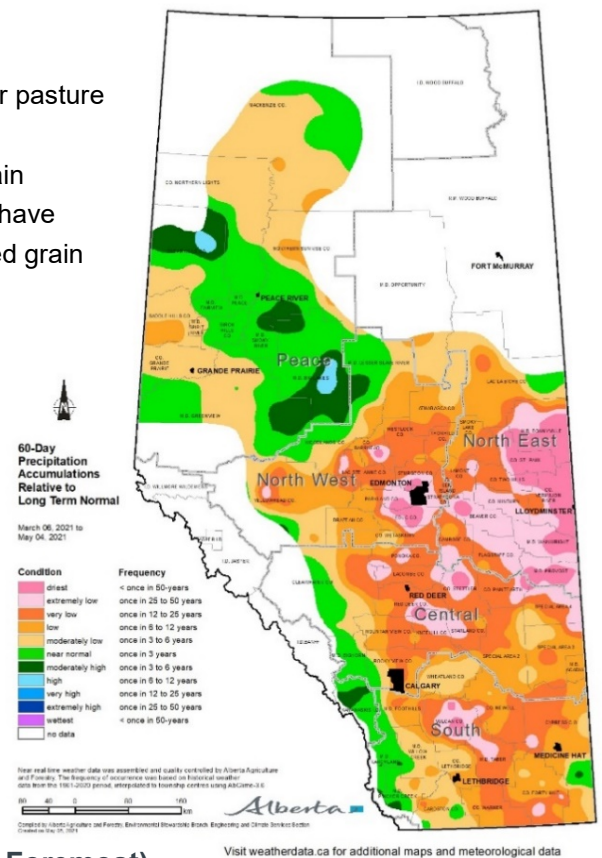
## Regional Assessments:

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

- Spring seeding is well on its way. Sugar beets are leading at 91 per cent, with potatoes at 65 per cent, while dry bean seeding has not yet started. Pulses range from 62 to 76 per cent seeded, cereals have a wide range from approximately 10 up to 85 per cent planted, with oilseeds following at 21 to 40 per cent seeded. Emergence is slow with durum at 15 per cent and other crops well below 10 per cent.
- Fall-seeded crops are thriving with 75 per cent in good to excellent condition.
- Surface soil moisture was affected by drying spring winds, while sub-surface soil moisture is low from limited moisture last year. Surface soil moisture ratings (sub-surface in brackets) are 56 (58) per cent good or excellent.
- Tame hay and pasture are sluggish to start in many areas due to cool nights and low moisture. Current condition ratings are showing 59 per cent good or excellent for hay and 57 per cent good or excellent for pasture.
- Due to excellent yields last year, forage reserves are estimated to be in notable shape with 81 per cent adequate and nine per cent surplus, while feed grains are 84 per cent adequate and eight per cent surplus. However, the slow movement of cattle to processing plants due to COVID-19 issues has caused increased demand on those reserves.

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

- Seeding operations have started, but no crops have emerged yet. Pulse crops are 43 to 53 per cent seeded, durum is ahead of the cereals at 25 per cent, trailed by spring wheat at 16 per cent. The remaining cereals are just getting started, and oilseeds to follow.
- Fall-seeded crops are healthy with 79 per cent in good to excellent condition.
- Soil moisture ratings are variable due to drying winds this spring and some residual moisture from last fall. Surface soil moisture is at 46 per cent good to excellent, with sub-surface at 60 per cent good and excellent.
- Spring hay and pasture growth is ahead in the eastern portion of the region while the western part is just coming out of dormancy with little growth as of yet. Tame hay is rated at 35 per cent (pasture at 40 per cent) good or excellent.
- It is estimated that both forage and feed grain reserves are 94 per cent adequate with three per cent surplus.



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

- With cool temperatures overnight and dry conditions, seeding has gradually begun. Dry peas lead the way at 23 per cent seeded, followed by potatoes at 25 per cent seeded, down to five per cent for spring wheat and one per cent seeded for barley.
- Fall-seeded crops are flourishing, with an estimated 76 per cent rated good, comparable to last year at this time.
- Surface soil moisture has been affected by dry conditions with 46 per cent fair to 48 per cent good. Sub-surface moisture data indicates a higher moisture content estimated to be 75 per cent good to excellence suggesting favorable seeding for cereals.
- Tame hay and pasture has begun growing after a slow start due to dry conditions and cool temperatures, with many nights still dropping below freezing. Current assessment indicates 32 per cent fair to good and 68 per cent poor for hay and 25 per cent fair to good and 75 per cent poor for pasture.
- Estimated forage (feed grain in brackets) reserves are at 71 per cent (59) per cent adequate with up to 10 per cent (22) per cent surplus.

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

- Seeding operations have been intermittent due to snowfall or dry conditions in various areas of the region with 10 per cent of peas and corn in the ground, followed by barley with eight per cent of acres planted. No crops have emerged.
- Fall-seeded crops are deficient, with an estimated 85 per cent rated poor and fair.
- The soil moisture situation is in sharp contrast to last spring's saturated conditions. Surface soil moisture is 50 per cent good and 50 per cent poor to fair and sub-surface moisture is 61 per cent good and 39 per cent poor to fair.
- Perennials have a slow start from cool temperatures. Tame hay condition is estimated at 96 per cent poor to fair and pasture appraised at 93 per cent poor to fair.
- Estimated forage reserves are in good shape with 91 per cent adequate and five per cent surplus. Feed grains are in worse shape because of abundant unseeded and drowned acres in 2020 and are rated as 32 per cent adequate.

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

- Some spring fertilization and harrowing is taking place, but very little seeding has occurred.
- Soil moisture conditions are positive with both surface and sub-surface soil moisture rated as 80 per cent good or excellent with a few small pockets of excessive moisture.
- Perennial crops have barely begun growing this year. Current estimated condition is approximately 29 per cent good and excellent for both tame hay and pasture.
- Estimated forage (feed grain in brackets) reserves are 72 (73) per cent adequate and 18 (nine) per cent surplus.

## **Contacts**

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation  
Business Risk Management Products Unit  
Lacombe, Alberta  
**May 7, 2021**

Jackie Sanden – Product Coordinator  
Ken Handford – Product Development Analyst  
Email: [MediaInquiry@afsc.ca](mailto:MediaInquiry@afsc.ca)

Note to Users: The contents of this document may not be used or reproduced without properly accrediting AFSC and Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Economics and Competitiveness Branch, Statistics and Data Development Section