

# Alberta Crop Report

## Crop conditions as of July 23, 2024 (Abbreviated Report)

After consistent ratings on crop conditions since the middle of June, the recent heat was prolonged enough that major crop conditions significantly declined from 73 per cent good to excellent last week to 55 per cent good to excellent. Current conditions are now rated below the 5- and 10-year average of 57 and 62 per cent good to excellent, respectively. After cool temperatures during the beginning of the growing season, the last 30-day average daily mean temperature has been above the long-term normal temperature for most of the province. While rain and marginally cooler temperatures are in the near forecast, the true effects of the prolonged heat and potential positive impacts of rain will be unknown for a few weeks.

Crop staging is only marginally ahead of the historical average as major crops across the province are just nearing the end of flowering. Some spring wheat has started milk development, while oats are still halfway through flowering. Pasture weed growth is rated moderate for 19 per cent of the province and heavy for 3 per cent. Weed presence is heaviest in the South at 8 per cent heavy growth. Reported pests include grasshopper, particularly on fields near pastures, along with gophers and aphids, and diamondback moths have been observed in sweeps.

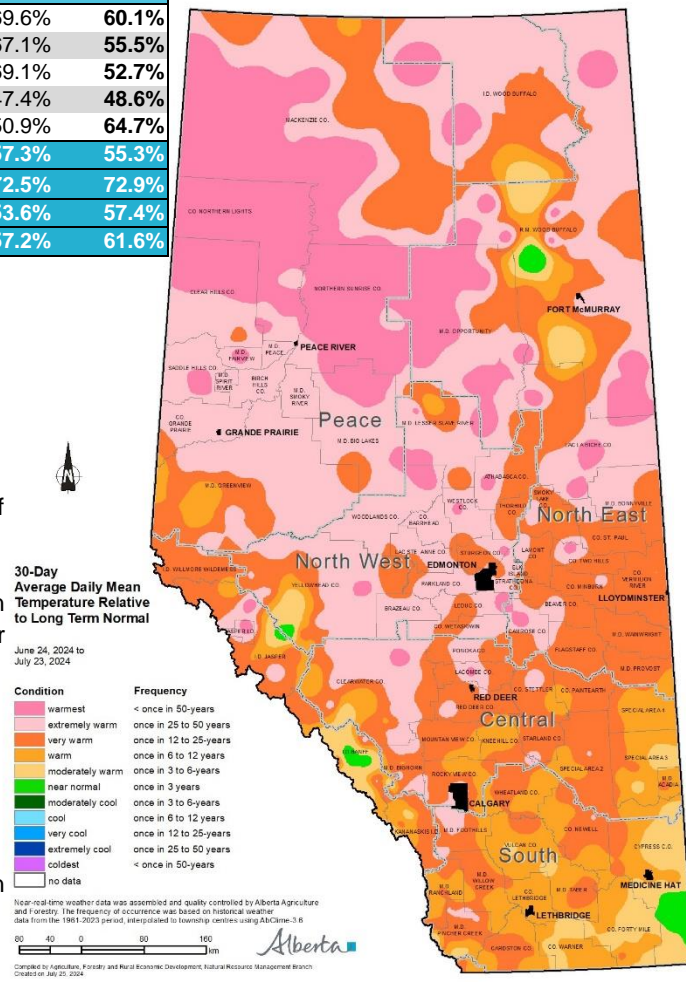
**Table 1: Regional Crop Condition Ratings as of July 23, 2024**

	Per Cent Rated in Good to Excellent Conditions					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat *	76.6%	39.3%	65.8%	43.6%	69.6%	<b>60.1%</b>
Barley *	78.3%	27.2%	55.7%	50.3%	67.1%	<b>55.5%</b>
Oats *	76.5%	38.1%	55.2%	42.5%	69.1%	<b>52.7%</b>
Canola *	76.6%	22.4%	60.7%	27.1%	47.4%	<b>48.6%</b>
Dry Peas *	77.7%	55.8%	71.8%	35.3%	50.9%	<b>64.7%</b>
Major Crops (*) July 23	77.2%	32.4%	62.5%	37.7%	57.3%	<b>55.3%</b>
Major Crops (*), July 16	81.6%	62.2%	72.4%	77.8%	72.5%	<b>72.9%</b>
5-year (2019-2023) Avg	49.9%	63.2%	65.3%	50.4%	53.6%	<b>57.4%</b>
10-year (2014-2023) Avg	55.3%	62.9%	70.5%	58.1%	57.2%	<b>61.6%</b>

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

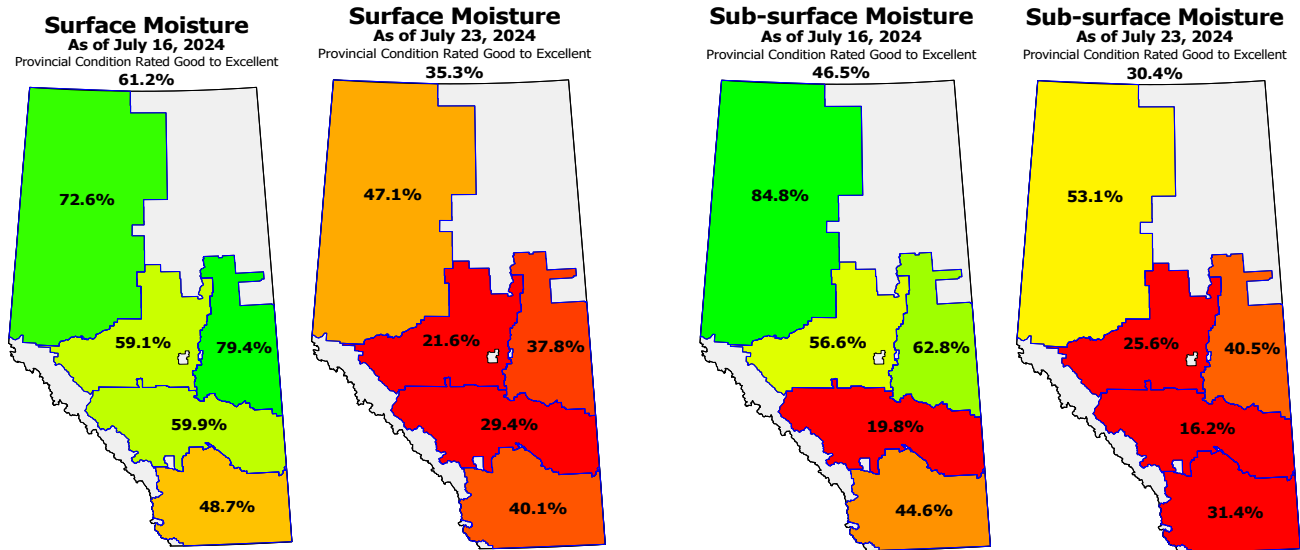
Precipitation the past week was sporadic with only a few small areas mostly along the west side of the province receiving up to 30 mm, while most other areas received nothing. The western Peace Region received between 15 and 80 mm. However, the majority of the province still needs precipitation as areas that have experienced excessive moisture are now drying up due to prolonged heat. Regionally, 40 (49 per cent last week) of surface soil moisture is rated good to excellent in the South Region, 29 (60) per cent in the Central Region, 38 (79) per cent in the North East Region, 22 (59) per cent in the North West Region and 47 (73) per cent in the Peace Region. Overall, provincial surface soil moisture is rated 35 per cent (61 last week) good to excellent.

As crops are in the reproductive stage of their growth, moisture requirements are high. With minimal recent rain, sub-surface moisture has continued to deplete. Regionally, 31 (45 per cent last week) of sub-surface soil moisture is rated good to excellent in the South Region, 16 (20) per cent in the Central Region, 41 (63) per cent in the North East Region, 26 (57) per cent in the North West Region and 53 (85) per cent in the Peace Region. Overall, provincial sub-surface soil moisture is rated 30 per cent (47 last week) good to excellent.



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**Figure 1: Surface and Sub-surface Soil Moisture Conditions, July 16 and 23, 2024**



**Table 2: Alberta Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of July 23, 2024**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	18.4%	41.6%	39.1%	1.0%	0.0%
Central	42.5%	28.1%	25.7%	3.6%	0.0%
North East	31.2%	31.0%	36.9%	0.9%	0.0%
North West	56.3%	22.1%	20.7%	0.9%	0.0%
Peace	9.0%	43.9%	42.6%	4.5%	0.0%
<b>Alberta</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	<b>33.9%</b>	<b>33.2%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>
<b>5-year (2019-2023) Avg</b>	<b>16.9%</b>	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>38.6%</b>	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>
<b>10-year (2014-2023) Avg</b>	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	<b>39.8%</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

**Table 3: Tame Hay Conditions as of July 23, 2024**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
South	10.4%	32.1%	52.6%	4.8%
Central	38.2%	32.3%	23.5%	6.1%
North East	52.3%	11.4%	32.9%	3.4%
North West	47.7%	17.6%	32.9%	1.8%
Peace	6.9%	29.3%	55.8%	8.0%
<b>Alberta</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>25.4%</b>	<b>38.4%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
<b>5-year (2019-2023) Avg</b>	<b>19.2%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>
<b>10-year (2014-2023) Avg</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>42.0%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>

Source: AGI/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Tame hay conditions have been slowly declining since the beginning of July but experienced a significant decrease in growth rated good to excellent since last report. Currently, provincial tame hay is rated 43 per cent good to excellent, down from last week's 62 per cent. This is also below the 5- and 10-year average of 55 per cent good to excellent. Though many regions report adequate first cut yields, many reports indicate second cut growth is unable to regenerate in the excessive heat and lack of moisture. There are multiple reports of producers silaging heat damaged crops to ensure feed availability. Regionally, 58 (66 per cent last week) of tame hay is rated good to excellent in the South Region, 30 (43) per cent in the Central Region, 36 (73) per cent in the North East Region, 35 (66) per cent in the North West Region and 64 (71) per cent in the Peace Region. Pasture conditions have also decreased over the week as the hot weather has made regrowth from grazing minimal and current growth start to brown. Regionally, 55 (61 per cent last week) of pasture is rated good to excellent in the South Region, 45 (56) per cent in the Central Region, 48 (77) per cent in the North East Region, 28 (67) per cent in the North West Region and 64 (71) per cent in the Peace Region. Overall, provincial pasture is rated 49 per cent (63 last week) good to excellent.

## Regional Assessments:

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

- Spring wheat flowering nears an end, while barley and oats have started milk development. Crops are rated 77 per cent good to excellent, down from last week's rating of 82 per cent and the 5-year average of 50 per cent.
- Sporadic rains and the odd thunderstorm happened but not enough to positively influence soil moisture. The South Region currently needs moisture to maintain yields and crop health. Sub-surface soil moisture is currently rated as 15 per cent poor, 53 per cent fair, 31 per cent good, 0 per cent excellent and 0 per cent excessive.
- First cut hay is mostly complete though second cut growth will need moisture to continue growing. Pastures are declining as hot weather continues. Pasture is currently rated as 10 per cent poor, 35 per cent fair, 51 per cent good and 4 per cent excellent.

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

- Major crops rated good to excellent decreased significantly from 62 per cent last week to 32 per cent now. Cereals are nearing the end of flowering due to heat stress. There is also staging variability depending on when fields were seeded, ranging from booting to dough development.
- Some areas of the Central Region experienced small moisture pockets and damaging hail that left sub-surface soil moisture rated as 53 per cent poor, 30 per cent fair, 15 per cent good, 2 per cent excellent and 0 per cent excessive.
- Some producers are planning to silage more of their crops due to recent low expectations for a second cut and to ensure feed availability. Pasture is currently rated 33 per cent poor, 23 per cent fair, 45 per cent good and 0 per cent excellent.

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

- Crops are struggling with heat stress as canola is experiencing shortened flowering stages and aborting kernels/pods.
- Areas in the North East that originally had excessive moisture are now dry as spotty moisture and hail have not improved the surface or sub-surface soil moisture. Currently, sub-surface soil moisture is rated as 21 per cent poor, 38 per cent fair, 40 per cent good, 1 per cent excellent and 0 per cent excessive.
- Similar to other regions, first cut hay quality is reported to be good but second growth is minimal, and farmers are starting to silage crops that are exhibiting signs of heat damage. Currently, pasture is rated as 37 per cent poor, 15 per cent fair, 44 per cent good and 4 per cent excellent.

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

- Crops experienced heat stress with cereals reported to be aborting tillers, and canola and peas showing the effects of heat blast. Spring cereals are on average near the end of flowering.
- Moisture is quickly depleting, even in areas of sloughs or standing water. Currently, regional sub-surface soil moisture is rated as 34 per cent poor, 40 per cent fair, 24 per cent good, 1 per cent excellent and 0 per cent excessive.
- Tame hay second cut and pasture are struggling as farmers are starting to silage barley or poor crops showing heat damage. Pasture is currently rated 42 per cent poor, 30 per cent fair, 26 per cent good and 2 per cent excellent.

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

- The Peace Region has had three consecutive weeks of hot weather that has interfered with canola and pea growth. This week's major crops decreased from 73 per cent last week, to 57 per cent good to excellent this week.
- Pasture conditions are rated as 7 per cent poor, 29 per cent fair, 55 per cent good, 9 per cent excellent.
- Even though sub-surface soil moisture in the Peace is the highest rated in the province, conditions are still below their historical averages. Currently, sub-surface soil moisture is rated as 3 per cent poor, 44 per cent fair, 49 per cent good, 4 per cent excellent and 0 per cent excessive.

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