

Alberta Crop Report



Crop Conditions as of July 14, 2020

Precipitation over the past two weeks continued across the province, resulting in large areas with excess moisture. Over this time frame many areas, particularly in the North West and Peace Regions and the western parts of the North East Region, experienced a couple of major weather events. Furthermore, local thunderstorm activities have brought rains across the province. Hail is reported in some fields in the Southern, Central and North West regions. Crop conditions are deteriorating with barley, canola and dry peas in the wet areas showing significant yellowing from excess moisture. Compared to the previous report, crop condition ratings are down for the North East, North West and Peace Regions, while they are improved in the Southern and Central Regions. However, the crop condition ratings are still higher than the 5-year average (2015-2019) in all regions, except for the North West, which is 31 per cent below. Provincially, crop growing conditions are 78 per cent good to excellent, compared to the 5-year average of 64 per cent (See Table 1).

Table 1: Regional Crop Condition Ratings as of July 14, 2020

	Per cent rated in Good to Excellent Condition					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Alberta
Spring Wheat*	85.8%	97.5%	81.6%	44.8%	67.9%	80.3%
Durum Wheat	89.9%	83.7%	---	---	---	89.1%
Winter Wheat	86.3%	78.0%	93.2%	---	---	85.9%
Barley*	84.3%	98.0%	75.1%	28.2%	56.3%	78.9%
Oats*	81.9%	96.1%	79.9%	32.5%	67.6%	68.3%
Fall Rye	89.8%	79.0%	94.5%	---	---	86.7%
Canola*	80.6%	96.7%	74.3%	27.1%	65.8%	72.0%
Dry Peas*	86.7%	95.2%	80.3%	28.2%	61.8%	77.7%
Lentils	90.8%	86.6%	---	---	---	90.2%
Chickpeas	89.7%	85.0%	---	---	---	89.6%
Mustard	71.0%	76.2%	---	---	---	72.7%
Flax	80.0%	84.7%	100.0%	---	---	82.9%
All Crops, Jul 14, 2020	85.2%	96.4%	77.7%	33.5%	65.2%	77.6%
Major Crops (*), Jul 14, 2020	84.2%	97.1%	77.7%	33.5%	65.2%	76.5%
All Crops, Jul 16, 2019	54.0%	82.4%	82.9%	82.9%	51.2%	70.1%
All Crops, 5-year Average	57.9%	62.2%	74.6%	64.6%	62.4%	64.3%
All Crops, 10-year Average	70.5%	73.5%	79.5%	73.9%	65.2%	73.1%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

As a result of persistent rains, excessive surface and sub-surface soil moisture continue to be an issue, in all regions, except the Southern. Currently, soil moisture reserves are near normal or higher for more than 95 per cent of the province, with some wet areas in the Central, North East, North West and Peace Regions, which are near a one in 50-years high for the similar time reference (see the map on the next page). Sub-surface soil moisture ratings (surface soil moisture are shown in brackets) across the province are now rated 1 (1) per cent poor, 8 (5) per cent fair, 44 (44) per cent good and 37 (39) per cent excellent, with 10 (11) per cent excessive (see Table 2).

Pasture and tame hay fields are still in a good shape in most parts of the province, particularly in the Southern Region, where blank areas from past dry years are slowly filling in. However in some wet areas, pastures are flooding and dying off. In these areas, hay fields are also soaked in water, making it impossible for producers to start haying. Provincially,

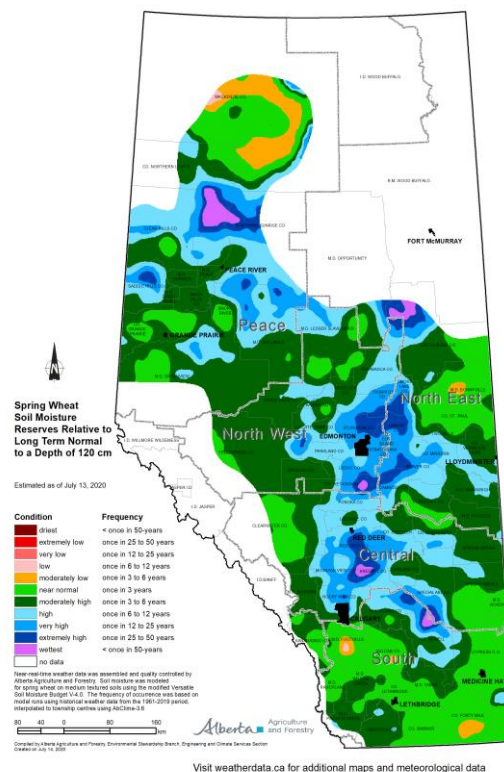
pasture conditions (tame hay conditions shown in brackets) are now rated as 1 (3) per cent poor, 7 (6) per cent fair, 66 (57) per cent good and 26 (34) per cent excellent.

Table 2: Sub-surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of July 14, 2020

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	1.1%	15.1%	62.8%	21.1%	0.0%
Central	3.0%	11.0%	64.7%	20.9%	0.4%
North East	0.0%	0.9%	20.3%	71.3%	7.5%
North West	0.0%	0.0%	4.7%	30.9%	64.5%
Peace	0.0%	0.3%	24.2%	60.6%	14.8%
Alberta	1.1%	8.0%	44.3%	36.4%	10.2%
5-year Average	14.7%	27.1%	39.2%	17.2%	1.9%
10-year Average	9.4%	19.4%	44.1%	24.9%	2.3%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

First cut dryland hay is 23 per cent complete across the province, below the 5-year average of 47 per cent. The estimated yield for dry land hay is 1.7 tons per acre (above the 5-year average of 1.3 tons per acre), with quality rated as 59 per cent good to excellent, compared to the 5-year average of 69 per cent. For irrigated hay, first cut is 71 per cent complete (down from the 5-year average of 83 per cent), with yield at 2.2 tons per acre, compared to the 5-year average of 2.4 tons per acre. Quality is rated as 80 per cent good to excellent, compared to the 5-year average of 85 per cent.



Regional Assessments:

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

- More showers over the past two weeks brought at least 20-30 mm of precipitation to the region, with some areas in the central and northern parts of the region receiving up to 80 mm.
- Crop development in the region is a little behind due to cool and cloudy days. Spring cereals are mainly finishing the head emergence stage of development, while fall seeded crops are at the milk development stage. About 88 per cent of canola, 76 per cent of dry peas and 60 per cent of lentils are in the flowering stage.
- First cut haying is underway, but has been challenging due to shower activities in the region. Currently, dryland haying is 58 per cent complete, behind the 5-year average of 79 per cent and irrigated hay is 81 per cent complete, compared to the 5-year average of 87 per cent. Dryland and irrigated yields (5-year averages are shown in the brackets) are estimated at 1.3 (1) and 2.2 (2.4) tons per acre, respectively. Hay quality is above the 5-year average for dryland, while it is below average for irrigated.
- Pasture growing conditions are reported as 7 per cent fair, 74 per cent good and 19 per cent excellent.

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

- Almost all areas in the region received at least 80 mm of rain over the past two weeks, with the northern parts receiving 100-125 mm of precipitation and an area in the south east receiving 20-40 mm. Some crops are yellowing and spraying has been challenging, due to excess moisture.
- Regional crop development is almost on par with the 5-year average, but in some areas it is slightly behind. Spring cereals are in the head emergence stage of development, while fall seeded crops are in the milk development stage. About 85 per cent of canola, 76 per cent of dry peas and 42 per cent of lentils are now in flower.

- Haying is in full swing, but it has been delayed by wet conditions. About 20 per cent of dryland and 5 per cent of irrigated haying is complete, compared to the respective 5-year averages of 45 and 42 per cent. Dryland and irrigated yields (5-year averages are shown in the brackets) are estimated at 1.8 (1.2) and 2.3 (2.2) tons per acre, respectively. For both dryland and irrigated, hay quality is below the 5-year averages.
- Pasture conditions are rated as 9 per cent fair, 75 per cent good and 16 per cent excellent.

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

- Most areas in the region received more than 60 mm of precipitation, with some parts up to 150 mm. A small area in the east of the region received only 20-50 mm of rain. Excessive rain led to flooded out areas and an increase in the proportion of crops in poor conditions. Warm and dry sunny days are needed in the region.
- Crop development is slightly behind the normal. Spring cereals are either at the end of booting stage of development or at the beginning of the head emergence, while fall seeded crops have just started the milk development stage. About 77 per cent of canola and 94 per cent dry peas are flowering.
- Only two per cent of haying in the region is complete, compared to the 5-year average of 25 per cent. Hay yield is estimated at 1.2 tons per acre, near the 5-year average of 1.3 tons per acre.
- Pasture conditions are rated as 1 per cent poor, 6 per cent fair, 67 per cent good and 26 per cent excellent.

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

- Over the past two weeks, precipitation in the region ranged between 70 and 125 mm, with a small area in the south of the region receiving more than 175 mm. Flooded out acreage has increased due to continued excessive rainfall. Fungicide spraying has been done by airplane in some areas, as fields are too soft to support ground spraying. Sunny and warm days are needed to advance crops.
- Crop condition ratings in the region are below the 5-year averages. Only 27 per cent of crops are now rated in good condition and 7 per cent are in excellent condition. The rest of crops are considered either in poor or fair condition.
- Most of the spring cereals are still in the booting stage of development, which is almost a week behind normal. About 82 per cent of canola and 67 per cent of dry peas are in flower.
- About 17 per cent of haying is complete, behind the 5-year average of 38 per cent, with yield estimated at 2.4 tons per acre, compared to the 5-year average of 1.7 tons per acre. Hay quality is now rated below the 5-year averages.
- Pasture conditions are rated as 7 per cent poor, 2 per cent good and 91 per cent excellent.

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

- More rainfall brought extra moisture to already wet areas. Over the past two weeks, all areas in the region received at least 80 mm of precipitation, with some areas receiving up to 150 mm. Only a small area in the central parts of the region experienced less precipitation, receiving about 40 mm.
- Crop development is behind normal in the region. Cereals are mostly in the beginning of the booting stage of development, while 65 per cent of canola and 56 per cent of dry peas are in flower.
- About 13 per cent of haying is complete, behind the 5-year average of 38 per cent, with a yield of 1.6 tons per acre, above the 5-year average of 1.3 tons per acre. Hay quality so far is rated lower than the 5-year average.
- Pasture conditions are rated as 2 per cent poor, 11 per cent fair, 67 per cent good and 20 per cent excellent.

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