

NEBRASKA WHEAT CROP REPORT

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According to the USDA crop progress report for the week of March 31, 2014, precipitation for the month of March averaged less than 50 percent of normal across much of Nebraska, causing further depletion of soil moisture supplies. Temperatures averaged two to four degrees below normal for the month. Windy conditions dried soils and caused fire warning levels to remain high. Available soil moisture continues to be a concern going into spring. Topsoil moisture supplies rated 16 percent very short, 46 percent short, 38 percent adequate and 0 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture supplies rated 18 percent very short, 42 percent short, 40 percent adequate and 0 percent surplus. Winter wheat conditions rated two percent very poor, 11 percent poor, 32 percent fair, 48 percent good and 7 percent excellent.

In the northern Panhandle, producers said the wheat has broken dormancy and looks good. The area is still receiving ice and snow. The soil moisture levels rated adequate. Soil erosion was a concern earlier this winter and last fall, but snow cover this March helped reduce erosion in the area and producers are hopeful for a good crop with good stands.

In the southern Panhandle, the wheat is starting to green up and is in the early stages of tillering. Precipitation has been ample the past few weeks, but it has been windy in the area. Producers said 20 percent of the area is starting to top dress. Other producers said it is not warm enough yet for top dressing. The soil moisture levels rated adequate. Select areas are seeing some winter kill and erosion damage.

In the northern part of southwestern Nebraska, producers said the wheat has broken dormancy and is greening up and entering the tillering stage. The weather has been cool, windy and dry. Soil moisture levels rated very short to short in different areas. Producers also said top dressing ranges from 10-75 percent completed depending on the area. There has been slight wind and erosion damage seen in some fields.

In the southwest corner, the wheat is greening up with good stands and is in the early tillering stage. The area is dry with very short moisture conditions. Top dressing in the area ranges from 10-50 percent completed. Producers said certain fields have 15-20 percent winter kill.

In southeastern Nebraska, 80 percent of the wheat has broken dormancy, but the wheat has yet to begin greening. The weather has been cold with no moisture. The top soil rated short in the area. Producers said top dressing is 100 percent completed and no winter kill has been seen yet.

