

# Showers give some farmers some relief

**HARRISBURG** — Mid-week showers delayed harvesting of small grains and others farm field activities during the week ending August 18, but the rain and an accompanying cold front brought an end to the extended period of hot and humid weather, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Harvesting of vegetables, fruits and small grains were major fieldwork activities during the week which had four days suitable for fieldwork. Other farm activities included making hay, baling straw, plowing, chopping corn and general repairs.

Apple and peach harvest is reported to be good, but some reports indicated fruit size was small. Late sweet corn varieties are being harvested, but are spotty, with production rated from plentiful to light.

Tomato harvest is building up, with numerous reports of dry rot and slow ripening tomatoes. Snap bean harvest is nearing completion with reports of production being down due to weather conditions. Harvest of cucumbers, squash and cabbage are reported as good.

Soil moisture is still rated short to adequate statewide, but spotted showers and thunderstorms have caused wide variations within regions. Northern operators rated soils as 48 percent surplus to 33 percent adequate. The central region

reported 64 percent short to 29 percent adequate while the south showed 50-50, short and adequate soil moisture supplies.

Wheat harvest is virtually complete across the state, on a par with last year. Oats harvest was rated as 82 percent complete, ahead of last year's 70 percent. Northern operators reported oat harvest at 56 percent while harvest was virtually complete in central and southern counties.

Corn harvested for silage stands at 10 percent, well ahead of last year's harvest which stood at less than five percent at the same time. Corn for grain is reported at 53 percent silked, 35 percent in dough, and five percent in dent. A year ago, corn was rated comparably at 53 percent silked, 33 percent in dough and six percent in dent. The five year average is 50 percent silked, 38 percent in dough, and five percent in dent.

Potato harvest was 22 percent complete statewide, slightly ahead of the 21 percent reported in 1979. Harvest in the north was at 22 percent, central harvest lagged at 11 percent and

southern potato harvest stood at 32 percent.

Tobacco harvest is at seven percent, ahead of the less than five percent harvested last year at this time.

Fall plowing was reported to be 20 percent complete statewide, compared to nine percent a year ago. The north is at 16 percent, central counties are at 21 percent and the south is at 23 percent plowed.

Second cutting of alfalfa increased to 83 percent, ahead of last year, despite the showers. While the south was virtually complete in second cutting, central farmers report 92 percent complete and the north is at 72 percent. Third cutting of alfalfa is 30 percent complete statewide, compared to 22 percent last year. Northern areas report 27 percent complete, central areas stand at 22 percent and the south is at 44 percent complete.

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Second cutting of clover-timothy advanced to 73 percent, compared to 50 percent a year ago. Northern areas were 63 percent complete, while central and southern areas stood at 83 percent and 81 percent complete, respectively.

Hay quality was rated as

good to fair during the week with northern farms rating hay as mostly fair to poor. Feed from pasture decreased this week, with 40 percent rating feed from pasture as average and 40 percent below average. All fuels were rated mostly adequate to surplus.



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