

Rain, warm weather push crops ahead

HARRISBURG — Rainfall again combined with warm humid weather to provide a good week for crop development in Pennsylvania during the week ending June 22, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Farmwork was hampered by the weather, with only four days rated suitable for fieldwork. Farm activities included making hay and haying; planting cabbage, transplanting tobacco; spraying corn, potatoes and fruit trees.

Topsoil moisture levels in the state were 76 percent adequate and 24 percent surplus. Northern soils were rated 57 percent adequate and 43 percent surplus, while central soils were rated 77 percent adequate and 23 percent surplus. Reporters in the southern region of the state rated topsoil moisture as 100 percent adequate.

Corn planting is virtually completed. The average height of corn statewide is 13 inches, compared to ten inches last year at this time. Tobacco transplanting is now 86 percent complete, compared to 78 percent last year.

Pennsylvania soybeans are now 87 percent planted, behind last year's 94 percent. Planting stands at 88 percent in the north, 91 percent in central counties and 81 percent in the south.

Barley is 38 percent headed, 54 percent turning yellow and seven percent ripe statewide. Last year, the barley crop was 40 percent headed, 50 percent turning and five percent ripe. In the north, barley is 68 percent headed and 32 percent turning, while central counties show 37 percent headed, 62 percent turning and one percent ripe. Southern barley fields were reported as ten percent headed, 65 percent turning and 23 percent ripe.

Wheat is 70 percent and 27 percent turning yellow across the state. Northern wheat is 75 percent headed and 21 percent turning while central wheat is 66 percent headed and 30 percent turning. The southern wheat crop is reported as 69 percent headed and 31 percent turning. Some farmers throughout the state are reporting problems with wheat rust and mildew.

Pennsylvania oats are 64 percent headed and less than five percent turning yellow. Forty-eight percent of northern oats are headed. Oats in central counties are reported at 74 percent headed and less than five percent turning, while southern oats are reported as 77 percent headed and six percent turning. Farmers from northern counties have reported that oats are heading normally but are short in height.

Statewide, alfalfa first cutting is 61 percent complete, behind the 73 percent cut last year. Second cutting stands at seven percent. Southern counties reported 83 percent of first cutting and six percent of the second cutting complete. Central areas reported 77 percent of first cutting and ten percent of second cutting alfalfa harvested, while northern areas reported 33 percent of first cutting and five percent of second cutting harvested. Some weevil damage has been reported.

Clover-timothy stands are 40 percent harvested, compared to 57 percent last year. The southern region leads with 54 percent harvested while northern and central counties are at 26 and 48 percent harvested respectively.

Hay quality for the week was mostly fair to good with poor haying weather across the state. Farmers in northern counties rated hay quality as 60 percent fair, 27 percent poor and 13 percent good, while their central counterparts reported hay quality as 50 percent fair, 33 percent good and 17 percent poor. Southern farmers reported hay quality as 50 percent fair and 50 percent good.

Feed from pastures rated average to above average across the state. Southern farmers rated pasture as 86 percent average and 14 percent above average; central farmers reported pasture at 67 percent average and 33 percent above average; and the northern farmers reported pastures as 80 percent average and 20 percent above average.

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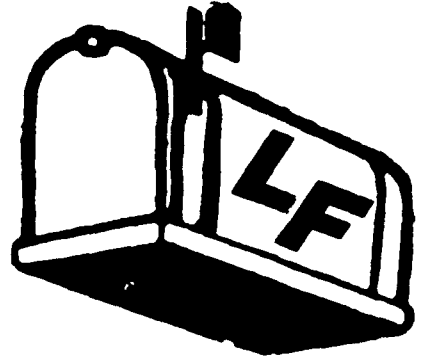
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