

Continuing storms still affect field work

HARRISBURG — Farmers were completing harvest of strawberries and sweet cherries, as well as harvesting cabbage, tart cherries, lettuce, onions, string beans and zucchini during the week ending July 8. Heavy rains caused damage to fields and crops and allowed only two days suitable for farm fieldwork across the state.

Other farm fieldwork included final plantings of soybeans, combining barley, some limited hay and haylage making and general farm maintenance.

The weather systems crossing Pennsylvania during the week produced some two-day precipitation totals in excess of

five inches, and local flooding was reported, particularly in southeastern counties. This is the third consecutive week that the state's average precipitation was above two inches.

As a result, soil moisture supplies were reported 32 percent adequate and 68 percent surplus across the state. Soil moisture was reported as 88 percent surplus in the northern counties, 65 percent surplus in central counties and 37 percent surplus in southern counties.

Corn averaged 21 inches high in the state compared to last year's height of 25 inches. Producers are spraying their fields as weeds become a problem.

Soybean plantings are virtually complete compared to 93 percent planted at this time last year. The northern and central regions reported planting as virtually complete and the southern area trailing slightly with 91 percent.

The transplanting of tobacco was virtually complete at the time, same as last year.

At the end of the week, barley was 12 percent headed, 19 percent turning yellow, 28 percent ripe and 41 percent harvested. Last year's crop was ten percent headed, 30 percent turning yellow, 26 percent ripe and 37 percent harvested. The northern reporters estimated 47 percent headed, 26 percent turning and 27 percent ripe. Central

reporters had 27 percent turning yellow, 40 percent ripe and 33 percent harvester, while southern barley growers reported 11 percent ripe and 89 percent harvested.

Across the state wheat growers reported 20 percent of their crop headed, 48 percent turning yellow and 29 percent ripe. Last year 30 percent was headed, 55 percent turning and 18 percent ripe. The northern region reported 62 percent headed and 36 percent turning. In the central region, five percent of the crop was headed, 68 percent turning and 27 percent ripe. Southern growers reported 34 percent turning yellow, 59 percent ripe and seven percent harvested.

Oats were reported as 62 percent

headed and 20 percent turning yellow. At this time last year 61 percent of the crop was headed and 12 percent turning. Northern region oats were reported to be 44 percent headed and five percent turning yellow. In the southern area 67 percent were headed, 35 percent turning yellow and eight percent ripe. All regions reported the growth of oats as uneven because of the wet weather.

Northern and central fruit growers report scab in the apples and some cases of fire blight are appearing. Apple set is mostly average to above average. Central and southern grape producers noticed black rot in their grapes and there appears to be some pear psylla damage in the southern regions. Peach set is mostly average to below average.

First cutting of alfalfa was 80 percent complete, behind last year's 92 percent. Second cutting of alfalfa was nine percent complete, six points behind last year's harvest. Clover-timothy was 69 percent cut, trailing last year's 81 percent at this time. The quality of hay made during the past week was rated poor by 54 percent, fair by 35 percent and good by 11 percent of the farm reporters. The amount of feed obtained from pastures was rated below average by five percent, average by 58 percent and above average by 37 percent. A few reporters have commented that the wet weather has delayed haymaking causing the quality of hay to decrease as the hay overmatures.

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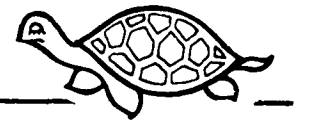
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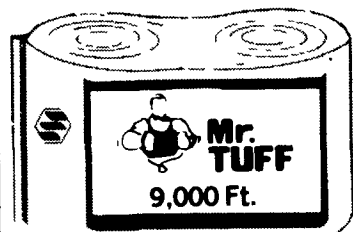
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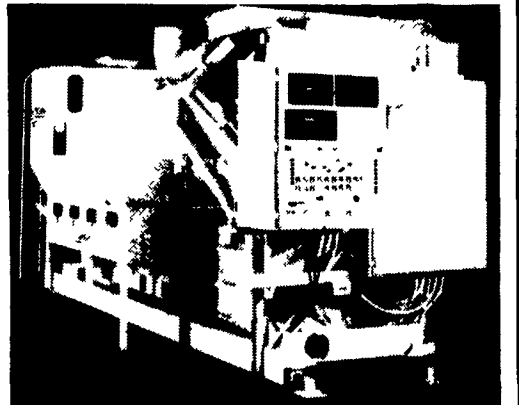
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