



### FOR THE WEEK ENDING MAY 3

**FAIR WEEK FOR FIELDWORK:** Above-average temperatures and below average precipitation across the commonwealth allowed four days suitable for fieldwork. Activities included spraying fruit trees and small grains, hauling manure, spreading fertilizer, maintaining machinery, spring plowing, planting, cutting rye, and caring for livestock.

**SOIL MOISTURE:** By week's end, top soil moisture was rated short by 10 percent of our respondents, adequate by 80 percent, and surplus by 10 percent of our reporters. Six percent of our respondents in the northern region rated soil moisture as short, 81 percent rated it adequate, and 13 percent rated it surplus. In the central region, 9 percent of our reporters rated soil moisture as short, 82 percent rated it adequate, and 9 percent rated it surplus. In the southern region, 17 percent of the respondents rated soil moisture as short, 74 percent judged it to be adequate, and 9 percent judged it surplus.

**PLOWING:** According to our respondents, spring plowing was 65 percent completed, two percentage points behind last year's 67 percent. The five-year average for this date was 68 percent. Spring plowing completion was 41, 78, and 78 percent for the northern, central, and southern regions, respectively.

**CORN:** According to survey indications, corn planting was 7 percent complete. That was 6 percentage points below last year's 13 percent and 7 points below the five-year average of 14 percent. Planting completion by region was northern region, 5 percent; central region, 7 percent; and southern region, 8 percent.

**SOYBEANS:** Soybean planting was 1 percent complete. That was the same as last year and 1 percentage point below the five-year average of 2 percent.

**OATS:** According to our respondents, oat planting across the state was 71 percent complete. That was 6 percentage points below last year's 77 percent and 5 points below the five-year average of 76 percent. Reporters in the northern region reported 50 percent complete, central region reporters indicated 76 percent, and the southern region reporters indicated 91 percent of the oats planted.

**POTATOES:** By week's end, 29 percent of the potato acreage was planted according to our indications. This is 7 percentage points behind last year's 36 percent and 17 percentage points off the five-year average of 46 percent.

**BARLEY AND WHEAT:** Barley was 85 percent in the preboot stage and 14 percent in the boot stage and 1 percent in headed stage. At this time last year, 77 percent was in the preboot stage, 21 percent in the boot stage, and 2 percent headed. The five-year average is 80 percent preboot, 17 percent boot, and 3 percent in the headed stage of development. Wheat was 92 percent in the preboot and 8 percent in the boot and none in the heading or headed stage. Last year at this time, 88 percent was in preboot stage, 11 percent boot, and 1 percent in heading or headed stage. The five-year average is 92 percent preboot stage, 8 percent boot stage, and none in the heading or headed stage. The wheat crop across the state was rated 13 percent excellent, 59 percent good, 21 percent fair, 3 percent poor, and 4 percent very poor.

**FRUIT:** Across the state, 38 percent of the peach trees were in the prepink stage, 23 percent were in the pink stage, and 39 percent full bloom or past. Last year at this time, 24 percent were prepink, 13 percent were pink, and 63 percent full bloom or past. The five-year averages were 25, 18, and 57 percent, respectively. Our survey results indicated that 41 percent of the cherry trees were in the prepink stage, 20 percent in the pink stage, and 39 percent full bloom or past. This compares to 20, 13, and 67 percent, respectively, at this time last year. The five-year averages for cherries are 24 percent prepink, 17 percent pink, and 59 percent full bloom or past. Apples were 68 percent in the prepink stage, 29 percent in the pink stage, and 3 percent full bloom or past stage. Last year at this time, apples were 31 percent in the prepink stage, 24 percent in the pink stage, and 45 percent full bloom or past stage. The five-year averages for apples are 36 percent prepink, 28 percent pink, and 36 percent full bloom or past.

**HAY AND PASTURE:** By week's end, 57 percent of the reporters rate alfalfa hay stands as good, 27 percent rated alfalfa stands as fair, and 16 percent poor. Timothy-clover stands were rated good by 32 percent of our reporters, 47 percent rated it as fair, and 21 percent rated it poor. The quality of feed being obtained from pastures was rated good by 54 percent of our reporters, fair by 36 percent, poor by 6 percent, and very poor by 4 percent.

## Farmer-Legislator Says Agriculture Well Represented

**VERNON ACHENBACH, JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
**HARRISBURG** (Dauphin Co.) — State Rep. Arthur Hershey, of Chester County, is one of two farmer-legislators who sit on the 18-member bipartisan Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee.

The committee, he said, is sensitive to farmer needs in making recommendations for possible legislative action to the state Legislature.

The committee was formed in 1968 under former Gov. Raymond Shafer as a research and recommendation-making agency.

In addition, the committee is charged with studying the enforcement of air and water pollution laws; to hold hearings throughout the state on related issues and complaints; study the effectiveness of restoration work conducted by various state departments with federal and state funds; study mining practices, including deep mining, strip mining, open pit mining and quarrying, the reclamation of mined-

out land; and study mining laws and laws related to reclamation.

Over the years, the committee has tackled a number of significant issues, some of which resulted in new or modified environmental laws.

A good amount of its work has been conducted during the 1980s, covering topics such as flood management, the Public Utility Commission regulation of water supply systems, research for the Safe Drinking Water Act, coal reclamation, low-level radioactive waste disposal, land application of sewage sludge, protecting water quality with well construction and location standards, recycling, infrastructure (PennVEST), use of roadside springs, state parks, the Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Act, funds for endangered species, septage management and disposal, urban storm water management, etc.

Current year efforts focus on water resources management, researching the recycling and regulation of used oil and putting together its annual report.

As farmers being represented on the committee, the record has been good. Not only are two farmer-legislators on the committee, but the majority of the committee consists of legislators from rural counties from different regions in the state.

According to Hershey, with all recommendations issued by the committee, considerations for agriculture are not overlooked. Although the committee must represent all interests in the commonwealth, he said the importance of agriculture and its economic, cultural and social significance is not lost in doing research and considering goals for the state.

Especially with the recent recommendations for change in the state's treatment of its water resources, Hershey said farmers may be being looked out for — there has been more than one incidence of a residential development depriving an existing farm of safe and adequate well water. Which is legal under the current laws.

However, farmers must be as aggressive as any other group in

pursuing fair treatment.

"With Pennsylvania being big in agriculture, we wanted to make some priorities for agriculture. Water is getting scarcer and scarcer," he said, adding that he knows two farmers who have lost well water quantity and quality to residential development, which not only deprives the farmer from his drinking supply, but also deprives the livestock from safe supplies.

"I always hold that food production will be very high in the col-

umn (of things to protect). We do have to eat," he said.

As far as water resources, he said farmers ought to start now in drafting policy and making it be known that agriculture deserves high priority for water use in Pennsylvania.

"We need to make a case for something that we just can't take for granted anymore," he said. "Not with the increase in uses — carwashes, golf courses . . ."

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