

# Texas Crop, Weather

July 01, 2008

Writer(s):

*Robert Burns, 903-834-6191, [rd-burns@tamu.edu](mailto:rd-burns@tamu.edu)*

COLLEGE STATION – Corn for grain varied from fair to good condition to a total loss from hail in some fields, according to [Texas AgriLife Extension Service](#) reports.

AgriLife Extension agriculture agents in many western counties reported all dryland corn a total loss. In other areas and under irrigation, corn was doing better.

"Recent rains have helped the 2008 crop tremendously. However, many of these rains were preceded by a very detrimental hail storm," said Benji Henderson, AgriLife Extension agent in [Parmer County](#), southwest of Amarillo. "Much of the mature wheat crop was knocked out, while corn and cotton crops were completely taken out."

"The county received about 1 inch of rain over the weekend. Most of the cotton producers are wrapping up planting cotton," said Wes Utley, AgriLife Extension agent in [Haskell County](#), southwest of Wichita Falls. "Peanuts in the county are looking good as is the corn and sorghum."

"Corn fields have also been adversely affected by the dry and windy weather patterns," said Gary Clayton, AgriLife Extension agent in [Wise County](#), northwest of Fort Worth.

"Most corn producers are salvaging their crop by haying or silage," said David Winkler, AgriLife Extension agent in [Bosque County](#), northwest of Waco.

"The last few days have been very hot with temps in the mid 90s and high humidity; typical weather for North Central Texas," said Rick Maxwell, AgriLife Extension in [Collin County](#). "Our crop conditions at this time are very good. Corn looks extremely good as does our grain sorghum and our few soybeans."

According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service reports, which are compiled from AgriLife Extension county reports, Texas producers planted 2.45 million acres of corn for grain in 2008, up from 2.15 million acres in 2007.

The following summaries were compiled by AgriLife Extension district reporters this week:

**[CENTRAL:](#)** Dry and hot conditions prevailed. Because of the drought, aflatoxin was expected in grain corn, and yields could be cut in half. Grain sorghum midge was reported, and a few fields were sprayed. Cotton was also stressed by dry and hot conditions. The pecan crop was light to medium. Pastures were dry and growing slowly.

**[COASTAL BEND:](#)** The drought worsened. The northern portion of the reporting area received isolated showers, but for the most part they were too late to increase yields. Most crops were

moisture-stressed, and many fields will have little to no yields. The grain sorghum harvest continued with some good yields reported, and some late sorghum was treated for fall armyworm. Pastures further declined, and feeding of livestock escalated. Ranchers were concerned about forages becoming scarce, and some were considering selling stock instead of buying hay.

**EAST:** Scattered showers with up to 1-inch accumulations were reported. However, most counties remained dry. Hay baling continued but slowed because of lack of moisture and hot weather. Hay yields were reported to be about normal for the year. Some San Augustine County producers were fertilizing pastures with poultry litter when it was available. Livestock were in good condition. Calf working neared completion and selling of market-ready calves continued. The blackberry and blueberry harvests continued with good yields. Disease and insects were reported on peas, peppers, beans, tomatoes and watermelons. In Wood County, there are reports of fish kills in ponds due to low pH levels.

**FAR WEST:** Some areas received rain, but for most counties the drought continued. Livestock conditions declined from lack of vegetation. Some ranchers reduced herd size until grazing situations improve. The region remained under extreme fire hazard with lightning causing more fires. Most crops were poor to average. All crops needed moisture.

**NORTH:** Soil moisture ranged from short to adequate. Days were hot and humid with the temperatures in the mid 90s. Scattered showers helped crops. Corn, sorghum and soybeans all looked very good, as did the peach crop. Most wheat yields ranged from average to above average, with some really high-yielding fields. The oat harvest neared completion. Cotton planting was completed and the crop was in good condition. Hay producers were only harvesting hay as needed due to production costs and carryover from 2007. Some producers made their second hay cutting. Warm-season forages were in good shape. Hay meadows and pastures looked good. Cattle were still doing quite well. Milk production level in milking herds was up. Range and pasture conditions were good.

**PANHANDLE:** Temperatures were near to slightly above average all week. Soil moisture varied from surplus to very short, with most areas reporting short to adequate. Corn was mostly fair. Cotton was rated from very poor to excellent, with most areas reporting fair to poor. Peanuts, sorghum and soybeans were rated mostly fair. Wheat was poor to fair as the harvest continued. Oats were rated good. Range conditions were very poor to excellent, with most counties reporting poor to fair. Cattle were in fair condition.

**ROLLING PLAINS:** The northwest part of the region received thunderstorms with high winds, hail and tornados. Childress, Hardeman and Wilbarger counties were hit hardest. Homes and other structures were damaged. Some cotton, corn, sorghum and peanut fields were totally wiped out. There were 100 farms affected in Childress County. Some alfalfa cuttings were lost as were some meadows. But despite the storms, many stock tanks were dry or nearly so. In the eastern part of the district, hot dry conditions continued to hurt hay production. Corn fields were also adversely affected by the dry and windy weather. Some ranchers said they expect to be feeding hay into mid-July if conditions don't change. Livestock remained in good condition.

**SOUTH:** Hot, dry temperatures and very short soil moisture conditions continued. Dry conditions helped corn and sorghum reach maturity and allowed quick drying of the crops for harvesting soon. Rains in some parts of the region benefitted forages but halted sorghum harvesting in localized areas. In other parts of the region, extremely hot and dry conditions continued to take their toll on native range and pastures. Livestock producers had to continue supplemental feeding of livestock. Cotton made good progress under irrigation.

**SOUTH PLAINS:** Several showers occurred with accumulations ranging from 0.5 to 2 inches. Where there was rain, some producers replanted cotton fields lost to the hail storms last week, but most producers have opted to replant to grain sorghum and sunflowers. Soil moisture was short to adequate. Wheat harvest continued as weather allowed. Cotton was from very poor to good depending on whether it rained or hailed. Grain sorghum was fair to good, with fields in a steady (hyphen) growth pattern. Pumpkins progressed well as irrigation and fungicide applications continued. Corn was in fair to good condition. Irrigation wells were running non-stop to keep up with dry conditions. Pastures and ranges were in poor to fair condition. Range conditions improved where it rained. Cattle were mostly fair to good. Supplemental feeding of livestock continued.

**SOUTHEAST:** From 1 to 1.5 inches of rain was recorded in some areas. Elsewhere, little growth occurred on forage pastures. Hay baling was delayed as a result of rain. Mexican rice borer moths were found in traps. Livestock were doing well.

**SOUTHWEST:** Hot dry weather continued. The last measurable rain was two weeks ago, but about 90 percent of the region remained in a drought. Hot, dry, dusty winds aggravated the situation. Ranchers reduced stocking rates and provided heavy supplemental nutrition to remaining livestock. There was a high failure rate of dryland corn, sorghum, hay, sesame and other crops. Irrigated corn and sorghum were drying down. The sorghum harvest was expected to start soon, with the corn harvest a week later. Cantaloupes, watermelons, peanuts and cotton made good progress under heavy irrigation. The green beans, onions, cabbage and potato harvests were essentially complete.

**WEST CENTRAL:** Very hot, dry and windy conditions continued this week in most areas. A few areas reported scattered showers. The potential for wildfires was extremely high, and burn bans remained in effect throughout the region. All crops showed signs of heat and moisture stress. The wheat harvest wrapped up with above-normal yields. Cutting and baling hay and some field preparations continued where it rained. Range and pasture grasses were in poor condition and continued to decline. Stock tank levels were in bad shape, with some completely dry. Livestock feeding picked up. Livestock were in good body condition. Pecan orchard irrigation was under way.