

Texas Crop, Weather

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COLLEGE STATION – While many South Plains counties saw cotton hailed out, the crop is doing pretty well in the Rolling Plains, said a [Texas AgriLife Extension Service](#) entomologist.

"In the southern Rolling Plains we are getting drier by the day," said [Dr. Chris Sansone](#), AgriLife Extension entomologist based at San Angelo.

Cotton is anywhere from the third growth stage to blooming, Sansone said. "Most of the cotton that is blooming out the top is planted extremely early and has been a little bit moisture-stressed," he said. "The irrigated cotton is doing well. Most of it is sitting about 6 or 7 nodes above white flower and otherwise it's been relatively quiet as far as cotton insect problems are concerned."

Sansone characterized the cotton crop as being on time in terms of maturity.

"Some people think we may be a little bit late, but if you do take the whole average, I think we might be catching up pretty quickly on the heat units."

While the Rolling Plains is drying out, parts of the Panhandle are seeing what is a "deluge" by High Plains standards, said Rick Auckerman, AgriLife Extension agent for agriculture in [Deaf Smith County](#).

Unlike some counties to the south, Deaf Smith was spared the worst of recent hail storms, Auckerman said. And more recently, there has been relief from the drought. "Hail has been sporadic, and in the last couple of weeks we've had from as little as 2 ½ up to 10 inches of rain," he said.

Deaf Smith planted from 20,000 to 25,000 acres of cotton this year, Auckerman said. Producers probably lost 5,000 to 8,000 acres on dryland, he said, adding that most of Deaf Smith County's irrigated cotton looks "pretty good," though it may be a little behind.

"If you go by heat units, we're ahead. But with all the environmental stresses, we're probably 10 days behind," he said.

Auckerman noted that counties to the south of Deaf Smith County got hit harder by hail. Bailey County, for example, lost as much as half of its cotton to hail.

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

[CENTRAL:](#) Crops matured early and pastures stopped growing because of the hot, dry weather. Livestock were supplemented heavily with hay. Stock tank levels were dropping ,

causing some to move cattle. Gardens and home landscapes were are not being watered regularly were suffering some wilting and yellowing due to heat and lack of moisture.

COASTAL BEND: Some rain fell, which helped local ranchers and caused pastures and range to green up quickly. However, the rain slowed down the grain harvest. Some grain elevators did not accept grain that was too high in moisture. In most cases, the rain was too late to help grain sorghum and corn. The rain also caused burn bans to be lifted in some counties. The drought is not over yet, though. Much of the area remained well behind in rainfall.

EAST: Dry conditions persisted throughout the reporting area. Although scattered showers fell in some areas, it was too little to give much relief. The hay harvest continued with lower yields and poor quality due to low fertilization rates. Pastures were in poor condition for the same reason. Producers in Nacogdoches County were trying to get broiler litter for fertilizer. Livestock were in fair condition. Vegetable production continued, but lack of rain and high temperatures threatened the quality and yield. Watermelons and peaches were being harvested. The blueberry and blackberry harvests began to slack off.

FAR WEST: Isolated thunderstorms brought rain that greened up pastures to the point they do not pose a fire hazard. Intermediate onions were harvested. The third cutting of alfalfa was nearly 50 percent complete, but halted by the rain. Pecan nut development was good. Chiles were fruiting and developing well. Some farmers planted a late crop of sunflowers and hope to get in a good crop of forage sorghum for late hay cutting. The promise of a good corn crop was greatly reduced by a Memorial Day weekend hailstorm. Watermelons were doing well, as were shrimp, pecan and grape production. Harvesting of grapes began.

NORTH: Soil moisture ranged from short to adequate. Rains were scattered and mostly. Hot temperatures and dry conditions still prevailed across the district; a good soaking rain would benefit not only crops and pastures but replenish soil moisture. Crops were not yet showing signs of drought stress. Corn, grain sorghum and soybeans continued to do well. The corn crop is 100 percent **silked**; 25 percent to 100 percent **doughing**; 40 percent to 100 percent **denting** and 10 percent matured. Grain sorghum crop is 40 percent to 100 percent headed and 15 percent to 90 percent coloring. The soybean crop is 25 percent to 99 percent **blooming** and 20 percent to 25 percent setting pods. Sunflower crops are 100 percent planted. Pastures and hay were doing well. Hay producers who were able to fertilize or had access to poultry litter were producing incredible yields. Most were working on second or third cutting. Peaches continued to look very good. Producers were cutting back on fertilizer due to its high cost. Cattle body condition was good. Stock tank levels were dropping, causing some producers to move cattle.

PANHANDLE: Temperatures were slightly below average with most areas having received some rain. Soil moisture varied from adequate to very short with most areas reporting adequate. Corn was rated mostly fair. Tasseling was reported. Cotton was rated mostly fair. Peanuts were rated mostly fair with **pegging** reported. Sorghum planting was nearly complete, and the crop was rated mostly fair. Soybeans were rated mostly fair. The wheat harvest was nearly complete. Range conditions varied from very poor to excellent with most reporting fair. Cattle were in good condition.

ROLLING PLAINS: Spotty showers passed through the district. No significant rain fell anywhere. Despite the dry conditions, most cotton and peanuts still looked good. Milo, however, has fallen behind and was in desperate need of rain. Fall armyworms and corn moved into milo and were heavily feeding. Range and pasture conditions were fair, and livestock were doing well.

SOUTH: Recent rains raised soil moisture from poor to adequate or surplus throughout the area. About 5 to 8 inches of rain was received, saturating some fields. Many fields were still under water, and field operations were halted. Wet conditions had put unharvested and cotton crops in jeopardy. The watermelon harvest was completed, and above average prices were reported. Range, pastures and forage improved considerably because of the rain.

SOUTH PLAINS: Temperatures were warm during the week with some scattered showers ranging from 0.25 inch to 1.5 inches of rain. Soil moisture was short to adequate. Replanting of failed cotton acreage continued. Field activities during the week included irrigating, cultivating, applying fertilizer and weed controls. Cotton continued to **square** and **bloom**. Most dryland cotton showed need for moisture. Where moisture was good, sorghum and corn showed rapid growth and development. The wheat harvest was completed, and yields were well below average. Pumpkins progressed well under irrigation. Ranges and pastures were in poor to fair condition. Some supplemental feeding of livestock continued.

SOUTHEAST: Drier conditions allowed hay harvesting in some counties. There were some issues with cinch bugs and army worms in pastures, and producers sprayed affected fields. Mexican rice borer moths were found in traps. Livestock were doing well.

SOUTHWEST: A total of nearly 1 inch of rain fell in the last two weeks after 43 consecutive dry days. The rain settled dust and provided some cooler temperatures, but was not economically significant. Year-to-date cumulative rainfall remained at about 26 percent of the long-term average. Cotton and peanuts continued to make good progress under heavy irrigation. Corn and sorghum were drying down, and harvesting should soon begin. The onion harvest was completed. The watermelon and cantaloupe harvests were in full swing.

WEST CENTRAL: Hot, dry, windy conditions continued in most areas. Wildfire dangers were high. A few areas reported scattered showers with 1 inch to 2 inches of accumulation. New cotton started to show signs of moisture stress, and producers were spraying for weeds. Most hay operations were completed. Range and pastures continued to decline, and conditions were very poor. Livestock remained in fair to good condition, and producers resumed supplemental feeding.