

Texas crop, weather

Cool, wet weather slows cotton
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COLLEGE STATION - - Rain fell in many parts of Texas, improving winter wheat but setting back the cotton harvest, reported [Texas AgriLife Extension Service](#) personnel.

Some [Panhandle](#) and [Rolling Plains](#) counties received 3 inches or more, and in most cases it fell on already saturated ground. Many [Southeast](#) and [East Texas](#) counties received from 1 to 2 inches with some counties getting 3 inches or more. Even parts of far [West Texas](#) received as much as 2 inches, slowing the maturing of cotton and other crops. [Southwest Texas](#) remained the exception, recording only sparse accumulations of moisture since mid-September.

"Total rainfall reports for the county averaged a little over 2 inches," said Ryan Martin, AgriLife Extension agent for [Motley County](#) northeast of Lubbock. "On top of already saturated ground this has caused more problems for county roads, rivers and fences that crossed creeks or rivers. Commissioners are still trying to decide whether to abandon some roads or try to fix them. On the other side, crops are in good to excellent condition, excluding the cotton crop."

"One to 3 inches of rain really helped the wheat that is planted and will be good for what remains to be planted," said Miles Dabovich, AgriLife Extension agent for [Wichita County](#). "There's still a majority of the grain production wheat to be planted. Producers were waiting on (soils to) dry out."

"Much of the county received 1 to 2 inches; some areas more," said Jack L. White, AgriLife Extension agent for [Cherokee County](#) in East Texas. White said that because of dry conditions before the rain, more will be needed soon to maintain forage production.

"Producers are putting on cotton harvest aid applications as fast as they can," said Brandon McGinty, AgriLife Extension agent for [Gray County](#), east of Amarillo. "Wheat has really come up with rains and will be planted when producers have completed harvest."

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

[CENTRAL:](#) Some counties received rain this past week. Cooler nights slowed grass growth. Cool-season grasses emerged and showed vigorous growth. Armyworms were reported on small grains and Bermuda grass pastures.

[COASTAL BEND:](#) Some areas received as much as an inch of rain, but most did not receive enough for drought relief. The harvest of the second rice crop was under way Livestock were in good condition.

EAST: Most counties received from 0.5 inch to 4 inches of rain. However, [Marion](#) and [Shelby](#) counties were passed over and still need rain. Hay baling continued but was beginning to wind down. Winter forages were planted, with some fields already showing good growth. Armyworms and feral hogs reports continued to come in.

FAR WEST: Widespread showers brought accumulations of 0.5 inch to 2 inches. Cotton and grain sorghum crops matured slowly due to the wet, cool weather. Cotton stripping was expected to begin soon. The pumpkin harvest was nearly complete. Pecans were in the shuck-split stage. (Shuck split, when the husks crack along sutures, is the last growth stage of pecans.) Hay production was in its final cutting.

NORTH: Soil moisture ranged from adequate to short. Days cooled, and some areas received rain, though it was sparse in most cases. Planting of small grains was about 70 percent complete, slowing because of dry soil conditions. The corn, soybeans and sorghum harvests were completed. Pastures and livestock looked very good. The fly population seemed to be dropping. Many livestock producers continued to plant or over seed winter pastures. Hay supplies were reported as being "very good." Most hay producers were taking their last cutting of hay. Some winter rye began to emerged. Dairy farmers were planting oats. Cotton remaining to be harvested was in fair to good condition with bolls opening . Range and pastures were in fair to good condition.

PANHANDLE: Temperatures vacillated with some days above average and others below. Soaking rains were reported in most counties, with from 2 to 7 inches falling over three to four days. Soil moisture varied from surplus to very short with most areas reporting adequate. Corn was mostly fair to good. Cotton and sorghum were mostly fair. Peanuts and soybeans were mostly good. Wheat varied from fair to excellent. Range and pastures varied from very poor to good with most areas reporting fair to good. Cattle were in good condition.

ROLLING PLAINS: Fall seemed to come early this year with cool temperatures, foggy mornings and several days of drizzling rain. From 2 to 4 inches rain fell across the region with most counties reporting about 3 inches. With the exception of cotton, crops were in good to excellent condition. If the cotton crop is going to make anything this year, it needs some warm sunny days over the next 30 to 45 days. The sorghum crop did extremely well in the past month, but some that was planted late still needed about 30 days to mature. Winter wheat emerged and was in excellent condition with enough residual soil moisture to take it through winter. Pastures and livestock were in excellent condition. The recent rains made pastures flourish, which should keep livestock in good shape through winter.

SOUTH: Evening temperatures were cool with mild days. Most counties reported short to very short soil moisture conditions. Only one county reported adequate soil moisture. Northern counties received light-scattered showers; some reported 0.5 inch to 1.5 inches. The peanut harvest was in full swing in the northern counties. The cabbage harvest began, and fall peas and small grains were doing well. The sorghum harvest was nearly completed in the western counties, but range conditions in that part of the region have worsened and producers increased supplemental feeding of livestock. In the southern part of the region, corn was progressing well, as was the planting of winter wheat and sugarcane.

SOUTH PLAINS: Temperatures were much cooler with no significant heat unit accumulation for cotton. Rainfall averaged from 1 inch to 3 inches, slowing many field activities but improving winter wheat stands. Soil moisture was adequate to surplus. Cotton was in fair to good condition. Producers were waiting for fields to dry before proceeding with cotton defoliation. Cotton harvest could get under way within two weeks. The sorghum and corn harvests were delayed by the rain. Winter wheat was in good condition. The pumpkin harvest was nearly complete with outstanding quality and great demand. Peanuts were expected to remain in good condition until harvesting can resume. Pastures and ranges were in fair to good condition. Cattle were in good condition.

SOUTHEAST: Most counties received 2 to 3 inches of rain this week, which helped rye and oats. A few producers managed to plant winter annuals before the rains. Post-Hurricane Ike cleanup continued and fence repair was nearly complete. Second-growth rice was in fair condition thanks to the rain, and harvesting was expected to begin soon. The soybean harvest should also begin soon.

SOUTHWEST: The region remains very dry since mid-September and year-to-date cumulative rainfall at about 50 percent of the long-term average. The cool weather will conserve moisture, but pastures and ranges are showing drought stress. There will not be sufficient forage to overwinter livestock at current stocking rates or maintain wildlife populations. Fall crops made good progress under heavy irrigation. The pecan harvest was in full swing. The harvesting of peanuts, cabbage and cucumbers continued. The sorghum harvest was under way. Spinach was making good progress under heavy irrigation and cool weather.

WEST CENTRAL: Temperatures were much cooler, and some areas received rain. Wet weather delayed cotton defoliation and harvesting. Cotton was doing fairly well. There was increased field activity for small grains. Armyworm problems continued. Winter wheat was in good condition with good soil moisture. Pasture and range conditions improved dramatically in some areas due to recent moisture. Producers should be able to get another hay cutting thanks to recent rains. Livestock were in fair to good condition with supplemental feeding increasing. Water hauling was under way in the dryer areas. Pecans were in poor condition with low yields expected.