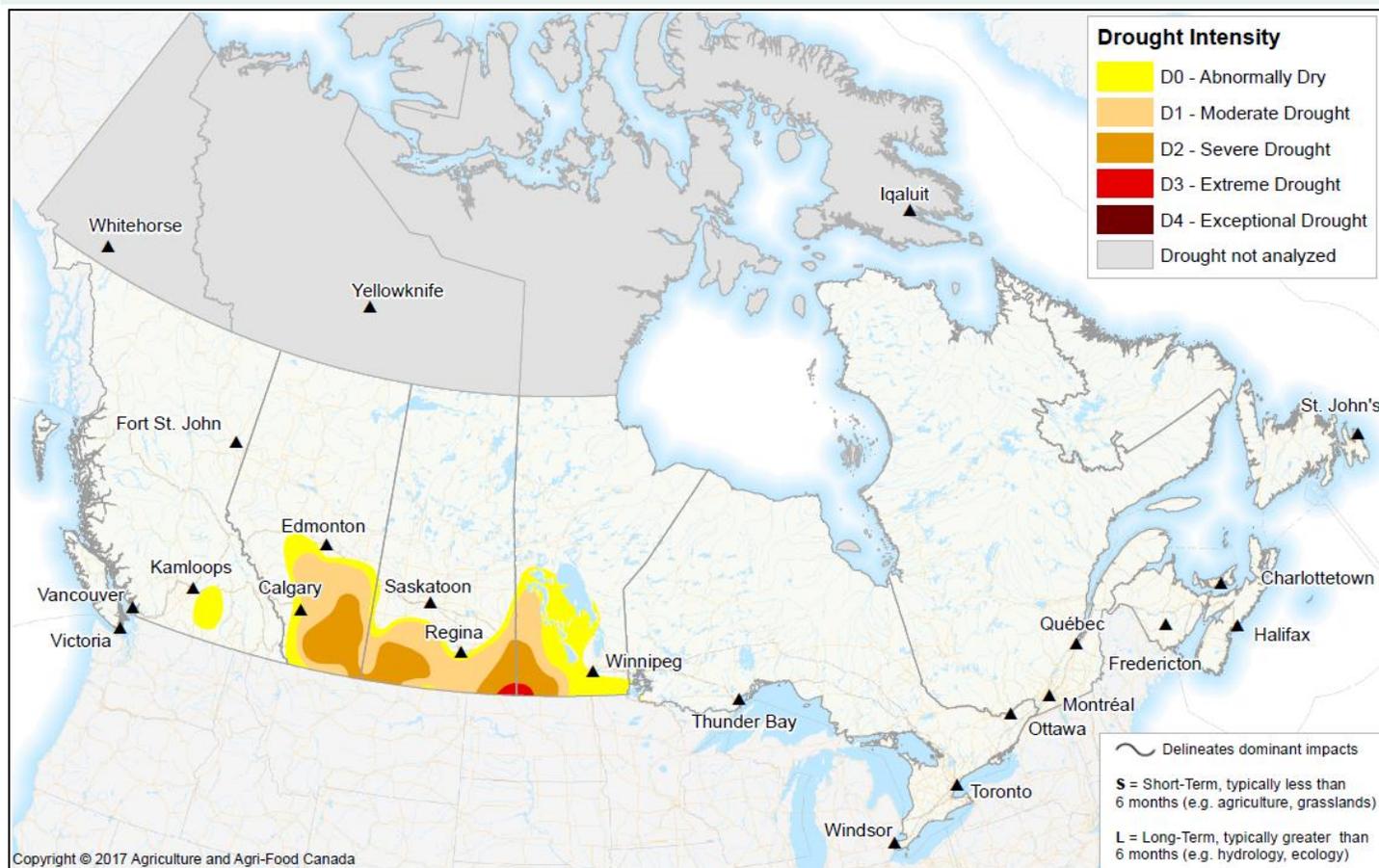


# Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of April 30, 2008



During April, drought coverage and intensity was reduced in eastern Canada as well as British Columbia. However Drought conditions have worsened in both area extent and severity throughout much of the southern prairies. In this region April precipitation ranged between 40 to 85 per cent of normal. With the dry winter and continued dry conditions into the spring, soil moisture levels and surface water supplies are very low across the southern Prairies.

## Pacific Region (BC)

The British Columbia Mountains have near normal or above normal snowpacks and near normal spring runoff is forecast for most river basins, providing a very positive outlook for water-supply conditions for most of the province. Exceptions are the Okanagan and Similkameen basins



which are forecast to have below average spring runoff. No water supply problems are anticipated yet because of the delay in snowmelt. These areas may however experience water supply challenges during the summer if conditions do not improve.

### **Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)**

The Southern Prairies continue to be dry with April precipitation ranging between 40 to 85 per cent of normal and some areas receiving less than 40 per cent of normal. With the dry winter and spring, soil moisture levels and surface water supplies are extremely low across the southern Prairies. Cool spring temperatures have also limited pasture growth causing cattle farmers to not release cattle on pasture in many regions. In some regions cattle are being put on to pasture too soon, but ranchers are left with few feeding options after running out of baled hay and unable to afford high feed costs. Water supplies are also a significant concern for producers in southern Saskatchewan. With limited snowpack and a very slow melt this spring, dugouts and other traditional water supplies did not recharge. Seeding is progressing well and well ahead of normal, however for much of the southern prairies, there is little soil moisture to support plant development. Producers are also considering changing cropping patterns if it does not rain soon. Timely rains are needed soon, or impacts on producers will continue to worsen. Northern areas of Alberta previously in abnormally dry conditions (D0) received significant precipitation this month resulting in this region being removed from the map.

### **Central Region (ON, QC)**

Central Canada continued to receive near normal precipitation throughout April. Due to the melting of the record or near record snowfalls, some localized flooding has occurred throughout the region. Winter precipitation alleviated much of the drought conditions in southern Ontario, however, dry spring conditions are causing some early concern, especially in some areas in the Southwest. In Northwest Ontario, significant precipitation throughout the month of April has reduced any concern for drought at this time.

### **Atlantic Region (NS, NB, PE, NL)**

In the Atlantic region, there are presently no drought concerns; although below normal rainfall has been received this spring. This is contrary to the above normal winter snowfall, currently resulting in significant localized flooding in some regions, most notably New Brunswick (the Fredericton area and the northwest part of the province). Regions of northern Nova Scotia, portions of Prince Edward Island and southern Newfoundland that had below normal snow this past winter, continue to receive slightly below normal spring precipitation. Some of these regions are reporting low soil moisture due to the lack of rain over the past month.

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