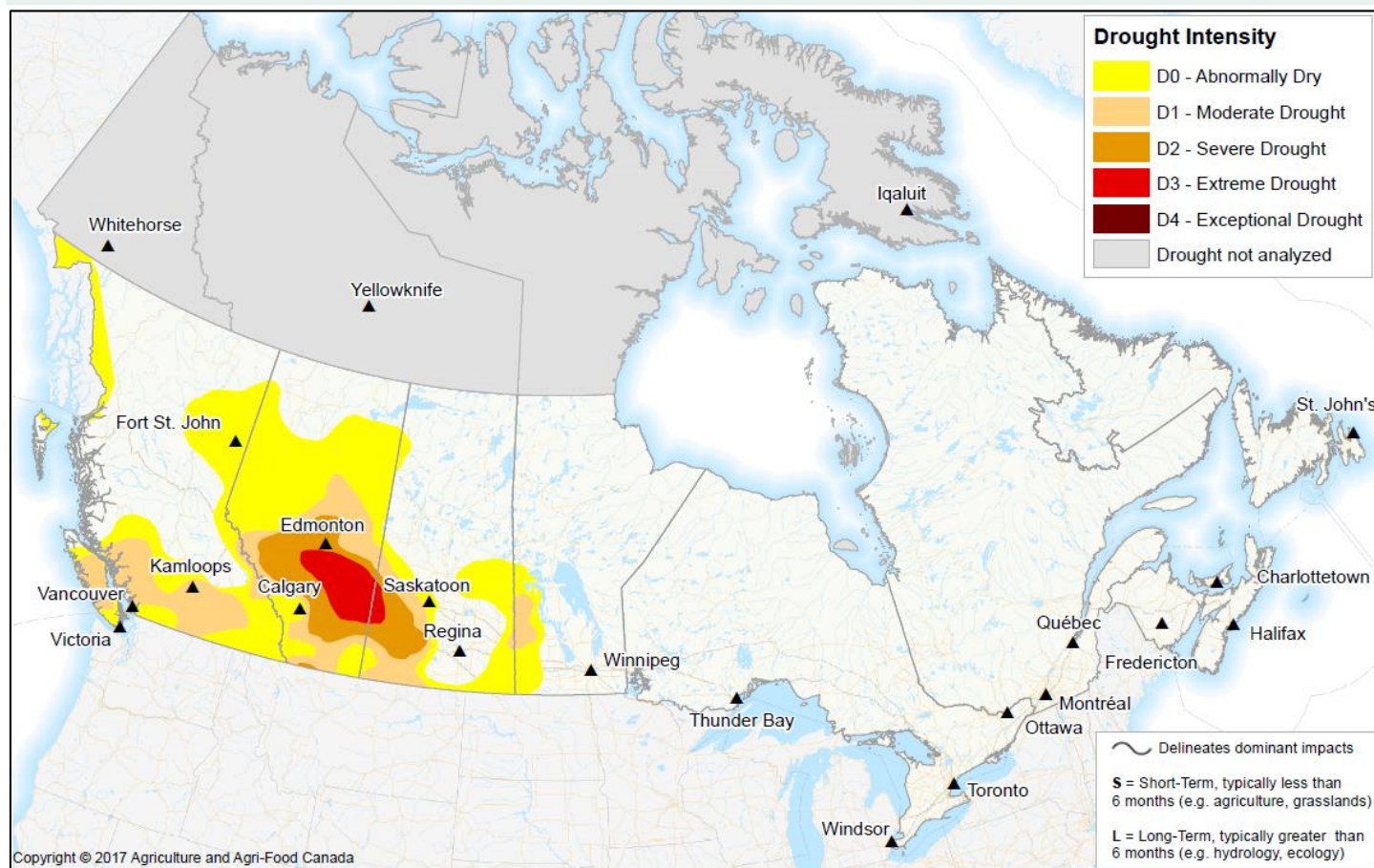


# Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of June 30, 2009



In June, drought conditions intensified in western Canada. At the end of the month, the majority of the agricultural region in western Canada was assessed as Abnormally Dry or in a drought classification. Drought severity and extent increased significantly in central Alberta and west-central Saskatchewan. The interior of British Columbia continued to receive below-normal precipitation and was experiencing 20-year low stream flows. Below-normal spring precipitation has resulted in concerns for another season of drought in the Peace River region of Alberta and British Columbia. The drought has had widespread effects on annual crops, hay, and pasture lands. Temperatures for June were generally below or near normal across Canada, with the exception of the Pacific coast of British Columbia, with the warmest reports on the lower mainland and the southern half of Vancouver Island. Cool temperatures have reduced the severity of drought in many regions of the country; however, they have also resulted in poor crop development, which exacerbates the drought concerns and impacts.



## **Pacific Region (BC)**

On Vancouver Island and in the lower mainland of British Columbia, drought continues to be a concern as many stream flows continue to be significantly reduced. This is a result of extremely low winter snow packs and below-normal spring precipitation, with some regions receiving 60 percent of normal since April 1. Many major rivers are experiencing 20-year low flow levels. The extremely warm temperatures have greatly increased the risk of forest fires. The Peace River region in northeastern British Columbia and northwestern Alberta has been classified as a D0 as a result of less than 40 percent of normal precipitation over the course of May and June, and less than 60 percent since April 1. There have also been reports that annual crops are nearly two weeks behind and forecasts are predicting only 50-70 percent of normal yields.

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

Drought conditions continued to deteriorate in the central region of Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan, resulting in an expansion of the D2 (Severe Drought) and the emergence of a D3 (Extreme Drought) classification. Much of this area has received well below normal precipitation, barely 70 mm (less than 2.5 inches) since September 1 of last year. As a result of extremely low snow accumulations, minimal spring runoff, and very low spring precipitation, many dugouts and sloughs are dry, and there have been reports of producers hauling water. Forage supplies have been significantly reduced because of drought, cool temperatures, and large amounts of feed being shipped to U.S. producers. Poor pasture conditions and high feed costs have led producers to sell cattle to reduce their herd size. In Alberta, many counties have instituted fire bans and as of June 30, at least twelve counties had declared themselves as agricultural drought disaster areas, with more counties being anticipated. Although much of Manitoba has experienced excessive moisture from earlier spring flooding and above-normal precipitation in June, the western half of the province is dry. Some areas have received less than 60 percent of normal since April 1, with areas around Swan River reporting only 70 percent since the start of the calendar year, contributing to low soil moisture reserves.