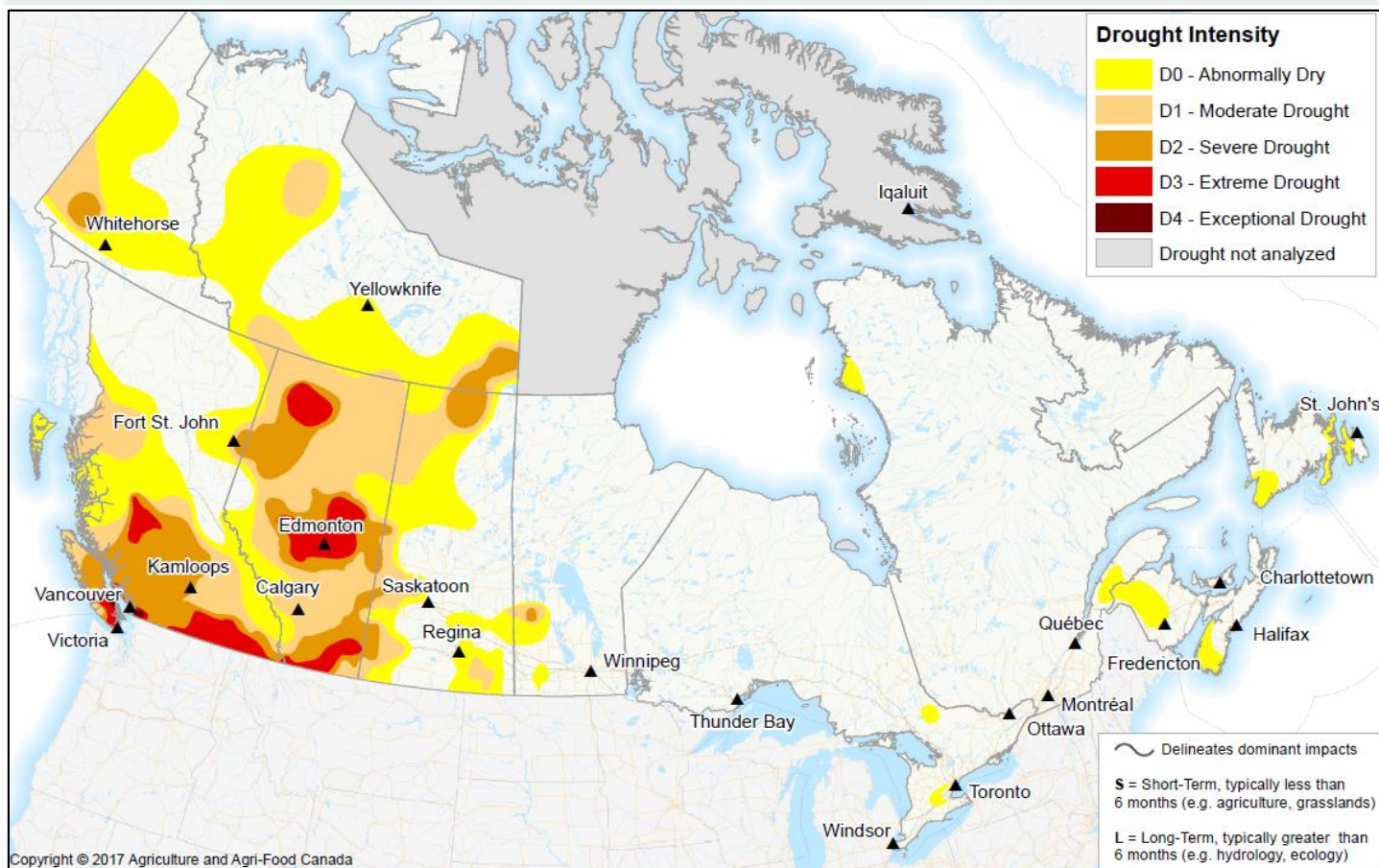


Canadian Drought Monitor

Conditions as of August 31, 2015



Drought continues to be a significant concern throughout much of British Columbia and Alberta. In parts of Western Canada, Environment Canada has stated that 2015 was the warmest summer on record for many regions and one of the top ten driest on record. In August, abnormally high temperatures throughout western Canada continued to desiccate crops and grasslands. Significant precipitation at the end of August improved soil moisture and reduced the drought extent and severity in some areas including much of Saskatchewan, central Alberta, and portions of western regions of B.C. Approximately 22.5 per cent of Canada's agriculture regions remained in drought at the end of August. This encompasses areas throughout the lower mainland of B.C., Vancouver Island, much of Alberta, and a portion of west central Saskatchewan, and affects approximately 18,000 farms and 3.9 million cattle. Outside of the agricultural areas, reduced precipitation throughout northeastern Alberta and northwestern Saskatchewan has resulted in an expansion of the Moderate Drought (D1). Other regions of



note include the expansion of Abnormally Dry (D0) in the Atlantic, a small portion of southern Ontario, and southern Manitoba.

Pacific Region (BC)

In British Columbia, warmer-and drier-than-normal conditions persisted through most of August. Record low stream flow continued through much of the month in many locations of western and southern British Columbia. A significant rainfall event late in the month improved the situation in parts of southwestern British Columbia, most notably in the lower mainland – Abbotsford area and the coastal mountains where 50-90 mm of precipitation fell the last week of August. Drought conditions did not improve throughout the southern interior, as less than 20 mm of rainfall was received throughout, resulting in continued drought. There was an expansion of Severe Drought (D2) and Extreme Drought (D3) in the southern interior. Conversely, there was a reduction of the Extreme Drought (D3) and the Exceptional Drought (D4) for the northern half of Vancouver Island, and a reduction of the Extreme Drought (D3) in the central Interior; due to significant rainfall (> 115%) for the last 30 days, thus increasing streamflow and replenishing soil moisture.

Prairie Region (AB, SK, MB)

For the Prairies, precipitation in August helped reduce the drought extent and severity for much of Saskatchewan and central Alberta. Central regions of Alberta received 90-125 mm of precipitation, 150 percent of normal in August, providing relief from drought and improved growing conditions. In these regions, there was a large reduction of the Extreme Drought (D3) areas. However, Severe Drought (D2) remains due to the long-term precipitation deficits experienced throughout the entire growing season. Southern and northern regions of the province received much less rain fall and remained in Severe Drought (D2) and Extreme Drought (D3) classifications. Rainfall throughout Saskatchewan continued to improve soil moisture and reduce drought impacts. Drought is now limited to the extreme west of the province with the exception of a small pocket of D1 in South eastern Saskatchewan. There was an emergence of a small pocket of Severe Drought (D2) east of Swan River in Manitoba due to reduced precipitation during the growing season; driest in the last 20 years according to province. Livestock producers in Western Canada are experiencing feed shortages. Hay yields are expected to be only 50 – 70 per cent of normal in British Columbia and parts of Alberta and dry conditions have kept pastures from greening up and producing feed for grazing cattle. Some poor quality crops are being grazed or baled to help address the feed shortages. In the driest areas, only one cut of hay was harvested. Producers are being faced with the difficult choice to either purchase expensive replacement feed or sell off breeding stock.

Atlantic Region (NS, NB, PE, NL)

Eastern and Atlantic Canada continue to receive adequate rainfall in most regions. Small pockets of Abnormally Dry (D0) exist and are being monitored; however, there was little concern for drought in these regions.

Northern Region (YT, NT)

In the northern areas around Hudson Bay, the Yukon and Northwest Territories, below-average snow packs have led to a significant portion of the area classified in Abnormally Dry (D0). For the pockets of Moderate Drought (D1) or Severe Drought (D2), these areas received below-average spring precipitation (50 per cent of normal in some areas), and fire danger continued to be a concern heading into September.

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