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Field Crop Reporting Series – No. 5

TELEGRAPHIC CROP REPORT – PRAIRIE PROVINCES

This is the second of the 1979 series of eleven telegraphic reports, covering crop conditions in the Prairie Provinces, issued by Statistics Canada. Crop correspondents from the Federal and Provincial Departments of Agriculture, Federal agencies, private crop observers and the grain trade supply the information on which these reports are based. The weather data included in this release are furnished by the Atmospheric Environment Service, Environment Canada.

SUMMARY

Prairie Provinces – Field operations are still behind schedule throughout the Prairie Provinces. Due to the later than normal seeding many farmers have indicated changes in their planting intentions. Field work is under way across much of Alberta and western Saskatchewan. Seeding has just begun in many areas and is furthest advanced in parts of east-central Alberta. Much of Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan remains wet and cold and field work has begun in only a few areas. Although further precipitation has been received, overall conditions have improved in recent days and field work should be widespread in a week. Some greening of haylands and pastures is occurring.

Manitoba – Excessive moisture conditions throughout most of Manitoba continue to delay all field work. The weather has improved this week but most areas need at least eight days of favourable weather before seeding operations can begin. Fall rye, grass and weed growth is only just starting. Feed supplies appear to be running low in some areas.

Saskatchewan – Weather conditions have improved within the last two days and are presently excellent for drying. Seeding progress to date has been confined mainly to west-central Saskatchewan. Seeding will be general in southern and western areas by the end of this week if the good weather continues. Field work should begin by the end of this week in eastern and north-central regions. The delay in seeding may cause a reduction in wheat area and an increase in barley, rapeseed and flaxseed this year.

Alberta – Spring operations were delayed throughout Alberta by cold, wet weather during April and the first part of May; however, recent higher temperatures have helped to dry fields. Tillage operations are now under way throughout the province. In most areas seeding is just getting started and should be general during the long weekend, about one to two weeks later than normal. The most advanced area is east-central Alberta where seeding is widespread. Moisture conditions are very good in nearly all districts. Soil temperatures are still below normal and warmer weather is needed to ensure good germination of seeded crops. Livestock are in good condition although forage supplies are nearly exhausted in many northern areas and in the Peace River District. Some cattle are being turned out to pasture, despite poor growth on haylands and pastures.

Agriculture Division
Crops Section

4-3102-508

(Disponible aussi en français)

RUST REPORT

The Winnipeg Research Station reports that rust spread has started in southerly parts of the United States. There is not much wheat stem rust to date but heavy infestations of wheat leaf rust and oat rust have been observed. Large amounts of inoculum of leaf rust and oat rust are being produced and may be carried northward if winds are favourable. The late-seeded crops in western Canada will be more susceptible to rust infestation than normal.

Precipitation and Temperature Data, Prairie Provinces(1)

	Unweighted Average Precipitation		
	Per cent variation from normal(2)		
	Man.	Sask.	Alta.
April 1, 1979 - May 14, 1979	+ 58	+ 25	+ 18
April 1, 1979 - May 7, 1979	+ 68	+ 47	+ 37
April 1, 1979 - April 30, 1979	+ 72	+ 26	+ 22
April 1, 1978 - May 15, 1978	- 20	+ 34	+ 28

	Mean Temperature		
	°C variation from normal(2)		
	Man.	Sask.	Alta.
For the week ending May 14, 1979	- 7.5	- 6.2	- 3.4
For the week ending May 7, 1979	- 6.2	- 6.5	- 5.9
For the week ending April 30, 1979	- 4.1	- 3.3	- 0.9
For the week ending May 15, 1978	- 2.3	- 1.2	- 1.5

(1) Source: Atmospheric Environment Service.
(2) Positive sign indicates above normal and negative sign indicates below normal.

MANITOBA

In the Altona district soggy fields are hampering field work but some harrowing has taken place on lighter soils. Field work could become general within the next ten days. Farmers are planning to change to earlier maturing crops.

Snow last Thursday further delayed field operations in the Melita area. Some field work was done during the weekend. No seeding has been done to date but should be general by the end of the week. Soil moisture is excellent and pastures are improving.

At Beausejour the soil is too wet for working. No crops have been seeded to date and very little weed growth is evident. Pasture development has been slow due to the cold weather but feed supplies are good. Approximately seven cm of snow fell in parts of the Selkirk district and aggravated the already excessive moisture conditions. Field work is at a standstill with seven to ten days of dry, windy weather required before seeding can start. Hayfields are turning green but pasture growth is slow. At Stonewall seeding will not be general until the end of the month. Although some cattle are being fed on pastures, the pasture growth is poor. Our correspondent at Portage La Prairie reports that land work has not started and soil temperatures are still very low. Forage stands have not shown any growth.

No field work has been possible in the Brandon area. If the improved weather conditions continue operations will start in a couple of days.

In the Interlake district around Teulon the recent heavy precipitation has left the soil water-logged and good drying weather is urgently needed. No field work or seeding is reported. Weed growth is now commencing. Indications are that original acreage intentions will change substantially. Pasture growth is just starting but feed supplies are adequate. At Arborg the ground is cold and the moisture remains excessive. No seeding is reported and pasture growth has been poor. Weed growth is now evident.

In west-central Manitoba around Neepawa weather conditions remained unfavourable until last week-end and seeding will not be general for two weeks. Forage stands and fall rye crops are beginning to show growth. Continued rain, snow and cold weather have further delayed spring operations in the area around Minnedosa. At least a week of good weather is needed before much field work can be done. Farmers are beginning to indicate changes in their cropping intentions. Hay supplies are limited. At Russell a few farmers on better drained land will start cultivation this week. General tillage is not expected for another week. No pasture growth is reported.

The higher temperatures of the last three days are melting the remaining snow at Swan River. Field operations may begin by the end of the week. Hay supplies will soon be depleted as pasture growth is late.

SASKATCHEWAN

In the southeastern part of the province at Moosomin weather has improved and moisture conditions are good. No field or pasture growth is evident. Field work is not expected to begin until the week of May 20. Around Indian Head weeds are beginning to germinate. Soil temperatures have been cool. With good drying weather seeding could become general by the weekend. In the Moose Jaw area the weather is presently favourable for the drying of fields. Soil moisture in stubble fields is good but is excessive on some summerfallow. Heavy clay soils will require a further week before seeding can begin. Fertilizer is now being spread on stubble fields. Field work and limited seeding has begun on lighter soils and seeding should be general in the next few days. Fall rye appears to have survived the winter satisfactorily. Pasture growth has improved noticeably in the last two to three days.

At Swift Current in the southwest seeding began this week. Four days of dry weather have enabled farmers to begin operations and it is expected that about 90 per cent of seeding will be completed within ten days if the good weather continues. Cold and damp conditions have retarded weed and grass growth. Around Leader seeding has started but is two weeks later than usual. Moisture conditions are excellent. Fertilizer is in short supply in the area.

In east-central Saskatchewan around Balcarres conditions are currently sunny and warm. No rain has been received during the past week but fields are still wet. Field work should be starting by the weekend with seeding general by May 22. Pasture and weed growth has been slow but should improve with the current warm weather. No changes in seeding intentions are evident.

In the central area tillage and fertilizer application is general at Drake. Favourable weather will permit seeding to become general by the weekend. Weeds are now sprouting. The feeding of cattle is continuing. Our correspondent at Saskatoon reports that pastures and haylands are beginning to green but that there has been little growth to date. Warm, sunny weather during the past week helped to dry fields. Spring tillage and seeding are now general in the area.

In the west-central area seeding is approximately 25 per cent complete around Kindersley. Moisture conditions are good. In the Scott area seeding is general and is about 40 per cent complete. Soil temperatures remain below normal and weed growth has been slow. Seeded pastures and haylands are growing although native pastures are still sparse. Moisture is adequate for germination but reserves are low.

In the northeast around Melfort the weather is warm and dry. There is still some snow around field edges but the fields are drying well. Field work should be under way this week. Although growth has been slow, winter wheat and fall rye have started to green. Winter injury was light on fields where a good snow cover existed throughout the winter.

At Meadow Lake in the northwest seeding of rapeseed and wheat has started and should be general in three to five days. Pastures were slow in developing but are now in good condition. The weather has been cool and scattered showers have been received within the last week.

ALBERTA

In south-central Alberta at Lethbridge cool, wet weather has delayed spring operations by two to three weeks. In some areas east of Lethbridge up to 50 per cent of the special crops have been seeded. At Lethbridge 20 to 30 per cent of most grain crops have been seeded, however, only five per cent of the special crops have been planted. In the Brooks district planting of specialty crops has been delayed; however, field work will be general this week. Near Pincher Creek and Claresholm seeding is expected to begin by May 20. Throughout this area less summerfallow than usual is expected because of excellent soil moisture conditions. Pasture growth has been slow but warmer weather is expected to bring on good growth later in the month. Near Vulcan moisture conditions are excellent. Cultivation is in full swing and about 25 per cent of the farmers are seeding. Spring operations are behind normal for this time of year due to high moisture conditions. Grasses and legumes are excellent. Forty per cent of the winter wheat is showing winterkill and, some of this land is being reseeded to spring wheat. The fall rye crop appears good.

In southwestern Alberta at Cardston three weeks of warm weather are required for completion of spring operations. Although some seeding is reported on lighter soils, many fields are still too wet to permit any work. Most intended acreages are reported to be similar to those of last year. Pastures and haylands are growing well. Supplies of seed and fertilizer are reported to be adequate.

In the east-central area of the province around Stettler very little seeding has been done due to prevailing cool weather. Tillage operations are in progress and seeding is expected to be general by the weekend. Moisture supplies are good to excellent. At Wainwright scattered showers during the past week slowed field operations for a few days; however, seeding is now well under way due to the return of warmer weather. Wheat is about 60 per cent seeded.

In the central area of the province at Eckville field work became general on May 14 and seeding is expected to begin soon. Fertilizer usage is anticipated to increase by ten per cent over last year. Forage and pasture growth is slow. Around Lacombe field work is just starting and very little seeding is yet reported. Cool, wet weather has delayed growth of haylands and pastures.

In the northeastern area of the province near Athabasca, below-normal temperatures and above-normal moisture levels are delaying spring operations. No seeding has yet been done. Pasture growth is slow.

In the Peace River District near Peace River, wet fields are hampering cultivation. General spring operations are expected by May 18 and seeding should begin next week. At Grande Prairie warmer weather has allowed field work to begin and a few fields have been seeded. Seeding of wheat will be later than normal this year. Near Beaverlodge cool weather, frequent snow flurries and rain showers have delayed all farming operations by three to four weeks. Farmers are beginning to seed in some areas. Some winterkill is evident in legumes. Further north at Fairview field work is just beginning. General seeding is not expected until May 18, although some spot seeding of wheat has been done. Wheat acreages are reported to be declining in favour of rapeseed due to high local demand.

TABLE 1 Precipitation and Temperature Data, Prairie Provinces(1)

TABLEAU 1 Données sur les précipitations et la température provinces des Prairies(1)

Province and crop district – Station Province et district agricole – Station	Precipitation – Précipitations			Mean temperature, week ending 8 a.m. May 14 Température moyenne semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai	
	Week ending 8 a.m. May 14, 1979 Semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai, 1979	Total since April 1 Total depuis le 1er avril	Normal since April 1 Normales depuis le 1er avril	1979	Normal Normale
	mm			°C	
Manitoba:					
1:					
Boissevain	10.4	85.1	58.1	3	10
Pierson	6.1	60.9	54.7	3	11
2:					
Virden	4.0	65.9	47.7	4	11
Brandon	9.3	97.4	50.6	3	11
Cypress River	25.6	126.1	56.4	2	11
3:					
Birtle	5.1	73.9	49.6	2	10
4:					
Rossburn	12.8	68.3	56.0	2	10
Russell	6.6	47.8	39.1	2	9
5:					
Swan River	12.0	58.0	51.0	2	11
6:					
Dauphin	11.8	76.9	54.6	2	11
7:					
Gladstone	13.0	103.5	64.4	3	10
Starbuck	9.9	101.5	75.1	3	11
Portage La Prairie	16.5	116.7	67.5	3	11
8:					
Altona	15.2	142.0	54.9	4	12
Baldur	11.4	106.6	80.2	3	11
Pilot Mound	15.2	108.2	66.7	3	10
Graysville	24.6	130.8	61.6	3	11
Morden	21.9	116.3	63.4	4	12
Roland	10.7	93.2	56.7	4	12
Morris	..	..	..	..	..
Plum Coulee	13.7	123.2	71.3	4	11
Emerson	..	..	..	..	..
9:					
Winnipeg	16.4	101.8	60.4	4	11
10:					
Pinawa	25.4	96.9	58.4	3	9
Sprague	14.0	82.3	64.3	4	10
11:					
Stonewall	16.5	86.0	65.2	3	11
12:					
Arborg	16.8	85.2	55.1	2	9
Hodgson	12.0	101.0	62.1	1	9
Gimli	19.6	96.2	56.1	3	9
The Pas	9.5	42.5	41.0	1	8
Grass River	5.1	114.7	50.2	2	10
Thompson	19.7	33.3	43.6	–	4
AVERAGE – MOYENNE	13.7	91.4	57.9	2.7	10.2

See footnote(s) at end of table.
Voir note(s) à la fin du tableau.

TABLE 2 Precipitation and Temperature Data, Prairie Provinces(1) – Continued

TABLEAU 2 Données sur les précipitations et la température provinces des Prairies(1) – suite

Province and crop district – Station Province et district agricole – Station	Precipitation – Précipitations Week ending 8 a.m. May 14, 1979 Semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai, 1979	Total since April 1 Total depuis le 1er avril	Normal since April 1 Normales depuis le 1er avril	Mean temperature week ending 8 a.m. May 14 Température moyenne semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai 1979	Normal Normale
	mm			°C	
Saskatchewan:					
1A:					
Carlyle	4.5	66.3	46.3	3	10
Estevan	7.0	105.4	49.1	4	12
Oxbow	8.4	32.8	41.6	3	10
Willmar	..	78.1(2)	..	..	..
1B:					
Broadview	6.1	56.0	43.0	2	9
Moosomin	10.0	74.4	49.9	3	10
2A:					
Yellow Grass	9.0	128.0	44.7	4	11
Weyburn	4.0	78.8	49.0	3	11
Midale	8.7	87.3	45.1	4	11
Amulet	(3)	86.4	67.2	4	11
2B:					
Moose Jaw	6.7	62.5	42.2	3	11
Regina	8.8	71.1	40.9	4	11
Francis	..	..	..	..	..
Indian Head	4.4	64.9	44.1	3	11
3AS:					
Ormiston	–	70.6	42.2	3	11
Cardross	2.0	40.7	46.4	3	11
Rock Glen	1.6	100.7	67.7	3	10
3AN:					
Coderre	(3)	57.2	38.0	3	11
Chaplin	13.6	46.1	34.8	6	12
3BS:					
Shaunavon	2.8	62.1	37.0	5	11
Aneroid	0.8	84.1	41.1	6	11
3BN:					
Swift Current	2.9	60.8	41.0	6	11
Pennant	1.5	40.4	39.4	7	11
Elrose	3.8	48.0	33.6	7	11
4A:					
Maple Creek	6.3	60.6	40.2	7	12
Consul	10.2	53.5	42.4	5	10
4B:					
Leader	3.2	60.1	36.1	6	12
5A:					
Balcarres	..	..	..	..	..
Lipton	6.2	66.1	43.2	4	11
Yorkton	3.0	39.8	40.0	3	10
Atwater	–	23.3	42.8	1	10

See footnote(s) at end of table.
Voir note(s) à la fin du tableau.

TABLE 2 Precipitation and Temperature Data, Prairie Provinces(1) – Continued

TABLEAU 2 Données sur les précipitations et la température provinces des Prairies(1) – suite

Province and crop district – Station Province et district agricole – Station	Precipitation – Précipitations Week ending 8 a.m. May 14, 1979 Semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai, 1979	Total since April 1 Total depuis le 1er avril	Normal since April 1 Normales depuis le 1er avril	Mean temperature week ending 8 a.m. May 14 Température moyenne semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai 1979	Normal Normale
	mm			°C	
Saskatchewan – Concluded – fin:					
5B:					
Wynyard	4.1	31.2	39.9	3	9
Foam Lake	4.0	42.2	39.6	3	10
Kuroki	1.5	44.2	43.4	3	9
Kamsack, Cote	2.6	27.0	35.8	3	10
6A:					
Davidson	6.6	43.7	40.4	5	11
Strasbourg	15.0	57.4	44.0	5	10
Watrous	2.0	26.8	44.6	5	10
6B:					
Harris	..	39.5(2)	..	..	..
Outlook	2.0	48.1	32.5	6	12
Saskatoon	1.0	45.4	35.1	4	11
Elbow	(3)	46.6	39.4	5	11
Tugaske	2.0	44.1	42.5	6	11
Dundurn	6.0	50.9	35.8	2	11
7A:					
Alsask	..	29.0(2)	..	..	..
Kindersley	4.2	33.8	30.5	7	11
Rosetown	2.8	33.4	37.0	6	11
7B:					
Macklin	2.0	21.0	32.2	7	11
Denzil	1.6	19.5	38.0	6	11
Scott	1.7	43.6	36.6	6	10
Biggar	0.8	33.0	36.4	6	11
8A:					
Hudson Bay	10.1	34.4	42.4	2	9
Prairie River	2.8	32.4	42.6	2	9
Nipawin	–	32.2	42.5	4	10
8B:					
Humboldt	3.0	11.2	33.1	4	10
Melfort	(3)	18.1	37.9	4	10
9A:					
North Battleford	1.0	42.8	34.3	7	11
Prince Albert	–	34.4	38.7	5	10
9B:					
Meadow Lake	3.5	39.5	35.0	6	9
Waseca	..	..	..	..	..
AVERAGE – MOYENNE	4.0	51.2	41.1	4.4	10.6

See footnote(s) at end of table.
Voir note(s) à la fin du tableau.

TABLE 3 Precipitation and Temperature Data, Prairie Provinces(1) — Concluded

TABLEAU 3 Données sur les précipitations et la température provinces des Prairies(1) — fin

Province and crop district — Station Province et district agricole — Station	Precipitation — Précipitations Week ending 8 a.m. May 14, 1979 Semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai, 1979	Total since April 1 Total depuis le 1er avril	Normal since April 1 Normale depuis le 1er avril	Mean temperature week ending 8 a.m. May 14 Température moyenne semaine se terminant à 8 h le 14 mai 1979	Normal Normale
	mm			°C	
Alberta:					
1:					
Empress	3.0	42.1	20.7	3	12
Foremost	1.0	98.9	42.8	8	12
Manyberries	3.2	81.9	44.3	7	11
Medicine Hat	0.8	54.5	40.9	9	12
2:					
Brooks	3.2	57.3	38.0	7	11
Gleichen	2.6	50.8	48.0	6	11
Vauxhall	1.4	43.7	38.7	7	11
Raymond	..	..	..	..	..
Lethbridge	0.7	80.8	56.8	7	11
Elnora	..	28.2(2)	..	..	..
Queenstown	..	67.8(2)	..	..	..
3:					
Calgary	4.6	58.4	50.4	6	9
Cardston	—	60.2	66.1	6	10
Pincher Creek	2.2	110.2	79.7	6	9
Fort MacLeod	3.1	60.9	57.9	6	11
Claresholm	..	..	..	..	..
High River	20.4	86.7	66.2	5	9
Olds	19.9	107.9	47.3	6	9
4:					
Alliance	1.0	32.1	32.4	6	10
Coronation	(3)	30.7	34.6	6	10
Hughenden	2.0	11.2	32.3	6	11
Lloydminster	5.0	44.0	35.5	7	10
Stettler	(3)	30.1	35.5	6	10
Vegreville	5.2	37.6	32.2	7	10
Ranfurly	4.2	32.0	36.6	8	11
Vermilion	3.0	33.2	33.6	7	10
5:					
Edmonton	(3)	41.6	36.9	7	11
Lacombe	2.9	28.7	47.1	7	10
Red Deer	2.6	48.2	44.2	7	10
Rocky Mountain House	5.9	55.9	58.9	6	9
Gwynne	6.8	40.2	44.5	7	10
6:					
Campsie	1.0	42.5	39.2	7	9
Edson	8.4	56.7	53.0	5	8
Elk Point	1.8	38.8	35.0	7	9
Whitecourt	9.4	69.7	49.5	6	9
7:					
Beaverlodge	1.0	36.9	39.9	7	9
Chipewyan	—	28.0	25.0	5	9
Ft. Vermilion	1.0	34.0	30.6	8	9
Grande Prairie	2.0	26.1	37.7	8	9
High Prairie	..	..	..	..	..
Peace River	4.0	19.8	28.0	8	9
AVERAGE — MOYENNE	3.7	50.3	42.8	6.6	10.0

(1) Source: Atmospheric Environment Service, Environment Canada. — Service de l'environnement atmosphérique, environnement Canada.
(2) Incomplete; not included in average. — Incomplet; non compris dans la moyenne.
(3) Trace
.. Figures not available. — Nombres indisponibles.
— Nil or zero. — Néant ou zéro.