

Agriculture Newsletter



State Crop Situation

By Eugene Terhune, County Extension Agent—Staff Chair

Eugene Terhune
County Extension
Agent – Staff Chair

May 18, 2008

Farmers were able to get into the fields last week and make some progress planting their crops.

Cooler temperatures at night, however, had an impact on crop growth.

Corn producers usually have their entire crop planted by now, but this year there was still 4 percent left to plant as of the end of last week. Corn emergence increased 13 percent to 90 percent emerged, which put corn emergence about three weeks behind last year's crop and two weeks behind the 5-year average. Most of the corn crop was in good to excellent condition. Farmers were sidedressing corn when field conditions allowed.

Cotton producers planted an additional 13 percent of the crop last week. Cotton emerged at 44 percent and was 23 percent behind last year and 12 percent behind the 5-year average.

Rice planted reached 75 percent but was still about two weeks behind last year and three weeks behind the 5-year average.

Sorghum producers planted 10 percent of the crop last week to reach 71 percent. Sorghum emerged increased 23 percent to reach 53 percent by the end of the

week, which put sorghum emergence 39 percent and 27 percent behind last year and the 5-year average, respectively.

Both rice and sorghum were in mostly fair to good condition. Soybean farmers planted an additional 7 percent of the crop last week to reach 30 percent planted. The soybean crop was 21 percent emerged by May 18, 11 percent behind the 2007 crop and 15 percent behind the 5-year average.

All of the winter wheat crop was reported headed and was in mostly fair to good condition. Farmers were applying fertilizer and herbicides to crops when conditions allowed.

Low temperatures ranged from 35 degrees Fahrenheit in Gilbert to 49 degrees Fahrenheit in North Little Rock. High temperatures ranged from 79 degrees Fahrenheit in Fayetteville and Harrison to 91 degrees Fahrenheit in Fort Smith.

Topsoil moisture supplies were 57 adequate and 43 percent surplus. Subsoil moisture supplies were 61 percent adequate and 39 percent surplus.

The number of days suitable for field work was 4.3.

Inside this Issue

State Crop Situation 1

Wheat Harvest Cost 2
Estimates

Wheat Desiccation 3

Woodruff County Extension
Service
502 North Third Street
Room 122
Augusta, AR 72006
Phone 870-347-2556

WHEAT HARVESTING COST ESTIMATES by Scott Stiles, Extension

The following provides estimated costs for combining, using grain carts, and hauling grain. These estimates could be useful for determining custom rates and for analyzing machinery costs on farms. Costs include overhead (depreciation and interest only) repairs, fuel and labor. Charging custom rates at estimated total costs should cover costs *but will not generate profits*. Adding 5 to 15 percent to estimated costs is appropriate when determining custom rates. Table 1 shows costs of combining wheat, operating a grain cart and hauling grain.

Table 1. Summary of Wheat Harvesting Costs

Combining:	Estimated Total Costs	Custom Rate (+10% over Total Costs)
18' header width / (240 hp)	\$ 24.36	\$26.80/acre
22' header width / (240 hp)	\$ 19.98	\$21.98/acre
25' header width / (275 hp)	\$ 20.14	\$22.16/acre
30' header width / (275 hp)	\$ 16.93	\$18.62/acre
Grain Hauling	.20 cents per bushel	.22 cents per bushel
Grain Cart:		
500 bu.	\$ 3.02	\$3.32/acre
700 bu.	\$ 2.51	\$2.76/acre

Cost Estimates

Formulas published by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers are used in calculating costs for combines and grain carts. All combine costs are based on buying a new combine and holding the machinery for 8 years. Table 2 lists other variables used in calculating operating costs.

Table 2. Factors Used in Calculating Variable Costs

Diesel fuel	\$4.10	Per gallon
Labor	\$10.21	Per hour

Combine Size and Costs

Costs shown in Table 1 illustrate the per acre cost differences based on various header widths and combine horsepower. Generally, per acre costs decrease as combine size and header width increase, given that acres harvested also increase.

Per acre cost estimates are provided for two different size grain carts. These costs are estimated based on 200 hours of annual use and a 12-year useful life for the grain cart. Per acre costs will vary based on the amount of use of the grain cart. A MFWD tractor with approximately 190 horsepower is used for this operation.

Grain Hauling Costs

Hauling costs are estimated for moving grain from the field to commercial storage. Hauling costs will vary depending on the miles between the field and storage.

Wheat Desiccation at Harvest

By Eugene Terhune, County Extension Agent – Staff Chair

In the past, Arkansas has obtained a section 18 during wet years for sodium chlorate use in wheat desiccation. A few years back the EPA said no more. Bob Scott, Extension Weed Specialist, wanted us to relay this information to our clientele and let them know that this will not be available in 2008.

Both Roundup and Aim are listed in the MP 44 as pre-harvest options in wheat. Both need to be applied at least 7 days before harvest. Roundup should be applied after the hard dough stage (30 percent moisture or less). Aim is listed mainly for morningglory desiccation at a use rate of 1.0 oz/A with 1 percent crop oil concentrate. Roundup would be more versatile, targeting annual broad leaf, and grass weeds, johnsongrass and non-resistant horseweed. Use rate is 1lb/A of active chemical per acre. Neither of which will do much to the primary weeds found at harvest in wheat.