



K-STATE
Research and Extension

Extension Agronomy

eUpdate

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These e-Updates are a regular weekly item from K-State Extension Agronomy and Kathy Gehl, Agronomy eUpdate Editor. All of the Research and Extension faculty in Agronomy will be involved as sources from time to time. If you have any questions or suggestions for topics you'd like to have us address in this weekly update, contact Kathy Gehl, 785-532-3354 kgehl@ksu.edu, or Dalas Peterson, Extension Agronomy State Leader and Weed Management Specialist 785-532-0405 dpeterso@ksu.edu.

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1. Planting progress update for corn and soybeans in Kansas

Corn and soybean planting in Kansas and the rest of the Corn Belt is proceeding following one of the slowest rates ever recorded. For Kansas, corn planted progress moved from 79 to 89 percent from June 3 to 10 (USDA Kansas Crop Progress and Condition Report). Similar progress has been observed for Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota. However, Ohio, South Dakota, Indiana, and Illinois are still quite behind (Figure 1, left panel). For soybeans planted, progress moved from 26 to 48 percent for Kansas, still well behind the 88 percent from 2018 and from 69 percent as the 5-year average (Figure 1, right panel). There has been similar progress for Nebraska, Minnesota, and Iowa but large departures from planted progress for Ohio, South Dakota, Indiana, and Illinois.

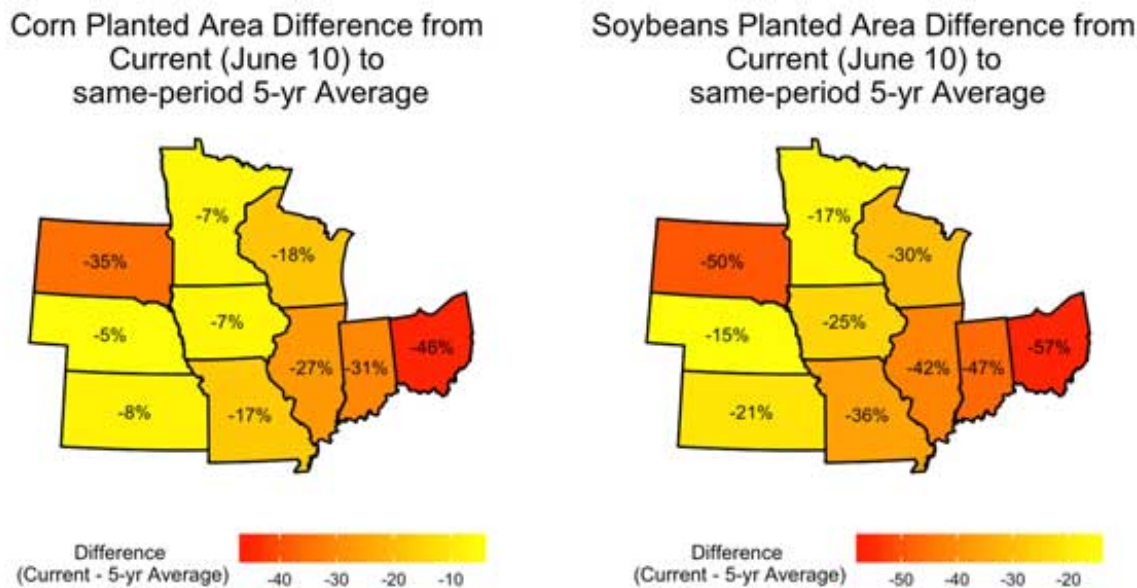


Figure 1. Progress of corn (right) and soybeans (left) planted area (%) from USDA Crop Progress Report, June 10. Graphic created by Leonardo Bastos, K-State Research and Extension.

Saturated soil conditions impacted the expected number of suitable working days in a given period of time. Knowing how many suitable working days might be available to conduct fieldwork for a given crop operation impacts crop choice and machinery investment decisions. The most active planting dates for corn are usually between April 15 and May 15 (20th to 80th percentile, respectively) and for soybeans and grain sorghum planting, those dates will go from May 15 to June 20 (20th to 80th percentile, respectively) (2010 USDA NASS handbook).

For Kansas, since the week of April 29 (Figure 2), the number of days suitable for fieldwork has been declining, presenting at the lowest point as less than 2 days suitable to conduct any fieldwork, which in many situations was potentially only 1 day before the next rain event. However, during the last two weeks, the number of days suitable for fieldwork has shown an increasing trend, currently

peaking close to the highest for Kansas as compared to the same point for the last week of April. Overall, close to 5 days suitable for fieldwork were available for most of the states during the last week of the Crop Progress Report from June 3 to 10.

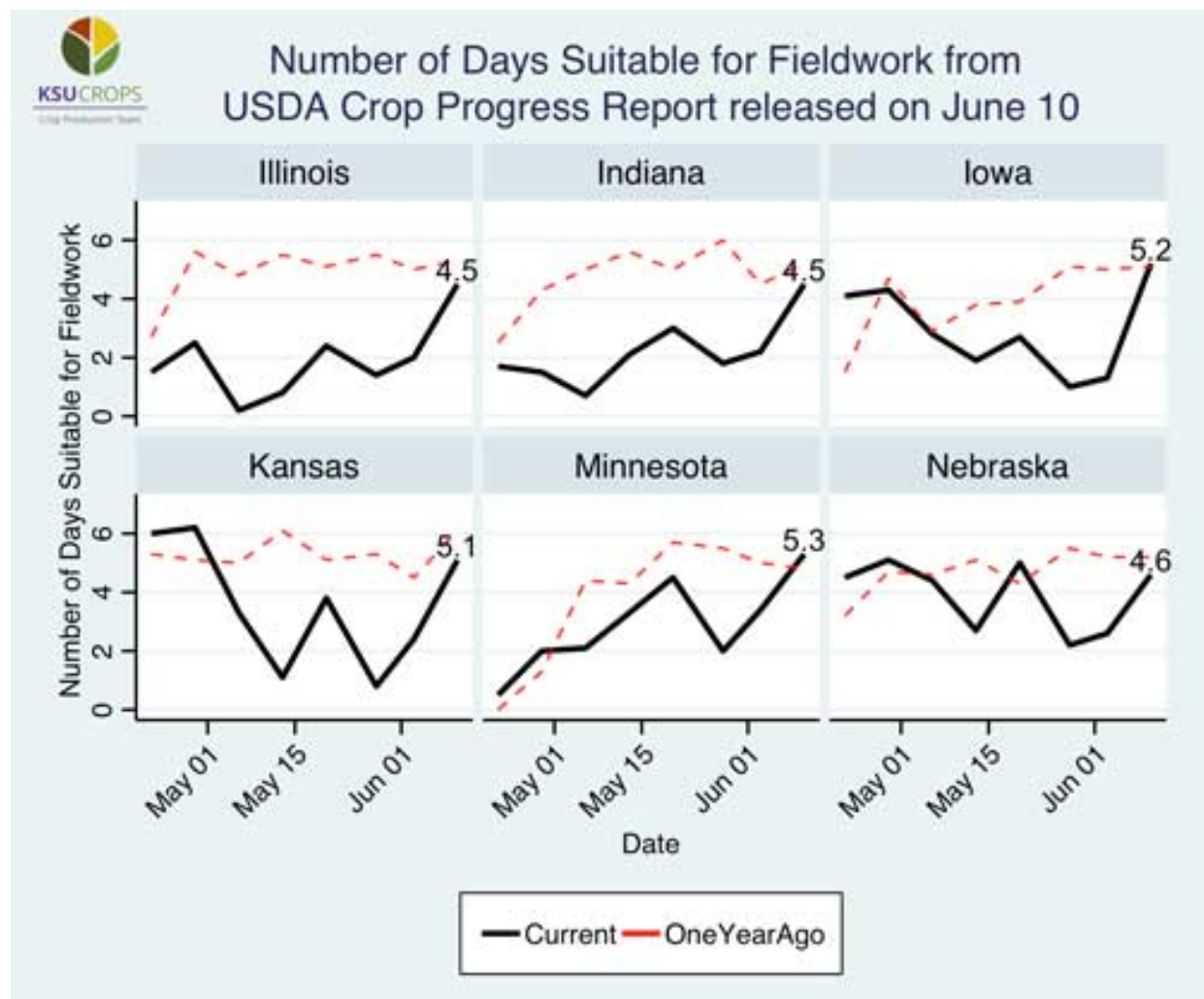


Figure 2. Number of days suitable for fieldwork from USDA Crop Progress Report, June 10, 2019. Graphic created by Leonardo Bastos, K-State Research and Extension.

As mentioned earlier, the number of days suitable for fieldwork approached 5 days available per week, one of the highest points compared with the entire planting window experienced during this growing season. In parallel, the topsoil moisture conditions across many states is reflecting a reduction in the surplus category, with less fields presenting standing water. Still, the states presenting the largest delay in corn planted progress are also the ones documenting a close to or more than 40% of surplus of topsoil moisture conditions. For Kansas, the topsoil moisture condition, reflected as an average of the state-level cropland area, decreased over the last week in the surplus category (Figure 3). The latter reflects the break in the weather conditions experienced during the last week. This break helped farmers catch up with planting new crop and re-planting some bad looking areas (poor stands, well below optimal plant population, etc.).

Topsoil Moisture Condition Classes and Percentages from USDA Crop Progress Report released on June 10

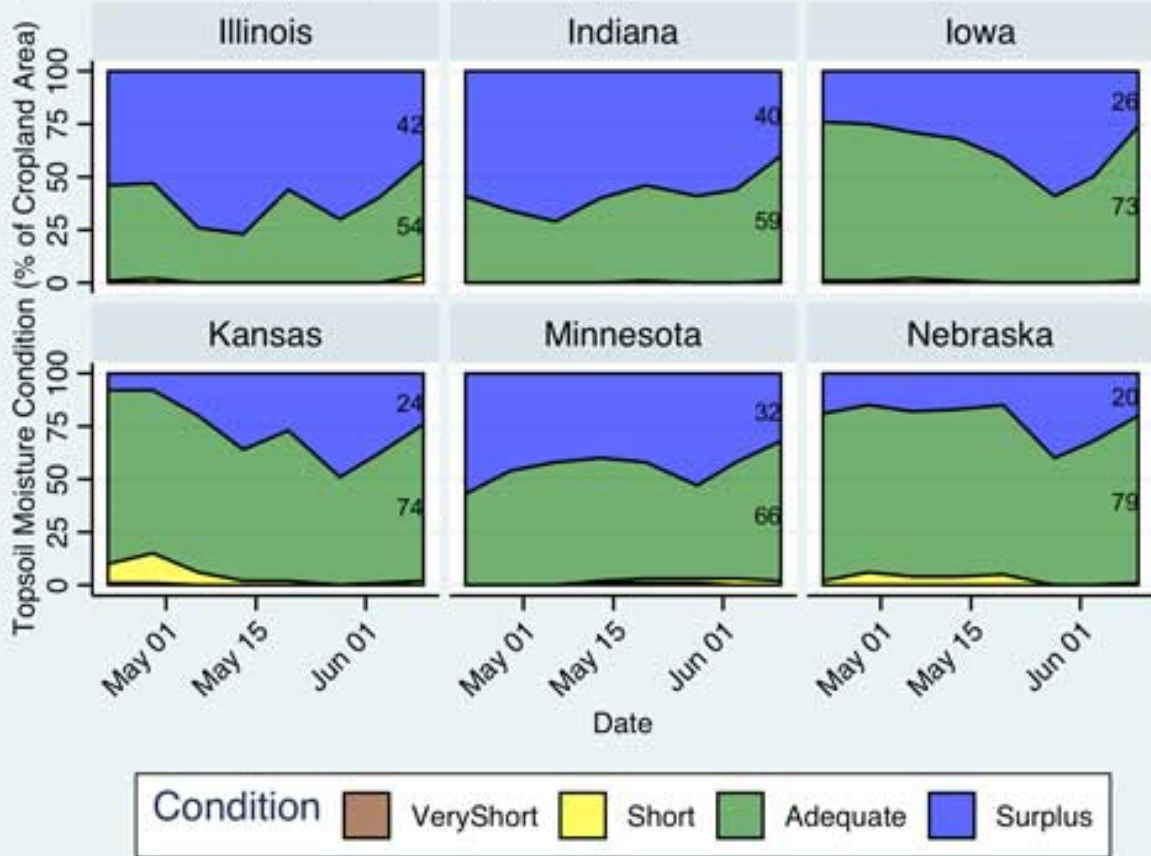


Figure 3. Topsoil moisture conditions classes and percentages from USDA Crop Progress Report, June 10, 2019. Graphic created by Leonardo Bastos, K-State Research and Extension.

In summary, both corn and soybeans are still trailing their respective five-year and 2018 progress averages last week, with corn catching up but soybeans well behind. For Kansas, grain sorghum is also behind 25 percent compared to 64 percent in 2018 last and 50 percent for the 5-year average.

Depending on your location, delayed planting will be a normal situation considering the weather already experienced during this spring. Crop insurance considerations and the main agronomic practices to implant a successful crop will be critical factors guiding our 2019 planting decisions.

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