

IOWA PRELIMINARY MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – SEPTEMBER 2008

General Summary. September temperatures averaged 63.6° or 0.7° above normal while precipitation totaled 4.10 inches or 0.69 inches above normal. This ranks as the 67th warmest and 47th wettest September among 136 years of records.

Temperatures. September began with two very warm and humid days on the 1st and 2nd. Ankeny reached 91° on the 1st and Keosauqua 92° on the 2nd. However, a strong cold front pushed through the state on the 2nd and temperatures fell as low as 40° at Spencer by the morning of the 3rd. There was no more 90° weather for the remainder of the month. Colder than normal weather prevailed for most of the period from the 3rd through the 16th. Sibley recorded the lowest temperature of the month with a 32° low on the morning of the 15th. However there were no additional freezes during the month, very welcome news as many late planted crops needed much more time for full maturation. Temperatures averaged above normal every day from the 17th through the 29th with Sioux City reporting the highest temperature during the period with an 88° maximum on the 26th. Statewide temperatures averaged 3.7° below normal for the first one-half of the month and 5.0° above normal for the second half of September.

Cooling Degree Day Totals. Home air conditioning requirements, as estimated by cooling degree day totals, averaged 40% less than last September and 10% less than normal. Cooling requirements so far this year are running 29% less than last year and 16% less than normal. This has easily been the mildest air conditioning season since 2004.

Precipitation. The relatively dry weather pattern that began in some parts of Iowa in July continued across northern Iowa in September with the far northeastern corner of the state now classified as being in moderate drought. However, three tropical weather systems brought abundant moisture to southeastern Iowa during the first one-half of the month. The remnants of Hurricane Gustav, which made landfall in Louisiana, brought rain to about the southeast one-half of the state on the 3rd-4th with up to 2.5 inches of rain in the extreme southeast corner of Iowa. Tropical Storm Lowell, an eastern Pacific storm, brought copious amounts of moisture across northwestern Mexico and rain to the southeast two-thirds of Iowa on the 12th-13th. Rainfall associated with Lowell caused substantial flooding in southeastern Iowa where more than 7 inches fell in Van Buren, Henry and Lee counties. Finally, the remnants of Hurricane Ike, which made landfall in Texas, brought an inch or two of rain to the extreme southeast corner of Iowa on the 13th-14th. Preliminary monthly precipitation totals varied from only 1.37 inches at Mason City to 11.58 inches at Oakland Mills in Henry County. At Donnellson, where 11.24 inches of rain fell, this was the wettest September among 66 years of record (old record 11.15 in 1961).

Harry J. Hillaker, State Climatologist
Iowa Dept. of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
Wallace State Office Bldg.; Des Moines, IA 50319
Telephone: (515) 281-8981

E-Mail: Harry.Hillaker@IowaAgriculture.gov