

IOWA WEATHER SUMMARY – SEPTEMBER 2009

General Summary. Iowa temperatures averaged 63.4° or 0.5° above normal while precipitation averaged 1.75 inches or 1.66 inches below normal. This ranks as the 66th coolest and 19th driest September among 137 years of records.

Temperatures. September was an exceptionally pleasant month with very little fluctuation in temperature. Rock Rapids reported the highest temperature of the month with an 88° reading on the 18th. Only two other times has the temperature failed to exceed 88° somewhere in Iowa during September (87° in 1992 and 88° in 1902). Temperatures also failed to drop very low. The lowest readings of the month were 32° temperatures at Onawa on the 29th and at Guthrie Center, Little Sioux and Swea City on the 30th. The overall 56 degree range in temperatures from the 32° low to the 88° high is the second smallest range of the historical record during September (only 54° range in 1987 from 36° to 90°). The lack of a hard freeze was very welcome news for crops that were well behind typical development owing to the very cool summer and/or late planting. Only one day, the 1st, averaged more than six degrees from the daily normal. Temperatures averaged below normal from the 1st to the 6th and again for the last three days of the month.

Cooling Degree Days. Home air conditioning requirements, as estimated by cooling degree day totals, averaged 48% less than last September and 54% less than normal. Air conditioning requirements for the entire cooling season have averaged 25% less than last year and 40% less than normal. A milder air conditioning season has been recorded only once (1992) since 1915.

Precipitation. Very dry conditions prevailed over most of Iowa during September with much of the eastern three-fourths of the state seeing almost no rain for the first 20 days of the month. Showers and thunderstorms brought rain to far western Iowa on the 3rd and 11th-12th. However, rain fell nearly statewide on the 21st-22nd and 24th-25th with several inches falling from north central into southeast Iowa. Monthly rain totals varied from only 0.16 inches at Storm Lake to 4.93 inches at Eldora. The Storm Lake total tied (with 1940) for the driest September among 117 years of record at that location while at Denison (0.24") this was the driest September among 115 years of records (old record 0.28 in 1940). Year-to-date precipitation amounts are generally below normal over northwest Iowa and above normal over the southeast.

Severe Weather. There were no reports of severe weather in Iowa during September. Not since 1976 has Iowa recorded a quiet September for severe storms.

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