

## IOWA PRELIMINARY MONTHLY WEATHER SUMMARY – APRIL 2010

General Summary. Temperatures averaged 55.3° or 6.8° above normal while precipitation averaged 3.64 inches or 0.31 inches above normal. This was 38<sup>th</sup> wettest April and ties with 1981 as the 5<sup>th</sup> warmest April among 138 years of state records.

Temperatures. Mild weather was the rule for most of April as below normal temperatures were confined to only six days during the month. This extends the warm weather pattern that began on March 6 as only 10 of the past 56 days have been cooler than usual. The warmest weather came on the very first day of the month when Little Sioux reached 89° with every point in the state reaching the 80's for the first time since August. On the other extreme the Spencer Airport recorded the lowest temperature of the month with a reading of 21° on the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup>. A few northeastern Iowa locations had a freeze as late as April 28; however, some south central and southeast locations have not seen a freeze since March 29. This has been Iowa's warmest start to the spring season since 1985.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 46% less than last April and 40% less than normal. Degree day totals for the entire heating season (since July 1, 2009) are running 2% less than last season and 1% less than normal.

Precipitation. Rainfall was widespread and frequent from the 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 7<sup>th</sup>. Locally heavy rain fell over northeastern Iowa on the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> with 4.14 inches at Elkader. However, a statewide average of only 0.45 inches of rain fell from the 8<sup>th</sup> through the 21<sup>st</sup>, allowing a large amount of fieldwork to take place. However, a small area from near Spencer to Mason City saw heavy rain on the 12<sup>th</sup>. The greatest rains of the month came on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> with south central and southeast Iowa receiving widespread 2 to 3 inches totals. Monthly rain totals varied from 1.43 inches at Sioux City to 6.68 inches at Elkader. Following the 7<sup>th</sup> snowiest winter on record, snow was noticeably absent in April with just a little snow briefly mixed with rain over southwestern Iowa on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The combination of much warmer than usual weather, and the extended streak of mostly dry weather at mid-month, allowed corn planting to proceed at the most rapid pace on record. Iowa Agricultural Statistics reported that 68% of the intended corn acres had been planted as of April 25. This is a truly amazing development considering that Iowa entered spring with super-saturated soils and deep snow cover.

Severe Weather. The first severe weather episode of the season arrived on the 2<sup>nd</sup> when high winds were reported from nine counties from south central to northeast Iowa. Severe storms were also reported on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. The most widespread event came on the 5<sup>th</sup> when high winds or hail were reported from 19 counties. No tornadoes have been confirmed in Iowa so far in 2010 for the slowest start to the season since 2000.

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