

PRELIMINARY IOWA WEATHER SUMMARY – NOVEMBER 2013

General Summary. Iowa temperatures averaged 33.7° or 2.9° below normal while precipitation totaled 1.63 inches or 0.42 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 37th coolest and 67th wettest November among 141 years of records.

Temperatures. A string of nine consecutive warmer than normal Novembers came to an end in 2013. The season's first subzero temperature was recorded at Spencer Airport on the morning of the 12th with a low of -1°. This was Iowa's lowest temperature for so early in the winter season since November 4, 1991. There were another five dates between the 22nd and 29th with lows falling to zero or lower somewhere in the state. This equaled the number of zero degree or lower dates in the previous twelve Novembers combined. Stanley reported the month's lowest temperature with a -5° reading on the 27th. On the other end of the spectrum temperatures reached into the seventies twice. Clarinda was the hot spot with a 72° maximum on the 16th while a handful of extreme eastern Iowa locations reached 71° on the 17th. Overall this was Iowa's coldest November since 2000.

Heating Degree Day Totals. Home heating requirements, as estimated by heating degree day totals, averaged 9% greater than normal and 21% greater than last November. Season-to-date totals (since July 1) are running 2% greater than normal and 3% greater than one year ago.

Precipitation. The month's largest precipitation event came on the 5th-6th when 2 to 4 inches of snow fell across extreme northwest Iowa and rain fell elsewhere. Over the southwest and northwest corners of the state this one event accounted for most of the month's precipitation. Light snow fell over all but far southwest Iowa on Veteran's Day. Showers and thunderstorms brought rain to all but extreme northwest Iowa on the 16th-17th. Light snow fell statewide on the 21st-22nd with greatest amounts around two inches falling from Audubon to Boone. Finally parts of central and east central Iowa saw snow on the 25th with a narrow band of 2 to 5 inches accumulating along the U.S. Highway 20 corridor from Iowa Falls to Dubuque. Monthly precipitation totals varied from 0.30 inches at Rock Rapids to 3.16 inches at Oelwein. Above normal totals were mostly confined to northeast Iowa. Monthly snow totals varied from only trace amounts at many points in southern Iowa to 8.0 inches at Strawberry Point. There was a statewide average of 1.5 inches of snow. This was 1.2 inches below normal and ranks 57th lowest November total among 127 years of records.

Fall Summary. Temperatures over the three fall months averaged 50.4° or 0.2° above normal while precipitation totaled 6.40 inches or 1.63 inches less than normal. This ranks as the 60th coolest and 51st driest fall among 141 years of records. According to USDA National Agricultural Statistics reports subsoil moisture levels as of late November remain drier than normal for this time of year. However, current levels are much better than at this time last year over northern and western Iowa while being slightly better than year-ago levels across south central and southeast Iowa. Soils were occasionally frozen in mid and late November but will likely freeze for the duration of

the winter season by December 5 with a prolonged period of unseasonably cold weather on the way. This season's freeze-up is coming about a week earlier than normal and is exacerbated by the lack of snow cover which would otherwise help insulate the soil from the cold air. Significant soil moisture recharge is unlikely to occur until the soil thaws next spring (usually about mid-March).

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