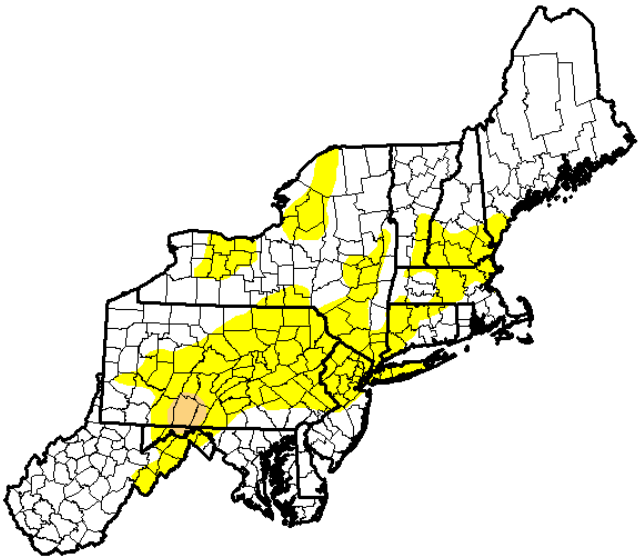
Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Northern New York Regional Ag Team

NNY Regional Ag Team **19 May, 2016**

Ear to the Ground

By Kitty O'Neil, Ph.D, kitty.oneil@cornell.edu

- Portions of St. Lawrence, Jefferson and Lewis Counties are considered abnormally dry. Abnormally Dry (D0) areas persist in southern portions of New Hampshire and Vermont, southeastern Maine, western Massachusetts, and Upstate New York where short-term (30-day) precipitation deficits exist and stream flows are below normal. Precipitation accumulations during the past week ranged from 0.5 to 2" with greatest accumulations in northern Maine and New Hampshire. Average temperatures were slightly above-normal in northern portions and two-to-five degrees below-normal in southern portions of the region.



U.S. Drought Monitor
Northeast

May 17, 2016
(Released Thursday, May. 19, 2016)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	67.19	32.81	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 5/10/2016	67.79	32.21	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 2/16/2016	71.66	28.34	3.27	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 12/29/2015	62.10	37.90	6.60	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 9/29/2015	42.41	57.59	9.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 5/19/2015	36.04	63.96	22.74	0.00	0.00	0.00

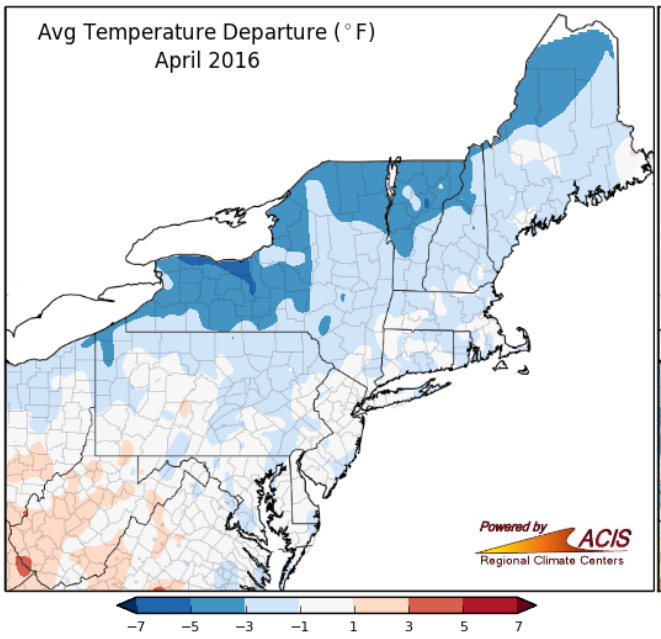
Intensity:
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Moderate Drought
D2 Severe Drought
D3 Extreme Drought
D4 Exceptional Drought

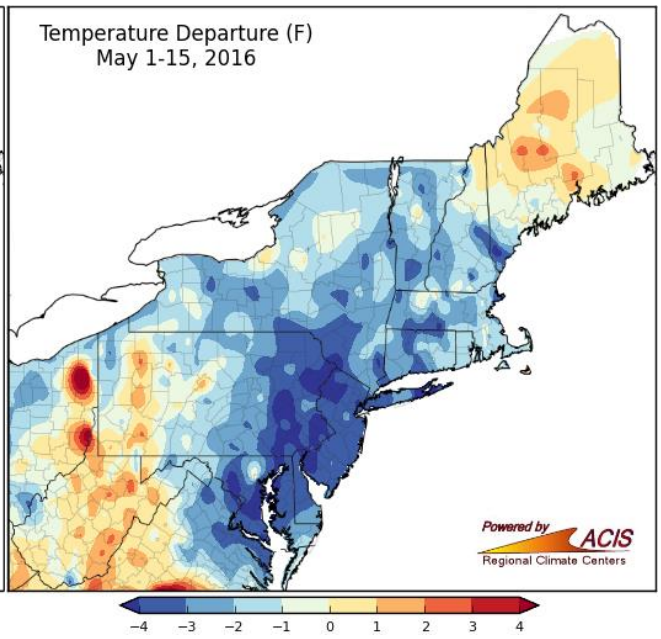
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

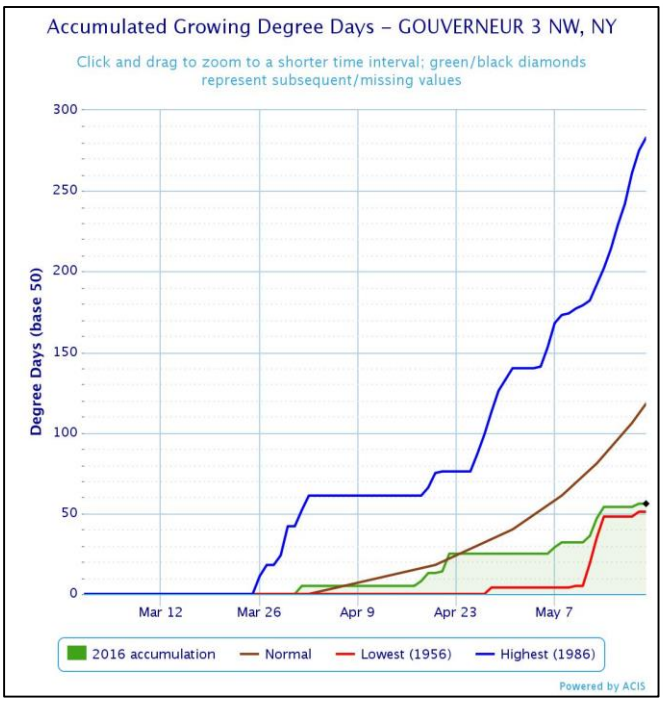
Author:
David Simeral
Western Regional Climate Center

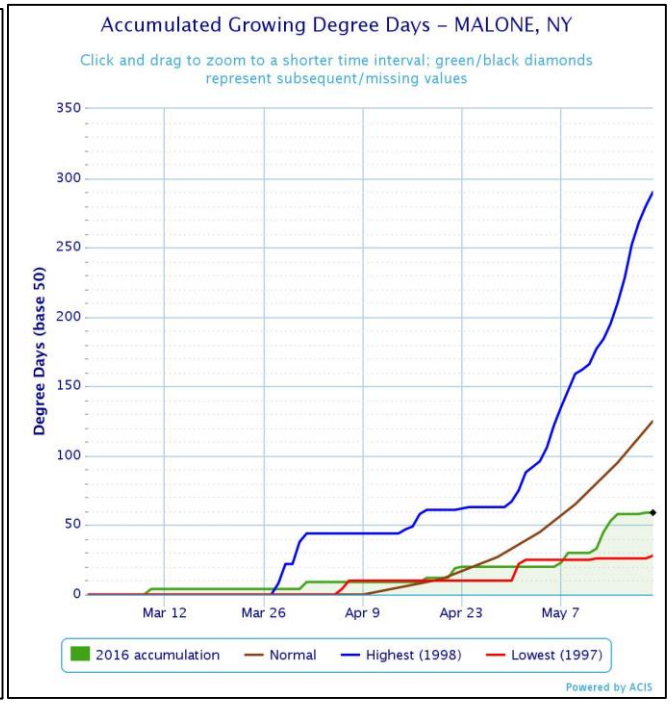
http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

- April and May temperatures have been abnormally cool. The maps below show the temperature departure from normal for April and May 2016 in the Northeast region. Average daily temps were 3 to 5 °F below normal for much of the North Country during April. May has also been below average temperature so far for much of the North Country, though not by quite the same margin. To see what this means for GDD accumulation, examine the 2 line graphs below the maps. They depict accumulated base 50 GDD from March 1 through May 20 this season for Gouverneur (left) and Malone (right). On each graph the 2016 accumulation is below the normal and for Gouverneur, the 2016 accumulation is close to the lowest GDD accumulation ever, which occurred in 1956 for that station.







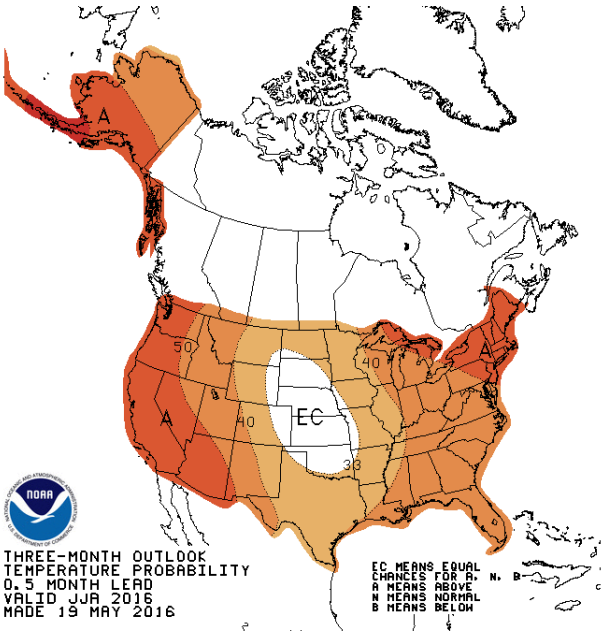


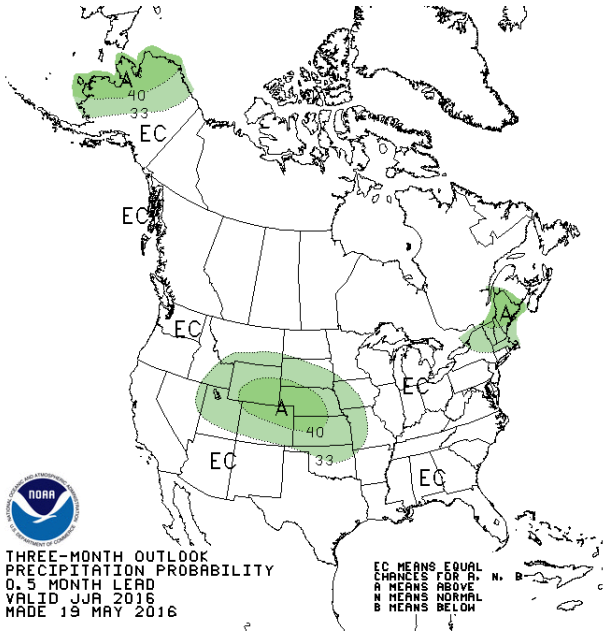
- <u>The abnormally cool spring has been good for cool-season grass growth, but alfalfa is behind normal production in most areas.</u> Alfalfa growth is generally stunted this spring, while grass is growing well and maturing normally, but may be shorter than normal. Orchardgrass and other early heading grasses are in boot stage in many locations now. Jerry Cherney recommends that you think about this, along with the % grass in each field, when planning first cutting:
  - > 50% grass in the stand: Harvest like a grass stand and ignore the alfalfa.
  - <25% grass in the stand: Wait for a little more alfalfa growth (more like a PEAQ chart), to minimize chances of damaging alfalfa stand. Grass will be more mature than normal.
  - 25-50% grass: Something in between. Harvest a little earlier than normal for alfalfa.

  Alfalfa height probably will not have a normal relationship with NDF this year. Keep in mind that the alfalfa has continued to mature (increase in fiber, lignify) even if it is not growing upward much.

  In 2015, alfalfa was a few inches taller at this point than most of it is this year.

- General predictions for the Northeast for the next 2 weeks are for warmer than normal temperatures with continued dry weather.
- 3-Month outlook for the North Country includes warmer than normal rain. See the maps below.





- - Accumulations from April 1 to May 15, 2015 - -

	Precipitation, inches			GDD Base 50 °F		GDD Base 40 °F
	Total	DFN[1]	Days[2]	Total	DFN[1]	Total
Highmarket	5.77	-0.90	21	33	-29	213
Lowville	2.29	-2.44	21	57	-29	263
Watertown Int'l Airport	3.00	-1.13	19	87	+3	303
Fort Drum	3.66	-0.98	22	103	+1	334
Massena	2.79	-1.50	19	89	-13	288
Malone	4.70	+0.60	19	54	-1	229
Plattsburgh Int'l Airport	2.10	-2.29	19	85	-1	289
Tupper Lake	4.10	-0.83	23	39	0	208
Newcomb	4.93	-0.04	23	49	+15	211

[1] DFN = difference from normal; [2] precipitation days = number of days with ≥ 0.01" precipitation.

Additional resources:

1. Weekly Crop Progress & Condition Report. 2015. New York USDA-NASS.
2. Northeast Regional Climate Center
3. U.S. Drought Monitor

For more information about field crop and soil management, contact your local Cornell Cooperative Extension office or NNY Cornell University Cooperative Extension Regional Field Crops and Soils Specialists, Mike Hunter and Kitty O'Neil.

Kitty O'Neil
St. Lawrence County CCE Office, Canton
(315) 379- 9192 x253 or (315) 854-1218
kitty.oneil@cornell.edu

Mike Hunter
Jefferson County CCE Office, Watertown
(315) 788-8450
meh27@cornell.edu

Our Mission

"The Northern New York Regional Ag Team aims to improve the productivity and viability of agricultural industries, people and communities in Jefferson, Lewis, St. Lawrence, Franklin, Clinton and Essex Counties by promoting productive, safe, economically and environmentally sustainable management practices and by providing assistance to industry, government, and other agencies in evaluating the impact of public policies affecting the industry."

Contact us directly through our website: http://nnyrap.cce.cornell.edu

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities