



North Dakota

Monthly Climate Summary

May 2011

Precipitation:

Percent of normal precipitation ranged from approximately 70% to 300% (Figure 1. North Dakota State Climate Office). The western half of the state had the highest amounts with 200% to 300% of normal. Much of the eastern half ranged from 70% to 150%. The North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network (NDAWN) May rainfall totals ranged from 1.60 to 7.01 inches. The greatest daily rainfall events occurred between the 8th and 10th, 19th and 22nd, and the 27th through to the 31st.

According to the USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, North Dakota Field office the average planting date was May 7th which was 19 days later than 2010 and 16 days later than the previous five year average (2006-2010). Cool, wet conditions continued to hamper field work throughout May. Melting snow pack and heavy rains in eastern Montana and western North Dakota caused river levels to rise above the 100-year flood level. The residents of the flooded areas filled sand bags and built dikes to protect property. Bismarck and Mandan had short notice to prepare for flooding from a scheduled release of the Garrison Dam.

Temperature:

NDAWN May average air temperatures ranged from 49 °F to 55 °F. NDAWN departure from normal temperatures ranged from -1 °F to -5 °F (Figure 2. North Dakota State Climate Office). May is the sixth straight month of below average air temperatures for most of the state. Average daily air temperatures across the state hovered near 50 °F throughout most of May. According to data from the NDAWN weather station network, the first 2011 day a maximum air temperature of over 80 °F was measured in North Dakota was on the 30th in the southeastern part of the state. The hot humid temperature came on the doorstep of a large scale thunder storm that produced near hurricane force winds. The Fargo Hector International Airport measured a strongest gust of 72 mph. However, it is estimated from the damage that gusts could have been 90 to 100 mph. Straight-line winds in the Fargo-Moorhead metro area ripped up trees, knocked down power poles, and caused power outages. Some who lost power did not have it restored for over a day.

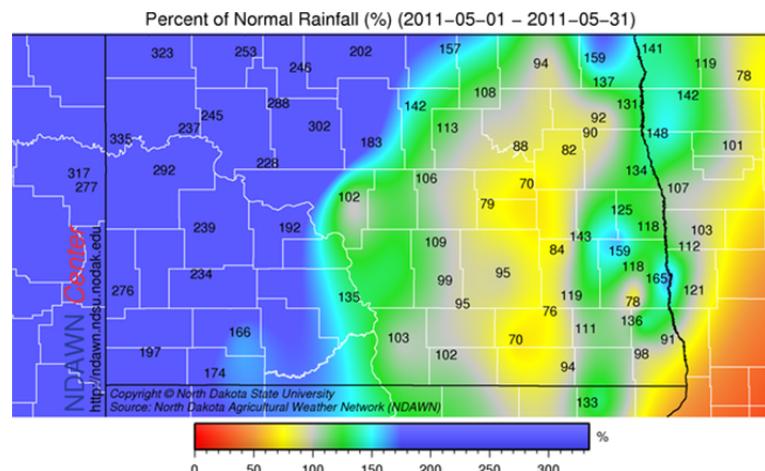


Figure 1. Precipitation Percent of Normal in May 2011 for North Dakota (North Dakota State Climate Office)

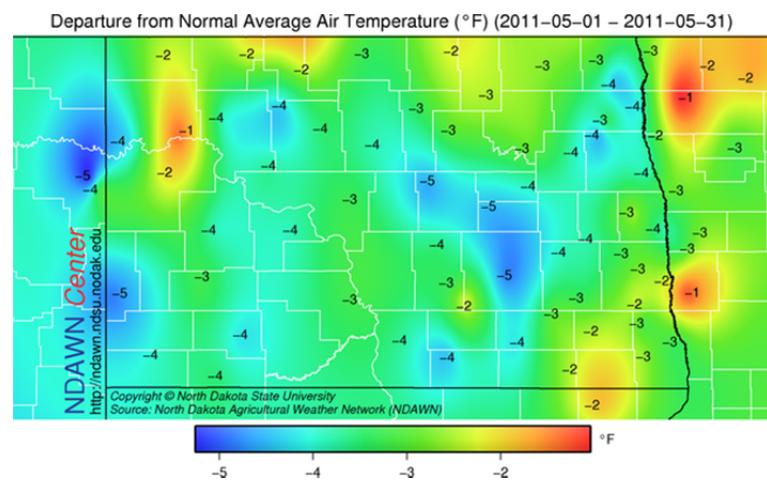


Figure 2. Temperature Departure from Normal in May 2011 for North Dakota (North Dakota State Climate Office)

The figure describes a map of North Dakota showing the departure from normal average air temperature in May 2011. The map uses a color scale ranging from blue (-5 °F) to red (-1 °F). Data values are labeled on the map. The western part of the state shows larger departures (around -4 to -5 °F), while the eastern part shows smaller departures (around -3 to -4 °F). The central part of the state also shows smaller departures. The map is titled "Departure from Normal Average Air Temperature (°F) (2011-05-01 – 2011-05-31)". The source is cited as "NDAWN Center http://ndawn.ndsu.nodak.edu Copyright © North Dakota State University Source: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network (NDAWN)".