



CYPRESS COUNTY

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COUNTY DECLARES AGRICULTURAL STATE OF DISASTER

DUNMORE, ALTA. – Recent rains came too late for many farmers, and Cypress County has now declared a local state of agricultural disaster for the fourth time in the past five years.

The Alberta Crop Report showed either poor (17.6 %) or fair (37 %) soil moisture ratings as of July 8 for the south part of the province. Earlier in the season, soil moisture was even worse. The June 17 report, for example, showed poor (35.8 %) and fair (39.6 %) conditions dominating the south region. Cypress County, in the southeastern part of the province, is regularly drier than areas further west.

“I know we had a bit of rain here yesterday, said Ward 8 Councillor Shane Hok, “(but) the amount of rain isn’t helping the crops. A lot of the crops are beyond help right now.”

Declaring a state of disaster allows producers to access provincial and federal relief programs.

“I have had numerous calls that we have to do something for them because it’s really dry out there,” noted Ward 1 Councillor Michelle McKenzie.

The county issued a fire ban June 27 due to extremely dry conditions, downgraded to an advisory today (July 15). Many municipalities in Alberta and Saskatchewan have already declared an agricultural state of disaster this year. Greenview, Pincher Creek, Maple Creek, and Fox Valley are among those who made similar announcements.

“The amount of rain that was just received in these crucial affected areas is not going to help save these crops by any means,” added Ward 2 Councillor Blaine Brost. “This will give them the opportunity to salvage some of these crops for feed, gives them an opportunity to make decisions best financially suited for them. Without doing this, it kind of has their hands tied.”

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