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# Québec Crop Report

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## Highlights

- The period from June 20 to July 3 was marked by typically summer conditions;
  - The harvesting of the first cut of hay and strawberries in the open field is underway in most regions and harvesting conditions are excellent;
  - A severe storm occurring on July 1 in the Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu area caused varying damage (market garden crops and apples);
  - There was some localized damage by heavy rain and very warm temperatures (to potatoes and market garden crops);
  - Plant growth has been accelerated: rapid ripening (strawberries);
  - A total of 1447 notices of damage were reported as of July 5, 2005, compared to 1316 last year at the same date.
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### Chronicle of Meteorological Conditions for the Period from June 20 to July 3

#### Week of June 20 to 26

Generally sunny weather and quite stable temperatures marked the first official week of summer. On June 25, the mercury reached between 30.0 and 34.0° C in the daytime, breaking records for heat in some places. However, on the night of June 22 to June 23 (and from June 21 to 22 in Abitibi-Témiscamingue), minimums drop below the 5° C mark in the centre and north of Québec. Some frosts were recorded locally in the more northern regions, the lowlands and mountainous sectors. In all, average weekly temperatures were from 1 to 2° C above normal in the south, centre and east of Québec, and up to 2° C above in the Abitibi-Témiscamingue region.

Some showers punctuated the first week of summer. On June 21, 24 and 25, summer storms were reported, sometimes accompanied by heavy rain, hail and high winds. Overall, there was an average rainfall of around 5 to 15 mm, over 1 to 3 days, and

up to 20 mm, over 1 to 2 days, in Abitibi-Témiscamingue.

#### Week of June 27 to July 3

Summer conditions also marked this week: there was a heat wave from June 27 to July 1, increasing humidity and cloud formation with violent weather events. On June 27 and 28, record high temperatures were reached with the mercury going above 30.2° C, and reaching 35.0° C in some places. The extreme heat and humidity caused storm-like conditions between June 27 and 29 and on July 1.

The storms of July 1 were accompanied by high winds in many places. In the Québec city area, wind caused damage to buildings and there were electrical shortages in several municipalities of the Côte-de-Beaupré, metro Québec and Portneuf regions. In the Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu sector, major storms with heavy rain and hail were reported in the municipalities of Saint-Rémi, Saint-Michel, Sherrington, Rougemont and Saint-Jean-

Baptiste, causing variable damage to certain crops.

To sum up, average temperatures were around 2 to 3° C above seasonal norms. Rainfall reached on average between 10 and 20 mm (over 1 to 3 days), except in the Québec, Victoriaville, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and La Prairie sectors where it varied on average between 30 and 40 mm (over 2 to 3 days). In certain localities of Charlevoix, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu and La Prairie, the storms left from 60 to 70 mm of rainfall.

### **Crop Conditions as of July 3**

Generally sunny and often windy conditions were beneficial for the harvesting of the first cut of hay, underway intensively in all regions.

The heat accelerated the ripening of strawberries and the crop is expected to be very good. However, the very warm temperatures caused fruit to ripen simultaneously, which may reduce the picking season by more or less two weeks. The harvesting of strawberries in the open fields, that got underway slowly in the week of June 20 in the Lanaudière, Saint-Hyacinthe, La Prairie and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu regions, increased around the Saint-Jean Baptiste holiday. The Lanaudière, Estrie, Mauricie and Centre-du-Québec regions followed suit during the same week-end. As for the Québec and Beauce regions, the harvest started on July 1. Exceptionally this year, it also started on July 1 in the outlying regions since the season got off to a very early start.

The harvesting of early potatoes for the fresh market got underway in Montérégie-Ouest (Saint-Michel-de-Napierville). The areas concerned are minor, but they should increase slightly over the coming week in that same region. Heavy rainfall between June 13 and 18 caused losses almost everywhere due to rotten seedlings and plant asphyxia in certain loam-type fields, more sensitive to excessive rain. There have also been reports of sunscald in certain more sensitive varieties, the result of the warm weather that followed that rainy period.

Plant growth over all was generally accelerated. There may however also have

been cases of excessive water and drought in certain places. For example, certain cases of asphyxia were reported in different vegetable fields, especially in low-lying areas and poorly drained soils. Despite the rain, certain soils dried out more quickly due to the warm dry weather. On lighter mineral soils and black earth, some drought conditions have been reported (water deficit).

The severe storm accompanied by episodes of hail occurring on July 1 in the Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu sector caused variable damage from one place to the next in fields of market garden crops (lettuce, onions, green onions, celery and sweet corn) and in apple orchards.

Note that the excessive rain of mid-June caused seeding dates to be extended for crop insurance coverage in some regions. As a result, the seeding deadline for field beans was extended from June 15 to 23 in the Trois-Rivières area. As for vegetables for processing, seeding deadlines were extended from June 24 to 28 for sweet corn and peas in the Drummondville, Nicolet, Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Saint-Hyacinthe and La Prairie sectors and again from June 28 to 30 for sweet corn in and around La Prairie.

### **Damage Notices**

As of July 5, 1447 notices of damage were reported, compared to 1316 for the same period in 2004. Of these notices of damage, 434 were related to coverage for cereal, grain corn and high-protein crops and for crops under the collective system, 155 to coverage for apples, 304 for vegetables (market garden crops: 146 and vegetables for processing: 158), 73 for honey (including 65 for the winter period, one mortality due to disease). Also, 380 notices of damage were reported for waterfowl (315 in 2004).

Payments made to date come to \$ 957,611, including \$729,858 for the winter period in honey coverage alone, \$154,710 for market garden crops, \$35,496 for cereals, \$17,365 for potatoes, \$13,511 for strawberries and \$6,671 for crops under the collective system (including \$6,057 for forage corn). As for waterfowl damage, \$204,188 has been paid to date.

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References: Statistics from the système d'information de gestion organisationnelle, La Financière agricole du Québec;  
Bulletins and press releases from the Réseau d'avertissements phytosanitaires (RAP-MAPAQ);  
Weekly climatic reports (preliminary), Développement durable, Environnement et Parcs;  
Monthly reports, Canadian Climate Impacts and Adaptation Research Network (Environment Canada).  
Real-time meteorological conditions, Centre Météo UQUAM-Montréal.  
Newsletter No. 7 of the Association des producteurs de fraises et de framboises du Québec.

The Québec Crop Report is published every two weeks from May to November. It reports weather conditions brought to our attention and the real or anticipated impact that may result. Under no circumstances should it be interpreted as an analysis or a final position of La Financière agricole, notably concerning indemnity.

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