

Agrometeorological forecast for March

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The climatic anomalies during the second half of February, with unusually high maximum temperatures for the season, exceeding 21-22°C in many of the lowland areas (Knezha - 24°C, Lovech - 23°C, Pleven - 23°C, Plovdiv - 23°C, Chirpan - 23°C), led to the activation of vegetation processes in the autumn-sown crops and to premature development of fruit trees.

During the first ten-day period of March, only in some places in Southern Bulgaria – Plovdiv, Pazardzhik, Sandanski, Kardzhali and Haskovo, economically significant precipitation of between 20-30 l/m² was recorded, which led to an improvement in soil moisture reserves in the autumn-sown crops.

In the central and eastern regions, temperatures were above the climatic norms and above the biological minimum required for the vegetation of winter cereal crops.

During most days of the second ten-day period in the lowland regions of the country, temperatures close to the usual for the period are forecast, as well as conditions for delayed vegetation in winter cereal crops.

An increase in temperatures and activation of vegetation processes in autumn-sown crops and perennial plantations is expected during the first half of the third ten-day period. At the end of March, the tillering stage will predominate in wheat and barley.

During the month, fruit crops will pass through various stages - from swelling and bud break of fruit buds to green cluster, flowering and fruit set in early-flowering stone fruit species (almond, apricot, peach).

In March, minimum temperatures in the range of minus 5-10°C are forecast - values critical for the blossoms and young fruit sets of the fruit trees.

The expected precipitation during the month, around and above the norm, will increase soil moisture reserves in the 100 cm layer. As a result of below-normal precipitation in February, the level of soil moisture reserves in the 50 and 100 cm soil layer in winter cereal crops in the far southern and southeastern regions was unusually low for the season - in some places below 55% of field capacity (agrometeorological stations Sliven, Chirpan).

In March, the forecast dynamic weather, with frequent precipitation, will hinder the implementation of seasonal agrotechnical activities. More favourable conditions for carrying out pre-bloom plant protection spraying in fruit trees will occur during the second half of the first ten-day period. During the month, the increased moisture content in the upper soil layers will limit the implementation of pre-sowing tillage on the areas intended for sowing with early and medium-early spring crops. For this reason, there is a likelihood of missing the optimal sowing dates for sunflower in the southern regions.

In mid-March begins the agrotechnical period (15-20.03) for sunflower sowing in Southern Bulgaria, and in the middle of the third ten-day period (25.03–5.04) – in the Danubian Plain.

Where and when in the different regions of the country there will be conditions for carrying out plant protection activities, see [HERE](#)

Source NIMH