

Agrometeorological forecast for February 2019

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During the first ten-day period of February, agrometeorological conditions will be determined by above-normal temperatures. In some of the eastern and southern regions of the country, as a result of the persisting unseasonably warm weather at the end of January and the forecast high temperatures at the beginning of February, conditions will be created for the resumption of vegetation in winter cereal crops. In isolated locations in Southeastern Bulgaria, where maximum values above 15–16°C are expected, there is a likelihood that some early-flowering fruit species (almond, apricot, peach) will emerge from endodormancy.

At the end of the first and the beginning of the second ten-day period, the agrometeorological conditions will undergo a substantial change. The expected cold spell will restore dormancy in autumn-sown crops and will prevent undesirable, premature vegetation in some perennial plantations in the southern regions.

During the second half of February, the forecast temperatures, close to the climatic norms, will maintain overwintering agricultural crops in a dormant state in most parts of the country. Exceptions will be observed along the Black Sea coast and in the southern regions, where during the third ten-day period the mean daily temperatures will approach the biological minimum required for the resumption of vegetative processes in winter cereal crops.

In February, the forecast values of minimum temperatures, down to minus 13°C, in conditions without snow cover and with more prolonged persistence, will pose a risk to wheat and barley at the 1–3 leaf stage, as well as to rapeseed stands that have not formed a rosette. At the end of January, in places in the southeastern regions, partial frost damage was recorded in some autumn-sown crops overwintering in initial stages of their development. These stands, during the coldest January days (06–09.01), were not protected by snow cover.

The forecast precipitation in February is expected to be close to the monthly norm and will increase the autumn–winter soil moisture reserves in the two-metre soil layer. At the end of January, soil moisture reserves in wheat in the one-metre layer, with the exception of some eastern regions, reached levels up to field capacity (FC). Frequent precipitation during the month will maintain high moisture content in the upper soil layers, which in many parts of the country will hinder the implementation of some agrotechnical activities – top dressing of autumn-sown crops with nitrogen mineral fertilizers, pre-sowing tillage of areas designated for sowing with early spring crops (peas, vetch, oats, spring barley).

More suitable conditions for carrying out pruning in vineyards and orchards will occur during the first and third ten-day periods. In areas where low negative temperatures below minus 15–16°C have been recorded, it is advisable that pruning of table grape varieties be carried out after sampling to determine the extent of any potential frost damage.

Source: NIMH