

# Winter Wheat Crop In Trouble

## COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

**W**ith very dry conditions setting in, most winter wheat stands are already severely stressed.

“We had one of the driest Octobers on record in Texas, and essentially no rain at all in November,” said Dr. Travis Miller, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service program leader and Texas A&M University soil and crop sciences associate department head. “Most stands are still hanging on, but they can only do that for a little while with the amount of rainfall we got.”

Over the last week of September, much of the state was fortunate to get enough rain to plant winter wheat and get it emerged, but with the exceptionally dry October and November, growth has been limited and stands are at risk.

Most Texas wheat was planted late-September through mid-November, with about 6 million acres planted, according to Miller. Typically, 55 to 60 percent of the crop is grazed, and the remainder is just planted for grain. But a lot of the wheat was planted on about 1 inch of rain in the topsoil, with no deep soil moisture because of the 2011 and 2012 drought. Δ



**In late September, an East Texas farmer prepares to plant small grains for winter pastures. After September, rains nearly ceased for the rest of the state, according to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service agent reports.**

(Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service photo by Robert Burns)