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Frigid Temperatures Halt Winter Wheat Planting

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) - Unseasonably early frigid temperatures gripping the Plains have pushed the winter wheat crop into dormancy and halted planting before it was finished.

Wheat planting was already behind schedule in the southwestern Midwest, even before the chill hit. Experts say the cool weather over the next few weeks will likely mean fewer acres of wheat to harvest next year.

Agricultural meteorologist Don Keeney of MDA Weather Services says the wintry weather will overall be positive for wheat. This is because snow will replenish soil moisture and offset expected winterkill wheat damage in western Nebraska and along the northeastern Colorado border, where temperatures are forecast to dip below zero Thursday.

Keeney says corn and sorghum harvest will be delayed, but that those crops shouldn't be hurt.

Associated Press