

Oregon Vintage 2009 – Current Climate Summary and Ripening Period Outlook

Monthly temperature departures from normal for McMinnville, Milton-Freewater, Roseburg, and Medford from November 2008 through August 2009 show a warmer than average November last year, which was followed by a colder than average December through April statewide (Figure 1). May through August has been warmer than average with only McMinnville showing a slight cooler August compared to the other locations. Overall the growing season so far is warmer than average or near normal with Medford 1.9°F above average, Roseburg 1.1°F above average, Milton-Freewater 1.1°F above average, and McMinnville 0.1°F below average. Daily to weekly swings in temperatures across the state have been greater than average this year with both record high and record low maximum temperatures being observed statewide. The wide swings were hinted at in the early season outlook from this past winter and were due to strong ocean temperature differences between the coastal waters and further out in the Pacific, along with waning La Niña conditions.

Monthly precipitation amounts for the four locations are exhibiting below normal rainfall since last November with McMinnville showing the greatest reduction (over 20" down for the just completed water year, nearly 45%). Other locations in the Willamette Valley are not as dry as McMinnville, but all sites are currently in a water deficit situation. For the other three sites, Roseburg was 21% down for the water year, Medford 16%, and Milton-Freewater 9% (Figure 2). The United States Drought Monitor currently has most of Washington, Oregon, and California under a moderate to severe drought status (Figure 3) (<http://drought.unl.edu/DM/MONITOR.html>).

Examining cumulative growing degree-day (GrDD) values from April 1st to August 31st statewide shows that each of the four sites started off relatively slow compared to the last six vintages (2003-2008) (Figure 4). However, the warm conditions during late May, early June and much of July brought each site to above or near normal. The 2009 vintage cumulative GrDD values from April 1st to August 31st for Roseburg (2333), Medford (2658), and Milton-Freewater (2711) are 10-14% more than 2008 on the same date, currently ahead of the last six growing seasons, and tracking the warm 2004 and 2006 vintages. For McMinnville the current accumulation of 1705 is 10% over last year at this time and slightly below the average of the last six vintages.

The weather outlook through the end of September:

The short term forecast calls for a warmer than average next seven days (through Sept 15-16) with daytime temperatures reaching into the mid to high 90s in most areas. However nighttime lows are starting to show greater drops indicating the onset of some our largest diurnal temperature ranges of the season, but the dry conditions could bring added fall frost risk. While the models show a warmer than average rest of September, they do hint at a few storms passing through Oregon over the rest of the month. The rainfall amounts from these systems are usually greater in Washington and northern Oregon and diminish by the time they get to Southern and Eastern Oregon ... but you never know.

The weather outlook through the end of October:

All weather/climate outlooks from the Climate Prediction Center (NOAA) and elsewhere are pointing to a continued warmer than normal end to the growing season. Precipitation amounts are also forecasted to be lower than average over the next three months. However, there are still some indicators that point to Oregon experiencing a greater likelihood than average of wide swings between warm/dry to cool/wet periods. While this scenario appears good for harvest, some of the long-term outlooks are discussing prolonged drought conditions into the winter throughout the western US.

Seasonal and Monthly Temperature Departures from Normal

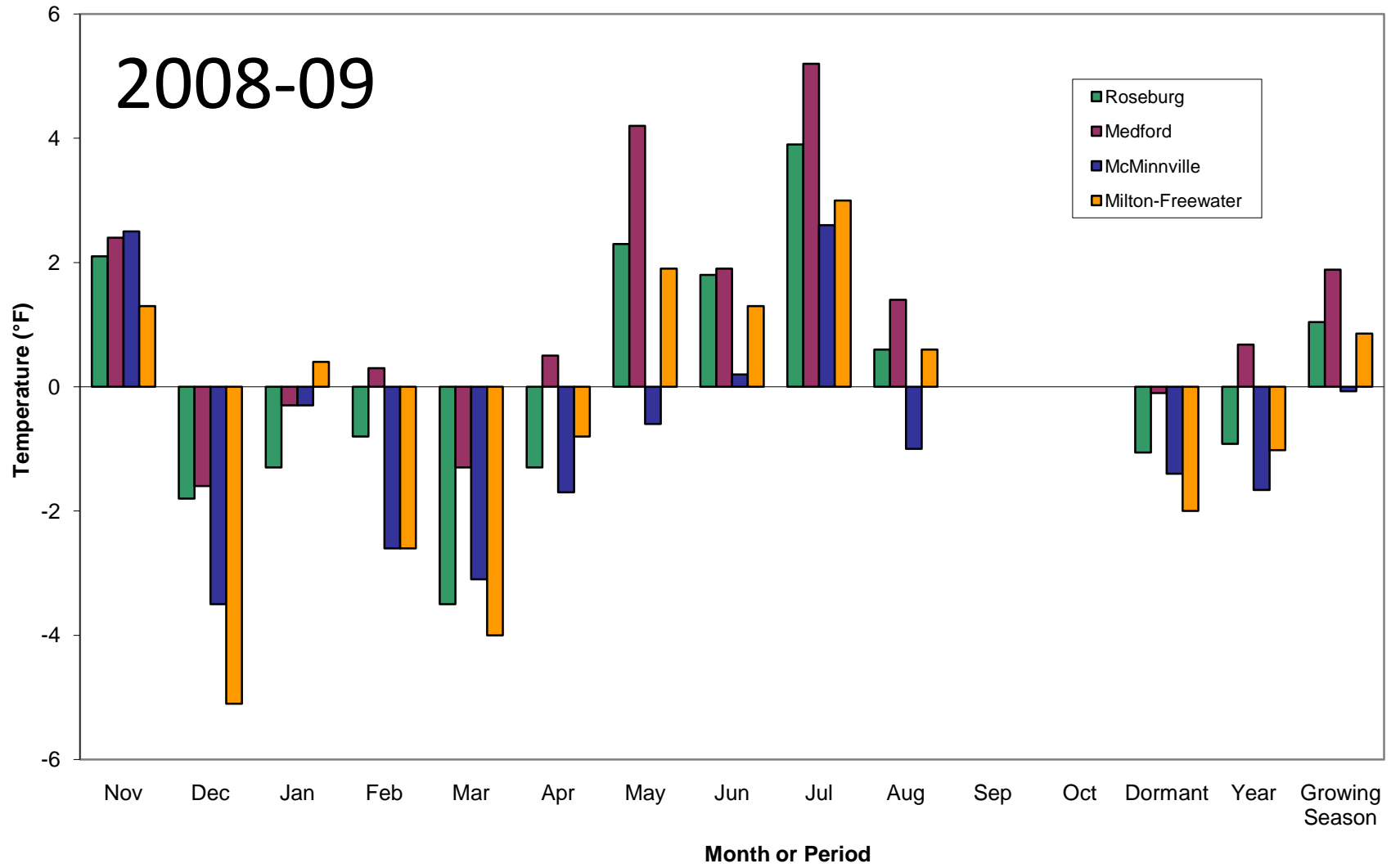


Figure 1

Seasonal and Monthly Precipitation Departures from Normal

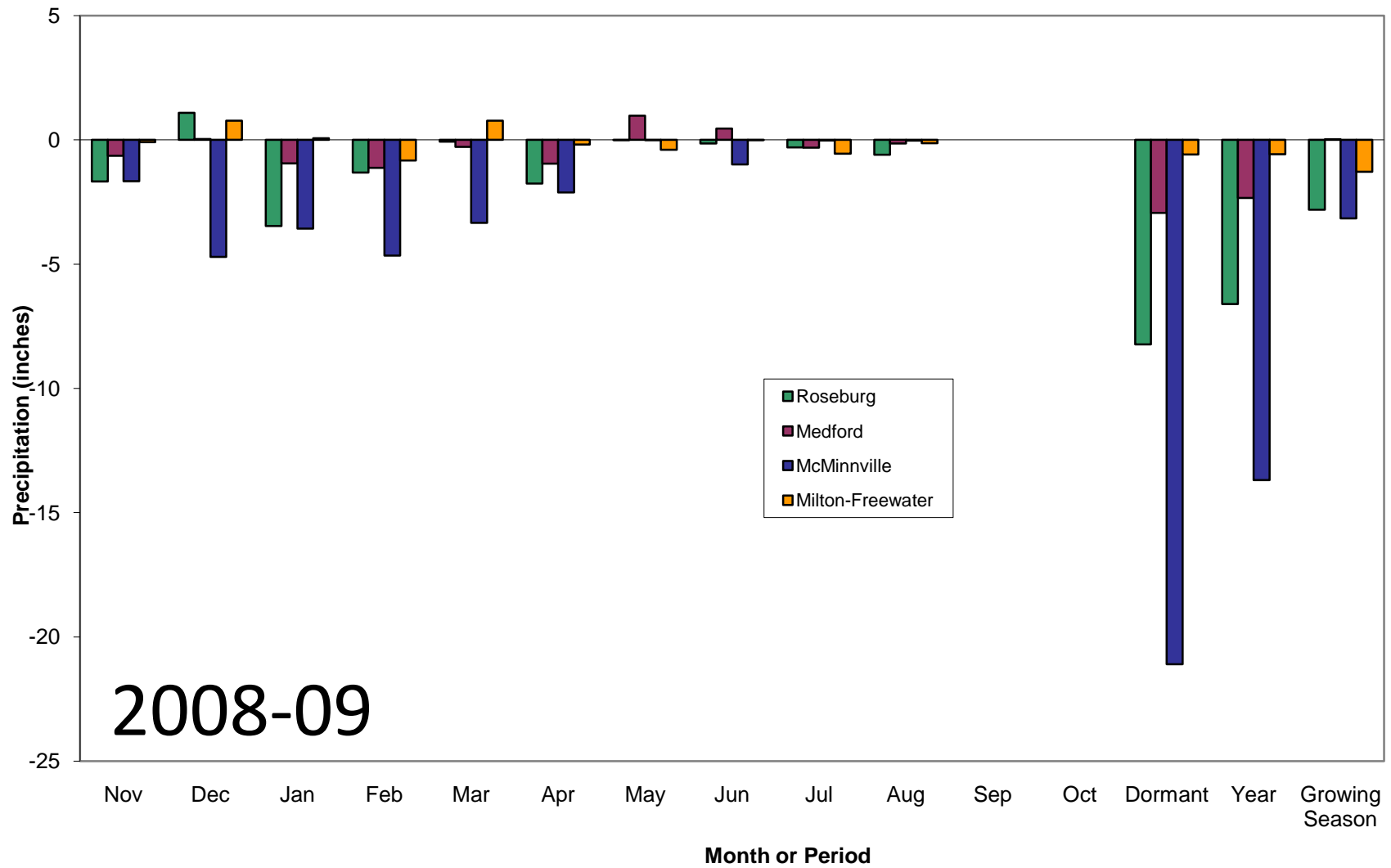
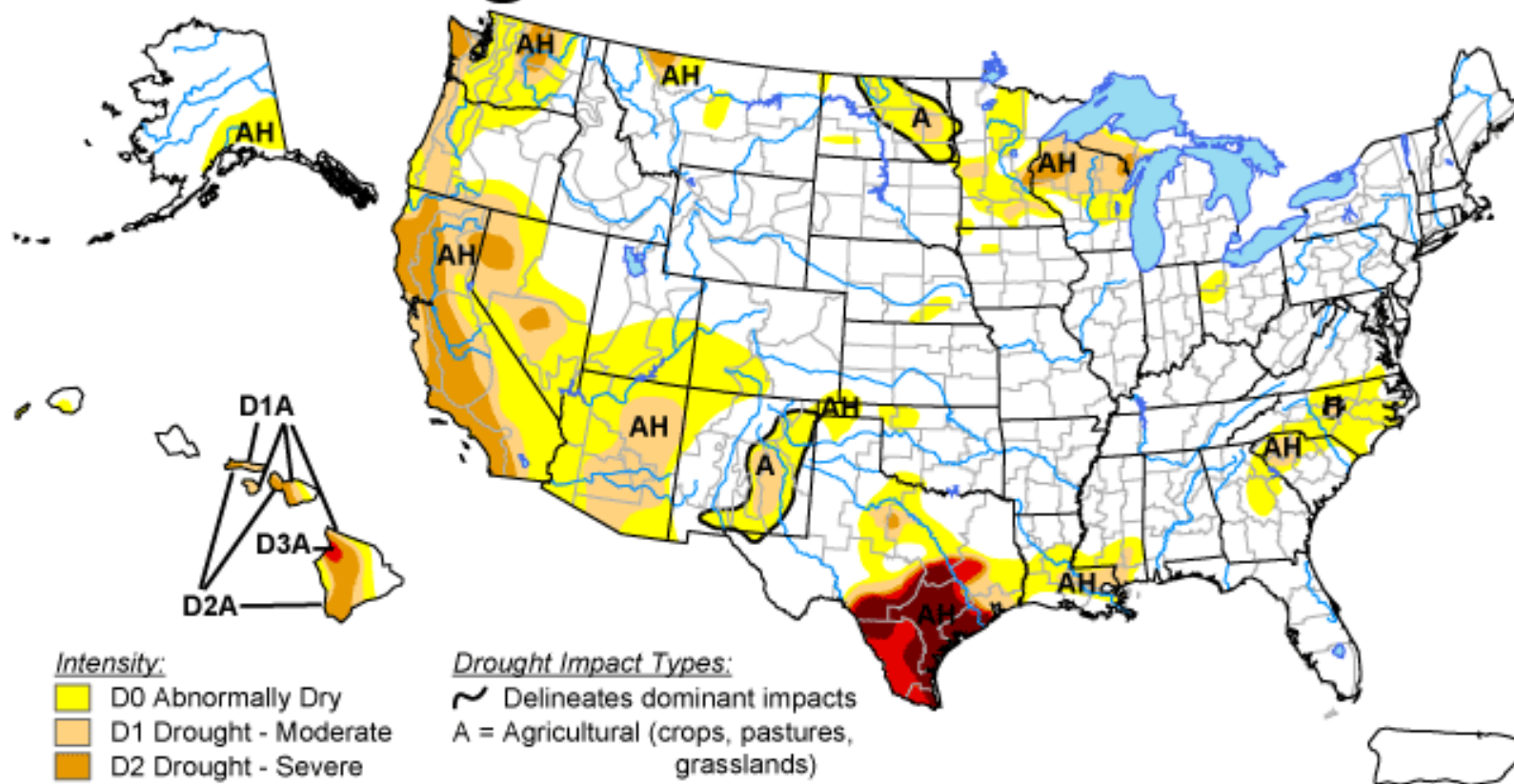


Figure 2

U.S. Drought Monitor

September 1, 2009
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional

Drought Impact Types:

- Delineates dominant impacts
- A = Agricultural (crops, pastures, grasslands)
- H = Hydrological (water)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://drought.unl.edu/dm>



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Figure 3

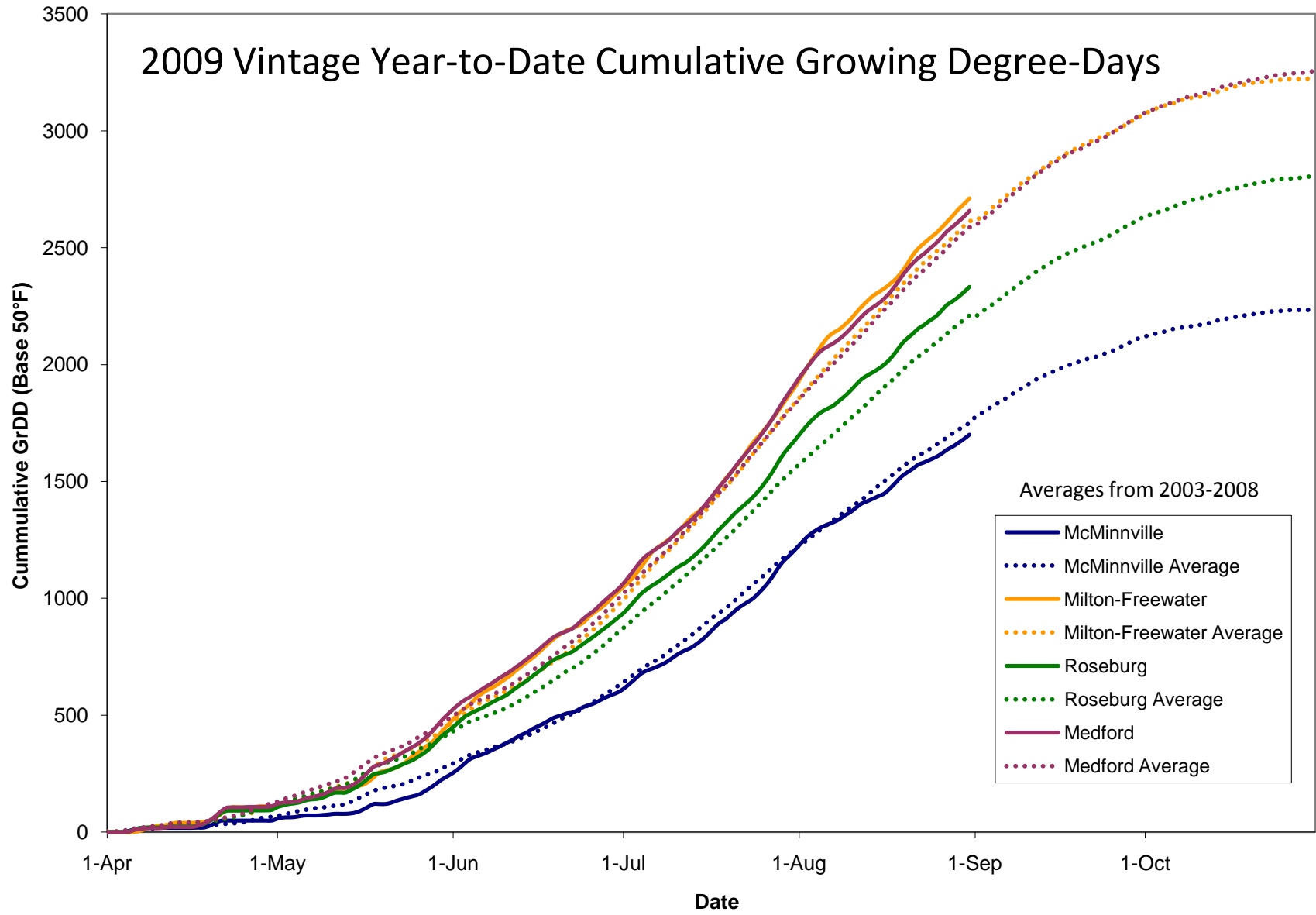


Figure 4