



Nebraska Weather and Crops

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Issue NE-CW 1307

Released March 26, 2007

Agricultural Summary: For the month of March 2007, above average temperatures raised soil temperatures as much as twenty degrees from last month in some areas of the state, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistic Service, Nebraska Field Office. The warm weather also provided good calving and livestock conditions, but caused producers in the western third of the state to worry about the lack of precipitation for the growing season. The central and eastern parts of the state received above normal precipitation during the month resulting in ponds filling that have been low for several years. Most areas were still too wet to work ground, but fertilizer application has progressed as producers get ready for the upcoming planting season.

This release is based on data from FSA county directors, county extension educators, NOAA, and the High Plains Regional Climate Center. County comments and reports can be found at:

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Nebraska/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/index

Weather Summary: As of March 25, snow cover had disappeared in all districts of the state. During the first week of the month, temperatures averaged below normal. However, during the rest of the month temperatures were above normal with record highs recorded in some areas. Precipitation for the month mainly occurred in central and eastern counties with up to two and a half inches reported in some areas.

Field Crops Report: **Wheat** conditions were near month ago levels and rated 2 percent very poor, 6 poor, 34 fair, 52 good, and 6 excellent. This is well above last year's condition of 43 percent good or excellent. **Oat** planting was underway in southern counties with 4 percent seeded statewide. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 8 percent very short, 36 short, 56 adequate, and 0 surplus.

Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report: **Cattle and Calves** condition rated 1 percent very poor, 6 poor, 28 fair, 61 good, and 4 excellent, well below year ago levels. Calving has progressed to 59 percent complete with calf losses reported as 4 percent below average, 81 average, and 15 above average.

The following are comments from Nebraska's FSA County Executive Directors and County Extension Educators:

NORTHWEST

DAWES: We have had great calving weather, but almost no moisture of any kind for several months in a row.

SIOUX: Warm winter conditions make calving easy, but will be causing forage production loss going into spring with less than normal soil moisture levels.

NORTH

HOLT/BOYD: Conditions last fall were very dry. Moisture received this winter should ensure that pastures, wheat, and alfalfa get a good start. Drifts in shelterbelts caused a lot of damage, but also provided badly needed moisture. Drifting snow also resulted in a lot of runoff, filling a lot of dams which have been low for several years.

NORTHEAST

BURT: Soil conditions are too wet for planting thus far. Producers are experiencing average calving conditions.

CEDAR: Mild weather has helped ease the shorter than normal feed supply. Some fall planted rye fields and brome grass have started to green up and should be ready to graze by mid-April. Calves are looking very healthy with few deaths reported.

CENTRAL

BUFFALO: Fields have been slow to dry, but some producers are shredding stalks and applying anhydrous applications. The past couple of weeks provided good opportunities for pleasant calving conditions. For the most part the frost is out.

HALL: Wheat is beginning to green up but some spots are not good due to the ice cover for so long.

EAST

NANCE/BOONE: Recent warm temperatures and drier weather has improved calving conditions in the area.

WASHINGTON: Feedlots have dried out substantially in the last week and moisture levels are good heading into spring.

SOUTHWEST

HAYES/HITCHCOCK: Warmer weather has brought better conditions for livestock, but still seeing sick calves with pneumonia and scours. Farmers are preparing equipment for spring planting. Grass is being seeded.

SOUTH

HARLAN: The main activities are tending to livestock and getting planting equipment ready for next month.

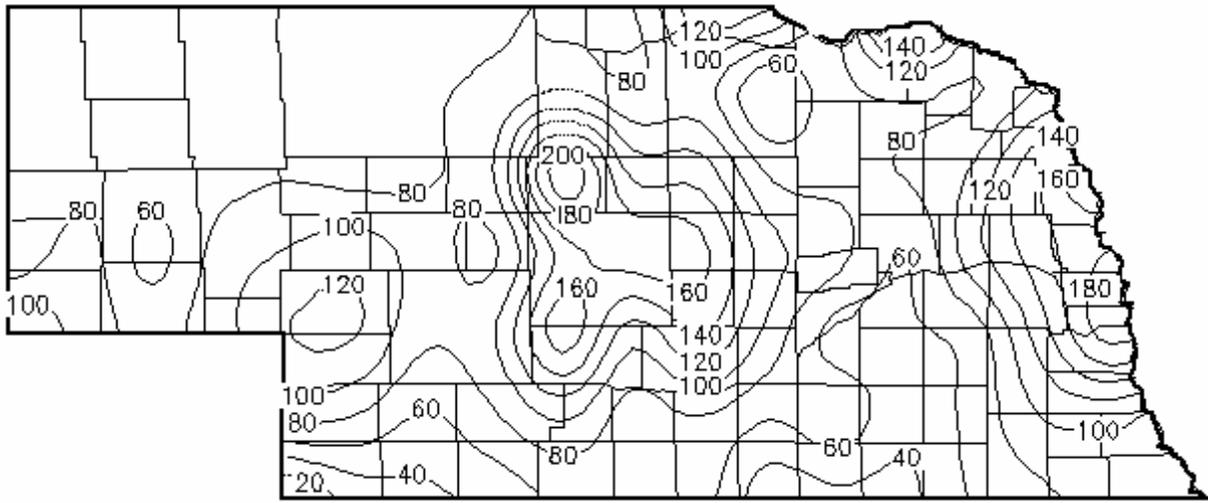
PHELPS: Warmer weather and less moisture has helped calving this month. Producers are beginning to start some field preparations and prepare machinery for planting.

SOUTHEAST

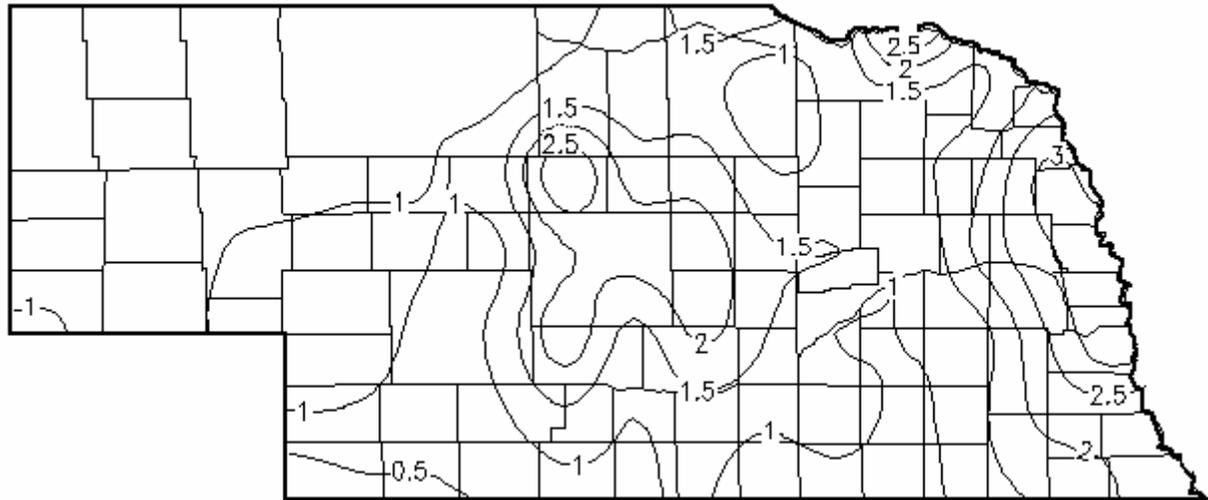
GAGE: Calf losses are not widespread but some operations have had difficulties.

JEFFERSON: Wheat is out of dormancy and greening up. Spring fieldwork is beginning.

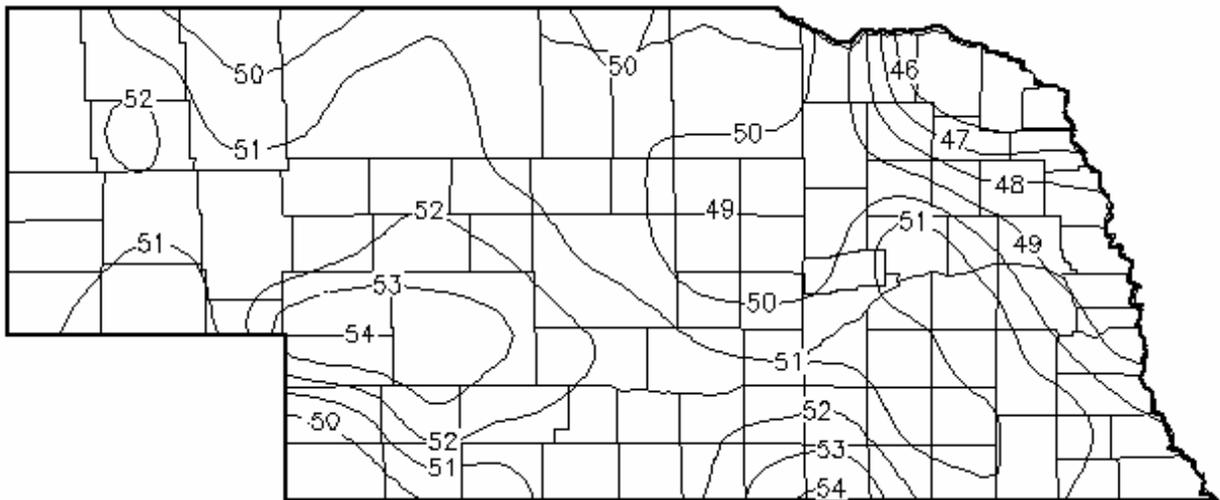
PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR MARCH 2007¹



PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF MARCH 2007¹



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL
MARCH 19, 2007 – MARCH 25, 2007¹**



¹ Source: High Plains Regional Climate Center and Nebraska State Climate Office