



Nebraska Weather and Crops

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Agricultural Summary: For the month of March 2009, temperatures varied widely during the month but averaged near normal, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Nebraska Field Office. Precipitation during March was below normal with most areas receiving less than one inch of moisture except for the far north and eastern parts of the state. A front moved through the western and northern part of the state at the end of the month leaving snow cover in those areas. Soil temperatures were above freezing across the entire state with the eastern half of Nebraska near last year's temperatures while the western half was between five and eight degrees below a year ago. Fieldwork was mostly limited to fertilizer application and seed bed preparation. A few fields of oats had been planted. Calving continued to make good progress with normal calf losses reported.

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: At the end of March snow depth was limited to the Panhandle and the North Central District which averaged one to two inches in those areas. Precipitation for the month was below normal, with very little measurable precipitation the first three weeks. Temperatures averaged near normal for the month with the first and third weeks well above normal and the second and fourth weeks well below normal.

Field Crops Report: **Wheat** conditions rated 0 percent very poor, 5 poor, 27 fair, 59 good, and 9 excellent, well above last year's condition of 50 percent good or excellent. **Oat** planting was underway with 11 percent seeded statewide, slightly ahead of last year. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 0 percent very short, 5 short, 91 adequate, and 4 surplus, well above year ago levels of 86 percent good or excellent.

Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report: **Cattle and Calves** conditions rated 0 percent very poor, 1 poor, 13 fair, 74 good, and 12 excellent, above year ago levels. Calving progressed to 56 percent complete with calf losses mostly average.

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

NORTHWEST

SCOTTSBLUFF/MORRILL: Some field work began last week but the snow this week delayed fieldwork. Soil temps are in the upper 40's. Some sugar beets may be planted in the next week if temperatures warm up.

NORTHEAST

BOONE: Weather was cold last week with rain but ended nicely with warmer weather over the weekend. Wheat is looking good and cattle and calves look good despite the cold wet rain this week.

DIXON: Producers are focusing on preparation for spring planting. Some chemical application was in progress where conditions permitted. Volatile weather patterns continue to keep livestock producers on alert.

KNOX: Primary activities included grain marketing, program signup, and purchase of planting inputs, calving, and general care of livestock. Alfalfa has come out of dormancy a week to ten days ahead of normal.

THURSTON: Some fertilizer applications were made this month on pasture. Weather has been generally favorable for cow-calf operations. Most of the frost is out of the ground. Most acreages have not dried out enough for field operations.

CENTRAL

HOWARD: The relatively mild winter has been good for the wheat and also the livestock.

EAST

DODGE: Some NH₃ is being applied. Getting planters ready and getting seed orders filled is the main activities.

SARPY/DOUGLAS: Producers are spreading manure from their feedlots and applying anhydrous ammonia.

WASHINGTON: It has been a good winter for calving, feeding cattle. No real problems with snow, mud, etc.

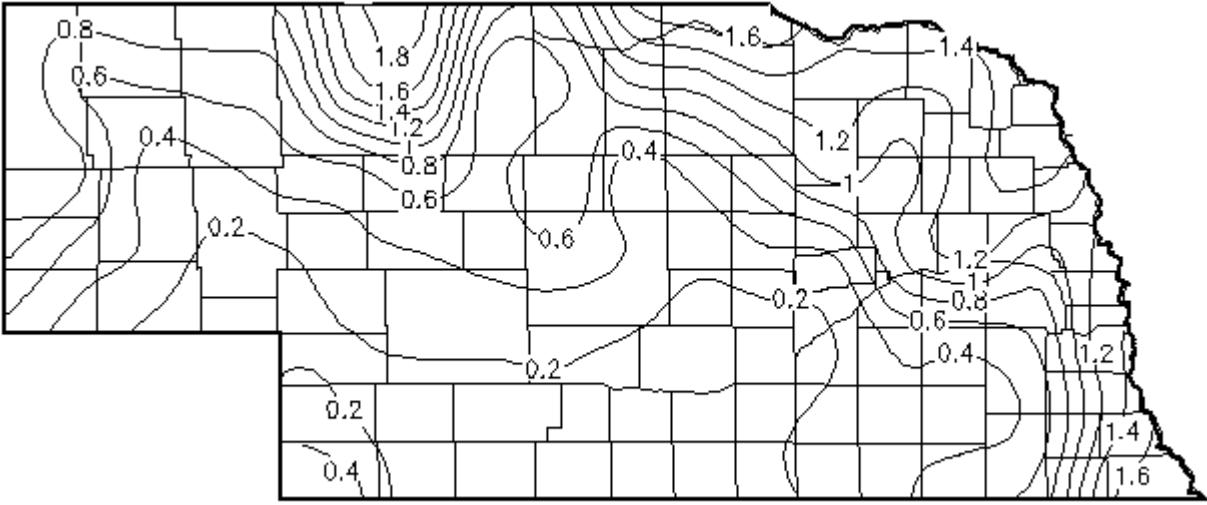
YORK: Less than .5 inch of rain in March. Snow flurries 4 days. Weather has been decent for calving, very cold and windy a few days but no blizzards. Farmers started applying anhydrous on March 21st and have continued almost daily since. A few fields are being disked ahead of fertilizer application, but most are working in the standing residue from last year. A number of farm auctions the last two weeks in March.

SOUTHWEST

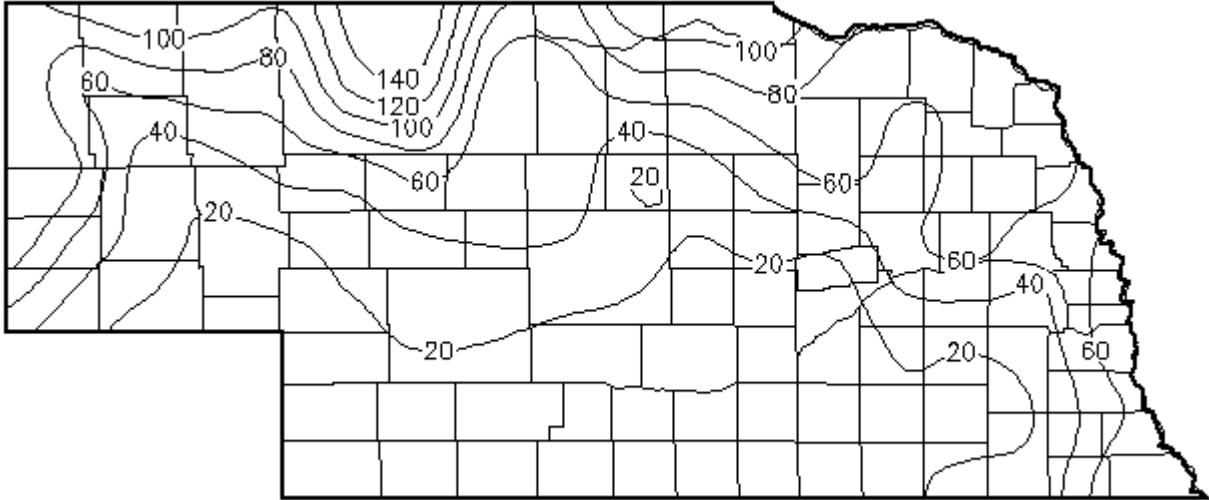
CHASE: High winds brought in by storms with limited moisture have depleted soil moisture.

FRONTIER: Ranchers report a good calving crop this year. Weather has been fairly mild with minimal cold, wet weather to hamper the calf health. Moisture is needed in the area as little snowfall was received this winter.

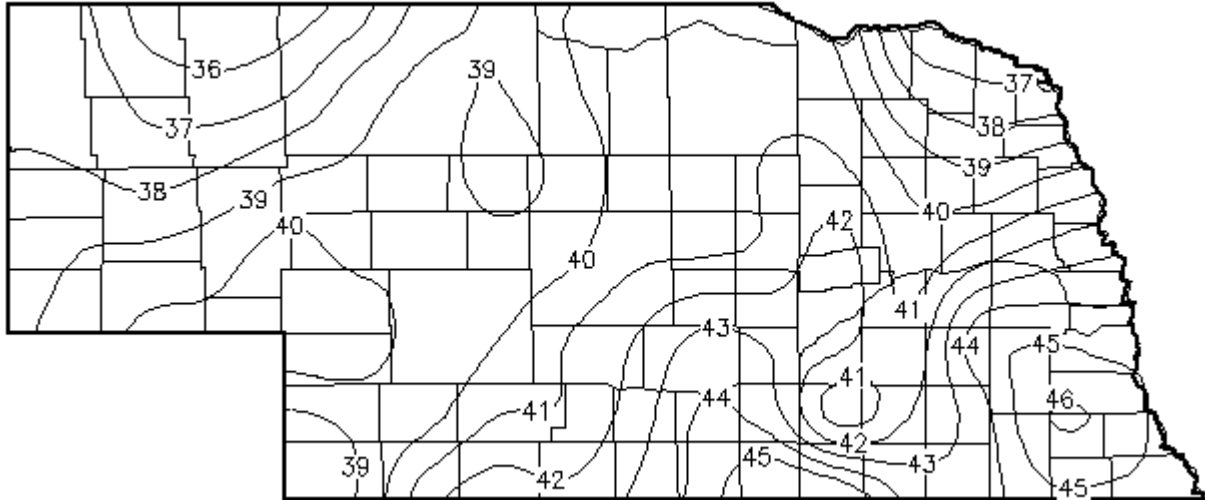
PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF MARCH 2009¹



PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR MARCH 2009¹



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL
MARCH 23, 2009 – MARCH 29, 2009¹**



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