



Nebraska Weather and Crops

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Issue NE-CW 0910

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Agricultural Summary: For the month of February 2010, below average temperatures during the last 3 weeks of the month and snow cover made for harsh conditions for livestock according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Nebraska Field Office. Snow covered fields made grazing of stalks difficult and more hay is being fed. Calving is under way and progressing. Precipitation during February averaged less than an inch of moisture across much of the state.

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: Average snow depth at the end of February was 4 inches statewide, near the same as reported at the beginning of the month. However, snow depth varied widely by region with the northeast reporting over a foot on the ground. Temperatures averaged near normal the first week of the month but 7-10 degrees below normal the remainder of February. During the last week of the month, soil temperatures ranged from 28 degrees in the west to 32 degrees in parts of the east.

Field Crops Report: **Wheat** conditions statewide rated 0 percent very poor, 8 poor, 43 fair, 45 good, and 4 excellent, below last year. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 1 percent very short, 16 short, 78 adequate, and 5 surplus, also below a year ago.

Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report: **Cattle and Calves** condition rated 0 percent very poor, 4 poor, 27 fair, 67 good, and 2 excellent, below last year. Calving progressed to 23 percent complete.

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

NORTHWEST

BOX BUTTE: Concern for wheat centers around damage from wind erosion and severely cold weather through January. There has been snow cover the past month protecting the wheat. The snows that have fallen in that period pose little problem at this time but the melting is running off the frozen soil and producing ponding in low areas. We may see wheat within a field damaged from wind erosion and cold and next to it wheat damaged from extended periods of snow and/or water/ice cover. We may be heading into a challenging spring.

SIOUX: The ground is still covered with snow. Calving is underway at about a normal rate.

NORTHEAST

DIXON: A lot of snow and large drifts means a lot of potential for wet, muddy conditions in March. Nighttime temperatures below the freezing mark would be the easiest way out of this situation as we look at the heaviest part of the calving season to begin. We have several hundred acres of corn yet to be harvested in both Dixon and Dakota counties. Several acres of baled cornstalks still need to be taken care of.

KNOX: Snow covered fields have prevented grazing of crop residues. Road conditions have hampered marketing of grain. Condition of grain due to moisture content at harvest time is a concern.

CENTRAL

BUFFALO: Almost everyone is tired of winter weather and ready for spring. Livestock have recovered some from the extreme cold experienced earlier but many are still showing the effects. Moving day (March 1st) is not the big event that it was 50+ years ago, but producers whose leases expire March 1 are struggling to get livestock equipment and fencing thawed and moved.

CUSTER: Ground beginning to thaw has caused very muddy conditions for calving. A lot of moisture in ground from fall snow should be an advantage for spring crops.

EAST CENTRAL

DODGE: Cold weather has been hard on livestock. Some new born calf loss has been reported. With all the snow cover, supplemental feeding has been required and a lot of hay supply is being used. Some farm meetings have occurred and ordering seed and fertilizer are the main activities.

DOUGLAS: It is time for a warm-up, but slowly.

SARPY: A lot more hay was fed to livestock because the snow prevented grazing of crop residues.

SAUNDERS: Snow still covers most of the ground. Waiting for warmer days.

SOUTHWEST

LINCOLN: The snow has melted in the range parts of the county. Calving seems to be going good at this time.

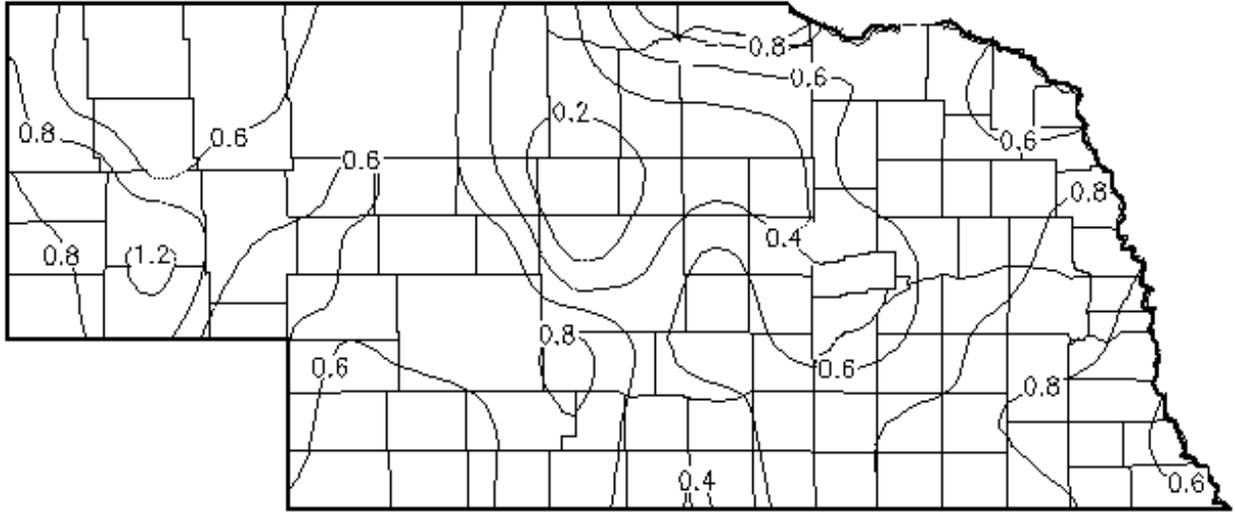
SOUTH CENTRAL

FRANKLIN: Cattle conditions improved after the temperatures warmed up from the bitter cold of January and the snow cover melted so that the cows were able to utilize the stalks. At this time, the farmers are beginning to talk about how the hay is getting short but I have not heard of anyone buying hay yet. However, I have seen some movement of hay. For the time being I would say supplies are good unless another major storm hits.

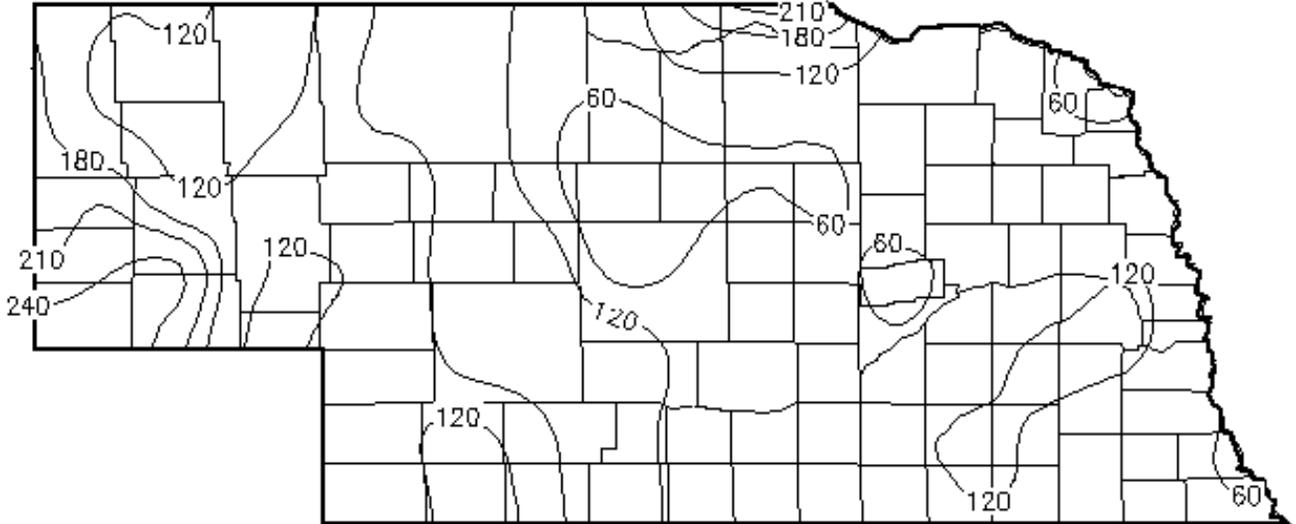
HARLAN: Nearly everyone has started calving in the area. Many are done or near done with calving heifers and the cows will start soon. Feed supplies seem adequate, but the sustained cold weather with snow nearly every week has made it a LONG winter for the cattlemen in Harlan County.

WEBSTER: Cattle are being supplemented in many areas here due to lack of availability of stalks and/or poor stalks. Snow cover over the last several weeks has limited stalks use.

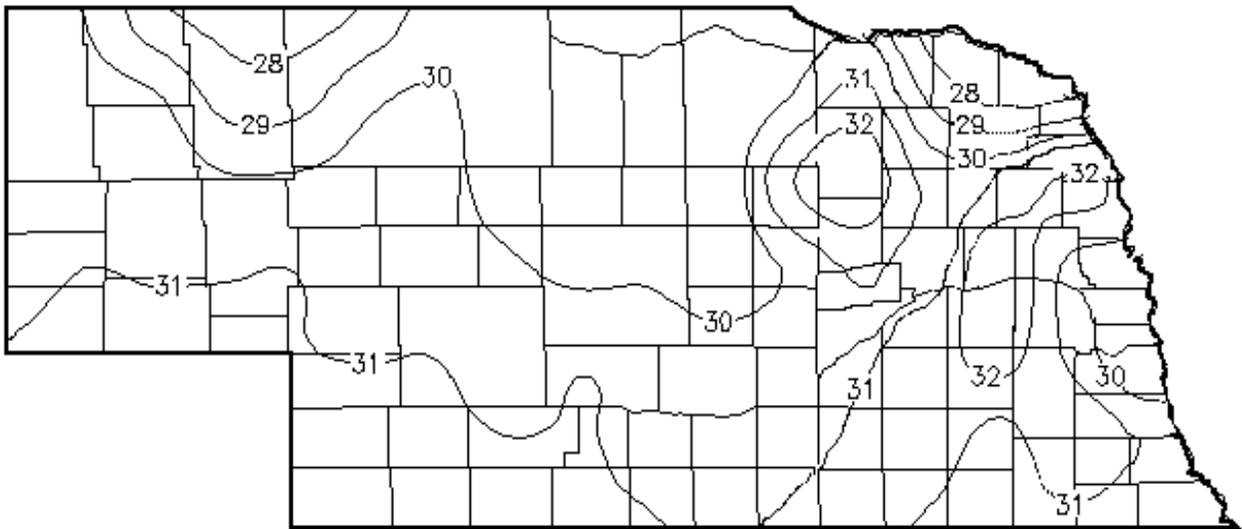
PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2010¹



PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR FEBRUARY 2010¹



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL
FEBRUARY 22, 2010 – FEBRUARY 28, 2010¹**



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