



Nebraska Weather and Crops

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Issue NE-CW0112

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Agricultural Summary: For the month of December 2011, weather conditions were relatively mild and dry compared to the same month last year, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Nebraska Field Office. High temperatures reached the upper 60's and lows fell to -16 degrees. Snow that had fallen during the month melted with the above normal temperatures allowing cattle producers to make good use of stalks. As a result, feed usage was not heavy and feed supplies were more than adequate with cattle in good condition. The southeast corner of the state received well above normal precipitation while most of the west was well below normal. Field work continued with the warm, dry weather and wheat conditions were well above year ago levels.

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: The majority of the state saw temperatures average 2 to 6 degrees above normal. During the last week of the month, topsoil temperatures ranged from 30 to 35 degrees and in general got warmer as you moved from west to east. The southeast corner of the state received from 1 to 3 inches of precipitation, while much of the west and north received a half inch or less.

Field Crops Report: **Wheat** conditions statewide rated 0 percent very poor, 1 poor, 25 fair, 70 good, and 4 excellent, well above last year when 42 percent of the crop rated good or excellent. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 0 percent very short, 4 short, 94 adequate, and 2 excellent, near a year ago.

Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report: **Cattle and Calves** condition rated 0 percent very poor, 0 poor, 7 fair, 85 good, and 8 excellent, above last year's 87 percent good or excellent.

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

NORTHEAST

BOONE: Good weather through the end of the year has been great for livestock. It is dry though and we could use some moisture.

DIXON: Mild weather continues to make outside work possible with a lot of fencing and earthwork continuing through December. A great deal of field work being done in preparation for spring planting.

KNOX: Cattle have gotten excellent utilization of stalks. Minimal winter feed has been used thus far. Small showers have been welcome. We probably would have 6 inches of snow cover if this would have been received as snow instead.

Marketing of grain has been the primary activity.

MADISON: Very dry conditions. Last significant moisture was 3-5 inches of snow in early December. Entire fall saw very limited moisture, setting up to be a large moisture deficit going into spring. Soil has limited frost. Any liquid moisture would be absorbed. Cattle are making good use of stalks. Large amount of stalks baled up.

CENTRAL

BUFFALO: Unusually warm weather is allowing producers an opportunity to continue fall field work well beyond normal "shutdown" dates including tillage, soil sampling, fertilizer application, etc. Livestock producers are getting exceptionally good gains and have been able to continue grazing stalks and winter pastures. For many producers, 2011 has been a favorable year.

HOWARD: The unusually warm weather has the livestock in great condition but we definitely need some moisture.

EAST CENTRAL

DODGE: Cattle continue to graze stalks. Below normal snow and warm weather has helped with not having to feed hay yet.

DOUGLAS: Need Rain!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

SOUTHWEST

CHASE: We are in need of moisture.

KEITH/ARTHUR: Very dry with no snow cover. Moisture is much needed. Temperatures have been above normal in the area.

SOUTH CENTRAL

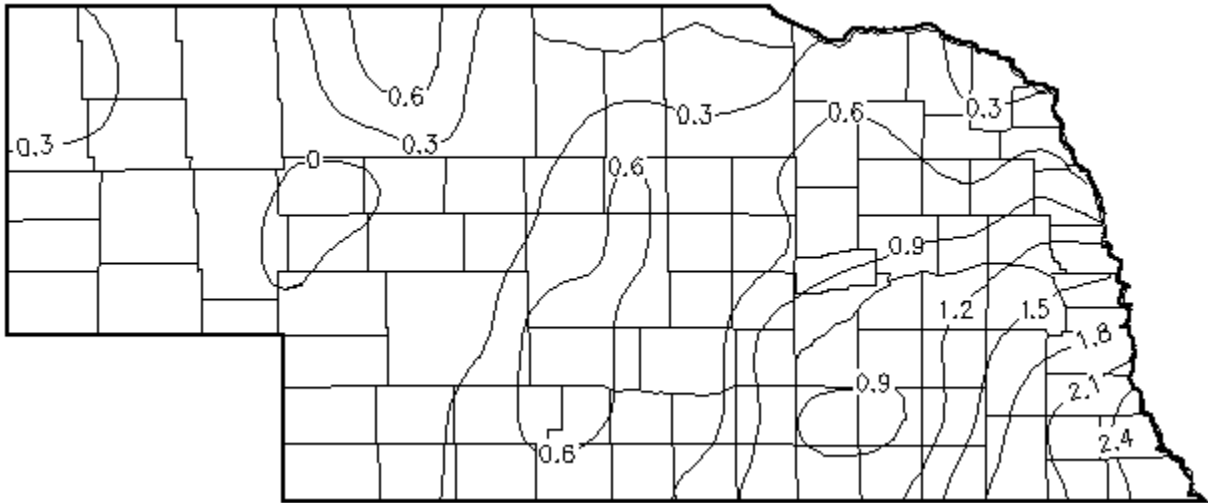
HARLAN: Warmer than normal with several 55 degree days - less than 1/2 inch moisture received at lake.

WEBSTER: Cattle are moved to the stalk fields and have not needed supplemental feeding so far as winter has been fairly mild.

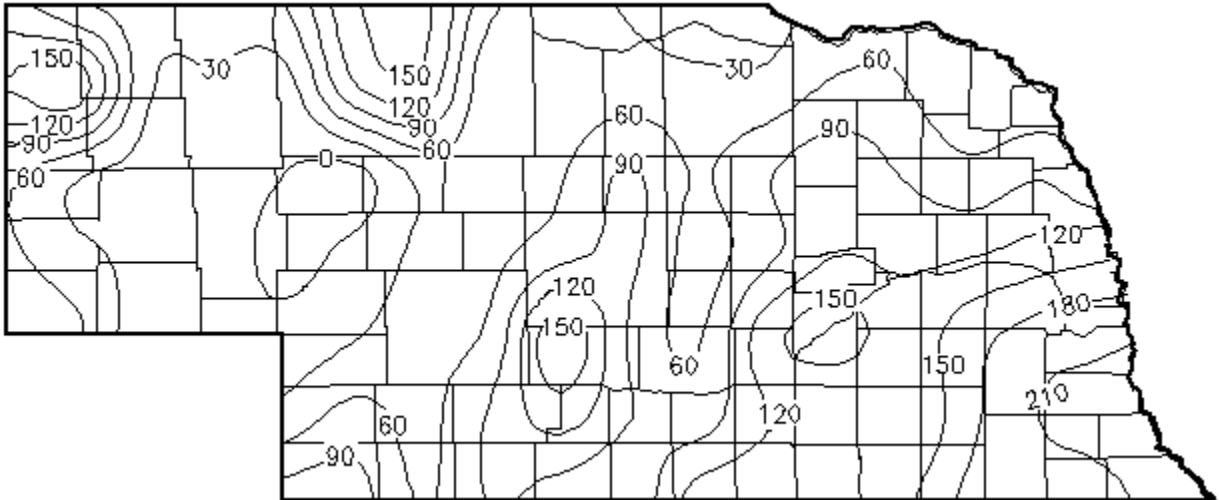
SOUTHEAST

OTOE: Conditions are very dry and mild for this time of year. Producers along the Missouri River are trying to get their cropland cleaned up.

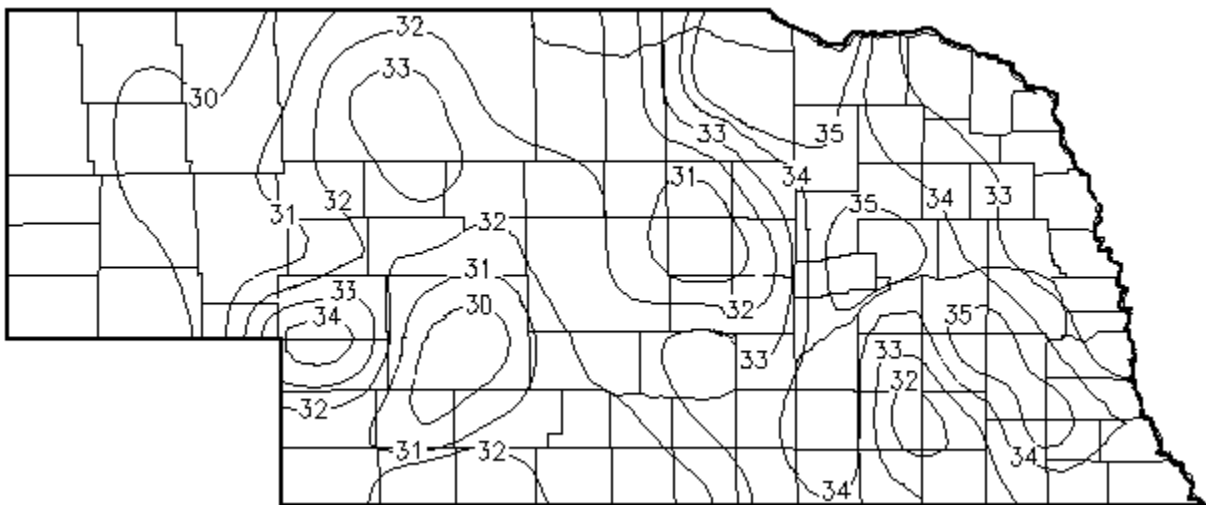
PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF DECEMBER 2011¹



PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR DECEMBER 2011¹



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL
DECEMBER 26, 2011 – JANUARY 1, 2012¹**



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