



# Nebraska Weather and Crops

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**Agricultural Summary:** For the month of February 2012, temperatures averaged 4 degrees above normal for the eastern half of the state and near normal for the western half. Heavy precipitation in the form of rain and snow fell early in the month. Overall, precipitation for the month was above normal for most of the state, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Nebraska Field Office. Moisture accumulation was greatest across the South East District with over 2 inches received. Elsewhere, one half to one and a half inches were common. At the end of the month, snow depth was limited mainly to the Northeast District with near 2 inches of snow cover. Strong winds have dried soils leaving soil moisture mostly adequate to short. During the last week of the month, soil temperatures ranged from 32 to 37 degrees. The coolest soils were in the northern half of the state and increased moving to the south. Hauling grain to market, preparation for spring planting, and livestock care were the main activities during the month. Wheat condition continued well above year ago levels. Producers have not had to do as much supplemental feeding of cattle due to mild conditions. Most feed supplies are adequate. Cattle and calves are in good to excellent condition and calving was progressing well with the mild weather.

**Weather Summary:** Average snow depth at the end of February averaged less than one half inch statewide. By region, the heaviest snow depth was across the northern third of the state. Temperatures averaged above normal at the beginning and end of the month but below normal for the second week. Average temperatures for the month got warmer moving from north to south across the state.

**Field Crops Report:** **Wheat** conditions statewide rated 1 percent very poor, 5 poor, 29 fair, 59 good, and 6 excellent, well above 40 percent good to excellent last year. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 1 percent very short, 5 short, 92 adequate and 2 surplus, near year ago levels.

**Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report:** **Cattle and Calves** condition rated 0 percent very poor, 1 poor, 8 fair, 74 good, and 17 excellent, above last year.

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

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

### ***NORTHWEST***

**BOX BUTTE:** Light snows have brought some moisture but the constant winds blowing hard (some days have averaged over 40 mph) several days in a row have taken their toll on moisture accumulation. Most areas did not have much fall rainfall and very little snow accumulation to give the wheat much reserve. The relative warm temperatures have allowed it to stay green while moisture has been taken from the reserve or accumulation.

**SCOTTSBLUFF/MORRILL:** Strong winds the past month have caused some minor wind erosion at this point to wheat fields.

### ***NORTHEAST***

**BOONE:** Weather has been mild, starting to snow today so will probably have a little snow cover this weekend.

**CEDAR:** We had rain and snow this past week. Warmer temperatures melted much of the snow that did fall. Favorable conditions for calving.

**DIXON:** Cattle are still picking up feed in open stubble fields. Some amount of supplemental feeding has been needed over the past month. Winter has remained open here for a wide spectrum of outside work to be done including grading, shaping, excavation, construction, etc.

**KNOX:** Primary activities have been grain marketing, tax preparation, review of crop insurance options, care of livestock, and preparation for spring fieldwork.

### ***CENTRAL***

**BUFFALO:** Lack of winter moisture is a concern. We are not hurting but we certainly do not have any surplus. The open winter has been a blessing for livestock producers and except for about one cold week, we have had excellent calving conditions.

### ***EAST CENTRAL***

**DODGE:** Hauling grain to town and putting lime on fields are the main activities. With snow about gone, cattle continue to graze stalks.

**DOUGLAS:** We need RAIN!

### ***SOUTHWEST***

**CHASE:** We have had extremely high winds!!! What moisture we did have is now gone.

**FRONTIER/RED WILLOW:** The mild winter has helped improve livestock conditions and hay supplies. We are still seeing numerous truckloads of hay/forage sorghum headed south. Calving appears to be going well.

**KEITH/ARTHUR:** Conditions are very dry in the area. We have received very little snowfall and have had high winds the past week. The dry weather is taking its toll on wheat crops in the county. Reports from ranchers on calving so far have been good.

**LINCOLN:** The weather has been nice except for the wind. We have had some moisture this month which has been helpful.

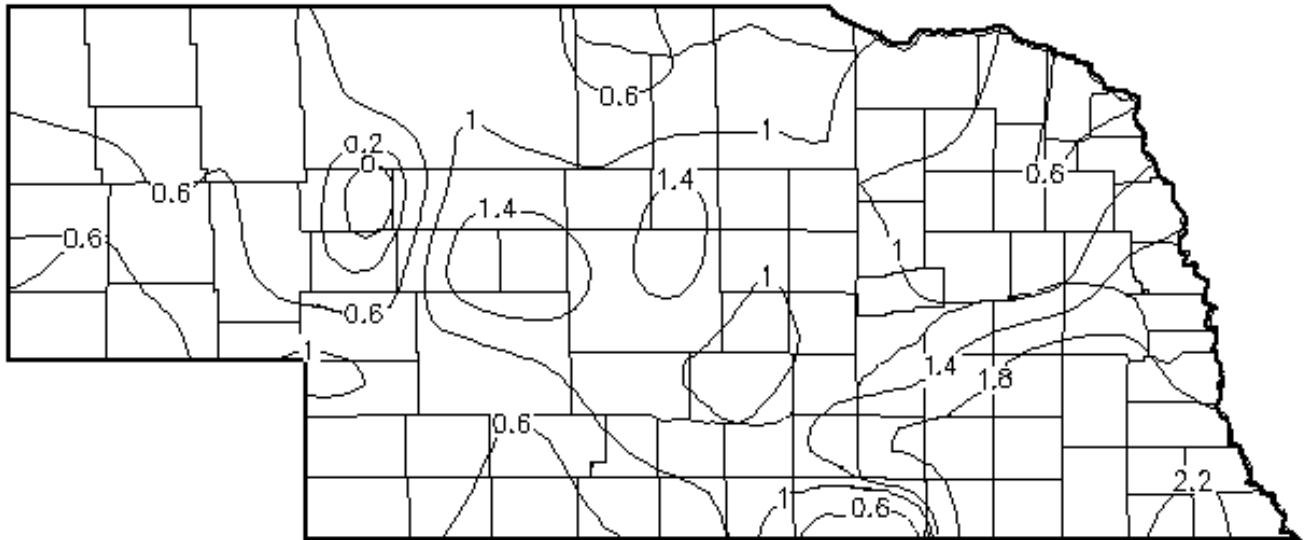
### ***SOUTH CENTRAL***

**FRANKLIN:** Preceding the last snow we had 1 ½ inches of rain and then 5 inches of wet snow. I believe the top soil moisture has improved considerably. I would think the subsoil is still on the dry side but have not dug down to see. Cattle are doing well. It has been good weather for calving. Plenty of hay left due to mild winter.

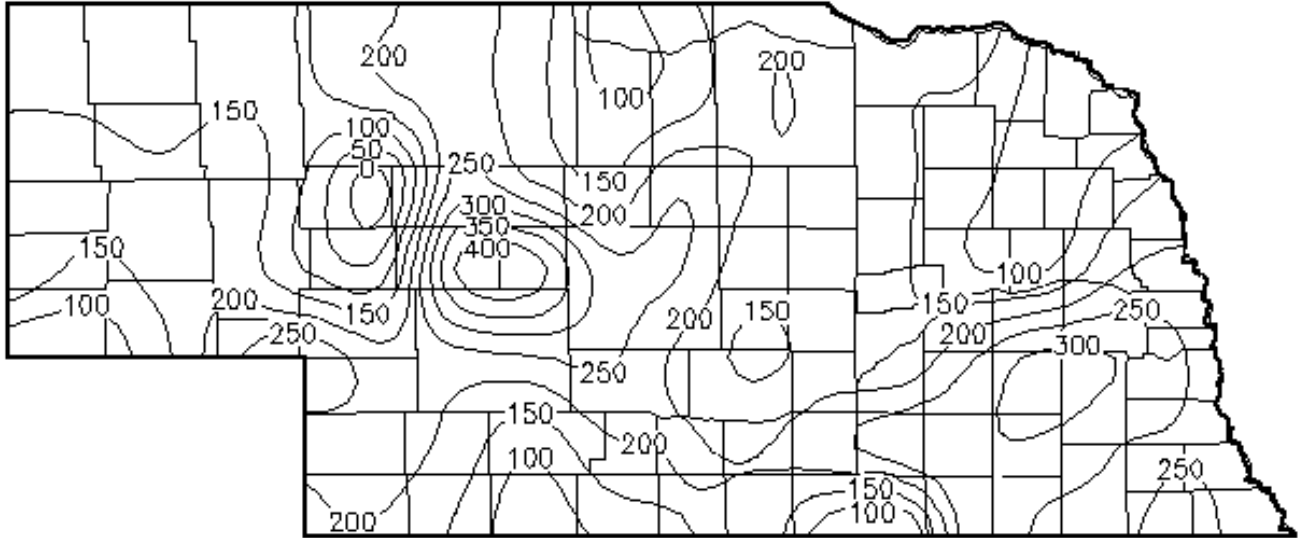
**HARLAN:** Lambing is ending and calving is beginning. Only 1 snowstorm for moisture.

**PHELPS:** Phelps County had approximately 11 inches of wet snow the week of Feb. 11th. The moisture was good. Due to warm weather the snow cover is now melted. Most producers are busy with calving. Warmer weather has decreased loss. Producers are beginning to prepare for fertilizer application.

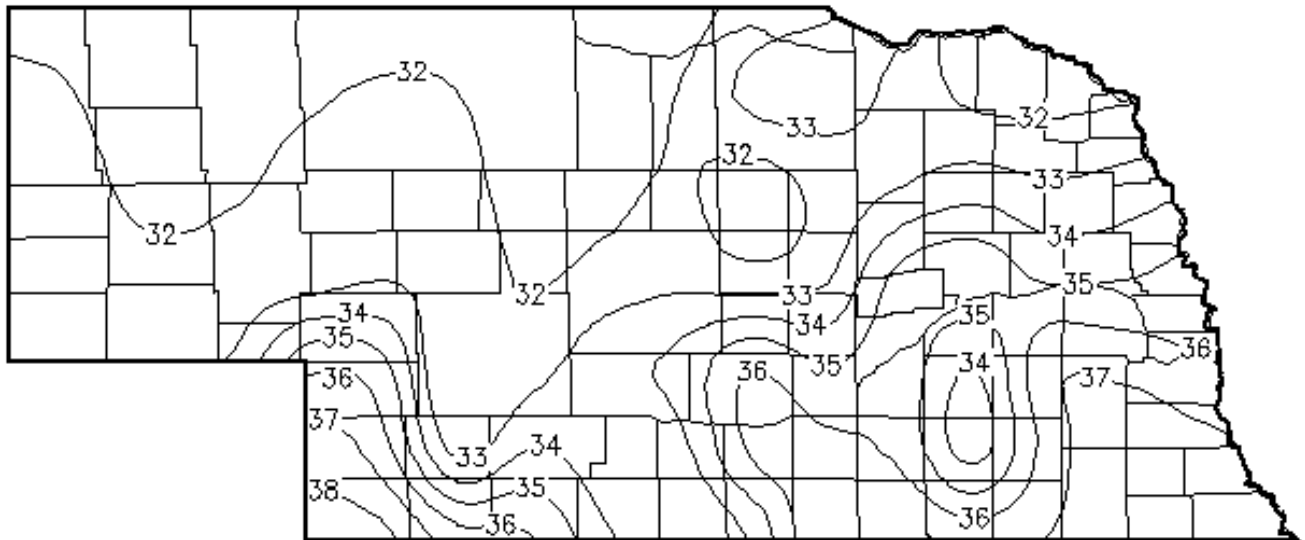
**PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2012<sup>1</sup>**



**PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR FEBRUARY 2012<sup>1</sup>**



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL  
FEBRUARY 20, 2012 – FEBRUARY 26, 2012<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Source: High Plains Regional Climate Center and Nebraska State Climate Office