



# Nebraska Weather and Crops

100 Centennial Mall North, Room 298, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508  
(402) 437-5541 · (402) 437-5547 FAX · [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov)



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**Agricultural Summary:** To date for the month of March 2012, temperatures averaged 8 degrees above normal for the Panhandle, 12 degrees above normal for the middle third of the State and 14 degrees above normal for the eastern third, according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Nebraska Field Office. Precipitation was limited until the third week of March with amounts of an inch or more falling in Southeastern counties. However, little or no rain was recorded in Panhandle counties and for most of the state, precipitation for the month was below normal. Winds have dried soils leaving topsoil moisture short or very short in about half the State. Driest conditions were recorded in Northeastern counties. During the last week of the month, soil temperatures ranged from 50 to 57 degrees. The coolest soils were in the Panhandle. Soils across much of the eastern third were above the 55 degrees needed for germination of corn; however, only isolated fields had been planted to date. Marketing grain, preparation for spring planting and livestock care were the main activities during the month. Wheat condition continued well above year ago levels. Due to the mild conditions, most feed supplies are adequate. Cattle and calves are in good to excellent condition and calving was progressing well with the above normal temperatures.

**Weather Summary:** Temperatures averaged 12 degrees above normal for the month. Highs were recorded in the 80's while lows were mainly in the upper 20's and 30's. The second week saw temperatures spike to over 20 degrees above normal across the state.

**Field Crops Report:** **Wheat** conditions statewide rated 1 percent very poor, 3 poor, 25 fair, 64 good, and 7 excellent, well above 40 percent good to excellent last year. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 1 percent very short, 5 short, 88 adequate and 6 surplus, near year ago levels.

**Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report:** **Cattle and Calves** condition rated 0 percent very poor, 0 poor, 7 fair, 77 good, and 16 excellent, above last year. Calving progressed to 60 percent complete, equal to last year with calf losses average to below average across 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](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***

SCOTTSBLUFF/MORRILL: Warm, windy conditions were prevalent most of the month. Soil was blowing. Little snow this winter.  
SIOUX: Warm and mild winter weather has helped with livestock activities and saved feed but has also dried out soil profiles.

### ***NORTH CENTRAL***

HOLT: Topsoil and subsoil moisture is far below normal. Moisture received in March is less than .20 inch.

### ***NORTHEAST***

BOONE: Some moisture (.25 inch) at the end of the week but not enough to make a real difference. Not much field work being done yet.  
CEDAR: Mild weather favorable for calving. Some moisture was received but it's still dry. Clearing of trees and some tillage has begun.  
DIXON: Conditions over the past two weeks have felt more like mid to late spring. Spring work is far ahead of normal. Dry conditions have carried over from the fall here in Northeast Nebraska.  
KNOX: Primary activities have been marketing grain, calving, and preparation for spring field work. Warm conditions have caused grass and trees to be at least three weeks ahead of normal.  
MADISON: Warmer temperatures and below normal winter moisture have caused continued loss of soil moisture. Recent rain has helped the top soil, but below 6 inches, the soil profile is short. Spring rains will be needed; otherwise, crops will be dependent on timely rains.

### ***CENTRAL***

BUFFALO: Very warm, open winter allowed time for fertilizing, tillage and other field operations. A lot of cattle are still in the stalk fields. An excess of warm weather and wind has added some concern for a dry summer.

### ***EAST CENTRAL***

DODGE: Some early field work of fertilizing fields and getting planters ready are the main activities.

### ***SOUTHWEST***

CHASE: A little rain was received this past week, but not enough to keep the producers out of the field. The pastures are needing moisture.  
FRONTIER/RED WILLOW: Above normal temperatures in March have helped farmers with spring work and have been favorable conditions for calving. Received small, scattered amounts of rain this past week but in need of more.  
HAYS/HITCHCOCK: Wheat is looking really good. We do need moisture. The mild winter was perfect for the calving season.  
KEITH/ARTHUR: Very warm and dry conditions. Lots of fires reported in the area. Farmers are beginning to work the fields with no report of planted acres yet.

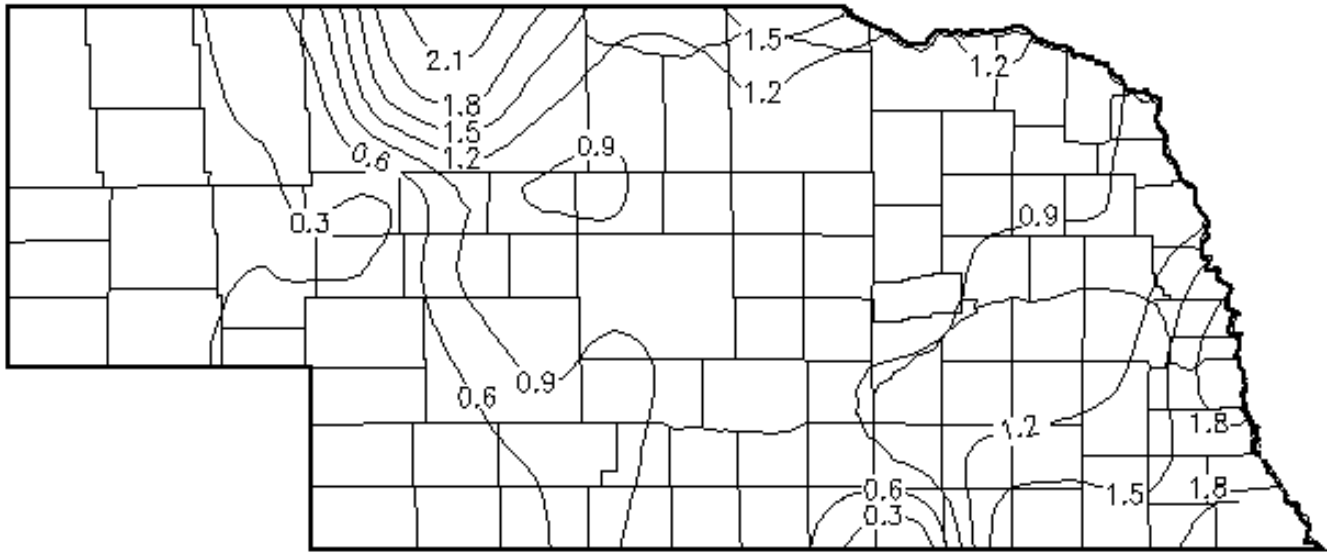
### ***SOUTH CENTRAL***

FURNAS: Still need more moisture due to the wind. Wheat is greening up. We don't need a freeze.  
PHELPS: Producers have been doing spring field preparation and are applying anhydrous. Calving is going well with minimal loss.  
WEBSTER: Everything greening up. Calving has gone well. Producers itching to get out planting but afraid of late frost. Still really dry here.

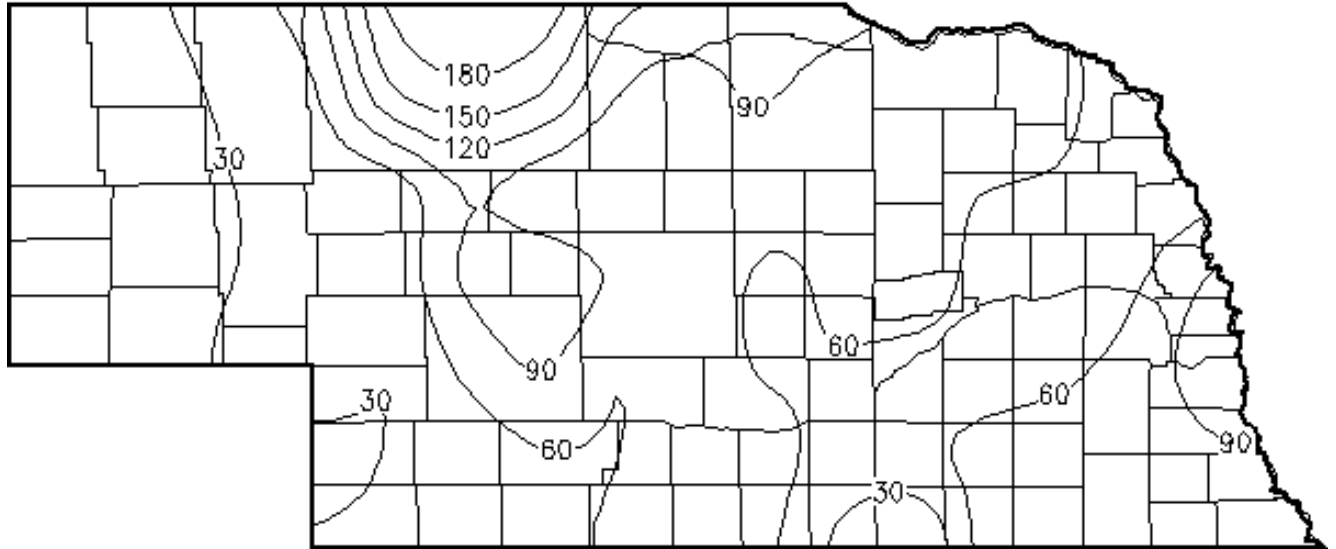
### ***SOUTH EAST***

GAGE: First few corn fields planted last week.  
NUCKOLLS: Need more rain, and continued temperatures above freezing!  
RICHARDSON: Received some much needed moisture this week!

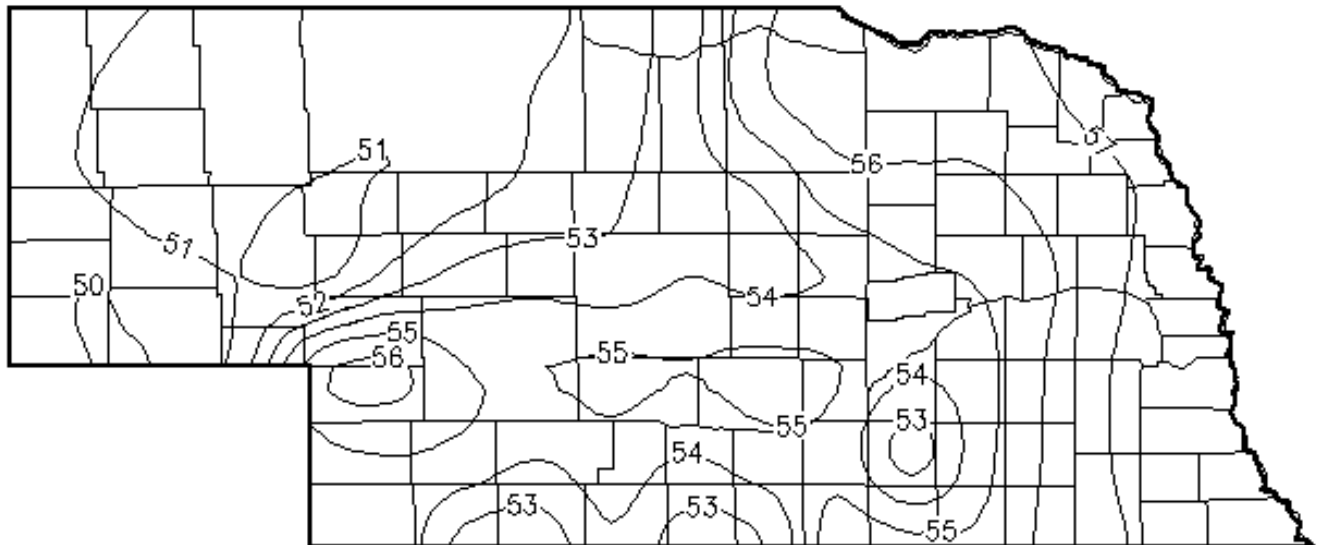
**PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF MARCH 2012<sup>1</sup>**



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



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL  
MARCH 19, 2012 – MARCH 25, 2012<sup>1</sup>**



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