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2025
DEER
NUMBERS



LET'S
TALK
HARVEST



FROM
MY SIDE
OF THE FENCE

2025 WRAP UP

- Disappointing Corn Yields
- Deer Harvest Down
- Trump's Farm Relief
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Reinke's New Facility in Romania

Reinke's new facility in Romania—an anchor point in the company's global expansion strategy—strengthens its ability to serve growers across Europe and Central Asia.

(DESHLER, Neb.)—Reinke, a global leader in irrigation systems and technology, has officially opened its newest facility in Năvodari, Romania. This expansion marks a major step in Reinke's international growth strategy, reinforcing its commitment to serving growers worldwide with precision irrigation solutions.

The new facility will serve as a regional hub for manufacturing, assembly, and distribution, enabling faster delivery times, localized support, and improved access to Reinke's full line of center pivot and lateral move systems. It also strengthens Reinke's dealer network and supply chain across Europe and Central Asia.

"This multi-million-dollar investment reflects our long-term vision to support growers wherever they farm," said Chris Roth, president of Reinke. "By establishing a strong presence in Romania, we're better positioned to meet international demand while continuing to innovate and lead in irrigation technology."

A ribbon-cutting event was held, bringing together Reinke leadership, international dealers, and agricultural partners to celebrate the milestone. The facility is expected to create new jobs and foster collaboration with local communities and agricultural institutions. "We're proud to further Reinke's legacy of excellence into Romania and the surrounding



regions," said Russ Reinke, first vice president. "This facility represents a major step forward in our international efforts and reflects our deep commitment to global agriculture and the people who make it thrive."

Reinke's expansion into Romania complements its U.S. operations and underscores its role as a trusted partner to growers globally.

For more information about Reinke and its global network of dealers, visit www.reinke.com or call 402-365-7251.

About Reinke Manufacturing

With hundreds of dealers in more than 40 countries, Reinke Manufacturing is the world's largest privately held manufacturer of center pivot and lateral move irrigation systems. Family-owned since 1954 and headquartered in Deshler, Neb., Reinke develops products and technology designed to increase agriculture production while providing labor savings and environmental efficiencies. Reinke remains a leader in industry advancements, as the first to incorporate GPS, satellite-based communications, and touchscreen panel capabilities into mechanized irrigation system management. For more information, visit Reinke.com or call 402-365-7251.

A photograph of a man in a field, likely a farmer or agricultural professional, using a smartphone to control a center pivot irrigation system. He is wearing a green t-shirt, blue jeans, and a baseball cap. He is holding the phone in his right hand, and a beam of light or signal is shown emanating from the phone towards the irrigation system in the background. The irrigation system is a long, articulated metal structure with multiple spray arms. The field is filled with green crops, and the sky is clear and blue. The Reinke logo is visible in the bottom left corner of the image.

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Disappointing Corn Yields in 2025

By Tom Hoegemeyer - Former Adjunct Professor of Practice, Roger Elmore - Emeritus Extension Cropping Systems Agronomist, Eric Hunt - Agricultural Meteorology and Climate Resilience Extension Educator, Bob Nielsen - Professor Emeritus, Purdue University, Jenny Brhel - Extension Educator

This harvest was a difficult one, plagued with breakdowns, slow-going in storm-damaged corn, and disappointing yields in areas of the state. While there were areas of the state reporting average to above-average yields, growers and seed dealers have been asking what caused the 20-40 bu/ac below-average yields experienced in other areas of the state — particularly the York/Seward and surrounding county area, and west-central Nebraska. An email thread amongst the authors resulted in the following article with our thoughts.

OBSERVED CONCERNS

Common patterns of concern in the York/Seward and surrounding areas included shrunken, lightweight kernels that appeared "shriveled/pinched" at the base of the kernel, southern rust/tar spot on leaves, and high levels of fusarium crown rot/gibberella stalk rots. Corn ears in many fields began prematurely drooping, cutting off the food supply to kernels.

At harvest, some experienced higher or equal non-irrigated yields in corn and soybean compared to irrigated fields. That is nearly always due to too much irrigation and poor irrigation timing, often occurring right before a significant rain event.

In early September, retired University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) Professor of Practice Tom Hoegemeyer shared

reports of seed corn fields yielding 15-20 percent less than anticipated, with small kernels and kernel depth shallower than expected. He felt this was due to exactly the same factors we were noting in irrigated fields in central Nebraska.

"The kernel/ear symptoms are (I think) what one expects from photosynthetic stress," Hoegemeyer said. "The fact that they appear 'pinched' may have to do with timing of that stress."

Purdue University Professor Emeritus Bob Nielsen added, "Your description of the kernels makes me think that kernel development was prematurely halted."

Hoegemeyer, Nielsen and UNL Professor Emeritus Roger Elmore all attributed the kernel symptoms to stress occurring before black layer, meaning the kernels may have prematurely died before completing the normal black layer process.

PHOTOSYNTHETIC STRESS

Much of the year we received lower-than-average solar radiation (which includes photosynthetically active radiation or PAR). There were several periods of cloudy/hazy/smoky days. That data could explain a potential cause for yield loss.

Dr. Eric Hunt shared solar radiation data for the period between July 4-Aug. 31, 2025, which demonstrated that York, Lincoln and Falls City were running deficits of -21 MJ/m², -25.2 MJ/m², and -28.3 MJ/m², respectively, during the peak of grain fill.

We were hearing reports of above-average yields in portions of northeast Nebraska. The data showed near-normal to above-average solar radiation in that part of the state.



Norfolk was below average at -10.7 MJ/m², West Point was near average at -1.3 MJ/m² for West Point, and Wayne was above average for solar radiation at +19.7 MJ/m².

At first glance, the reduced solar radiation during grain fill experienced by several counties seemed to be the major factor impacting yields. Elmore pointed out the 2025 Corn Yield Forecast articles by Dr. Patricio Grassini's team showed reduced solar radiation, higher nighttime temperatures, and reduced evapotranspiration (ET) for most of Nebraska throughout the growing season.

Yet, despite these factors, the Hybrid Maize Model was predicting average to above-average yields at the end of the growing season.

"This then points to all the biotic (living) issues you mentioned (as the main driver of photosynthetic stress)," Elmore said. "As Bob wrote, the things you've mentioned would, 'prematurely shut down

see YIELD 2025, next page



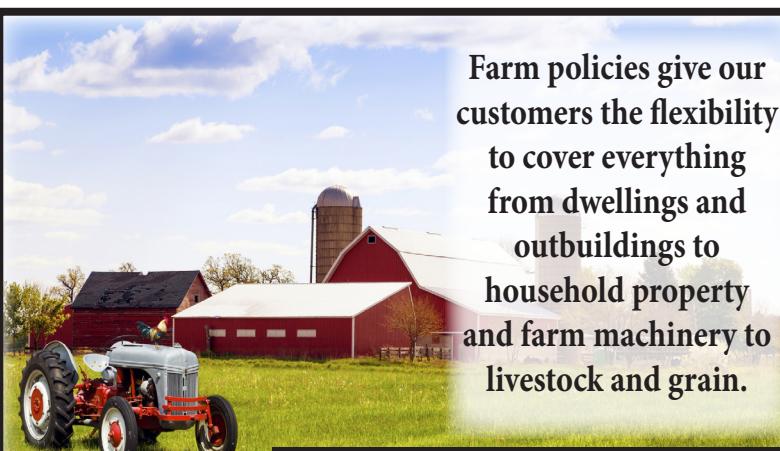
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kernel development. The drooping ears is another sign of that."

Living factors that can create photosynthetic stress on plants include leaf, root and stalk diseases. We feel that irrigated fields had the potential for greater disease, in spite of fungicides applied. Hunt mentioned the high humidity — particularly in York County — due to the sheer amount of irrigation, which may have led to increased disease pressure, including stalk rots.

"I think many producers irrigated prior to and when we got some significant rains during July," Hoegemeyer said. "Most of the water eventually soaked in but led to even higher humidities and wet leaf areas for extended periods, especially in July and August."

The spring of 2025 was dry for the York/Seward area of Nebraska and producers began irrigating early to germinate seeds and activate herbicide. This was coupled with producers experiencing drought the previous two years and sometimes the mindset of needing to irrigate.

"Photosynthetic stress and stalk rot go together like beans and weenies," Hoegemeyer said. "Each one can cause the other. We MAY have had some early infection with Fusarium/gib due to saturated soils/etc. As you know, high N rates, lower K available and a dozen other stress sources make it worse. I think most of the stalk rot is a result of other PS stress, rather than causing it initially, but I am certain that it helped accelerate death."

"I haven't seen cornfields die as fast as they did this year, at least not for decades. And as they died, they didn't die 'clean' — lots of disease, top loss reminiscent of pre-Bt days."

Nielsen added: "Severe reductions in photosynthetic leaf tissue prior to BL (black layer) due to southern rust etc., or early onset of severe stalk rots would also prematurely shut down kernel development. And, of course, ... (large) ears with excellent kernel set create a huge demand for photosynthate during grain fill, which exacerbates the negative effects of severe loss of photosynthetic leaf tissue and predisposes the stalk and root tissue to rapid fungal rot infection and development."

HOT NIGHTS

High nighttime temperatures burn sugars that should go into ears to fill kernels.

"If you look at where corn came from (Mexican high valleys, ca. 5,000 feet elevation) days during grain filling will typically be 95 degrees, but it will be 50 or 55 degrees at night," Hoegemeyer said. "It is the same where we get the highest yields (without doing the crazy fertility, etc., of contests) like the west slope of Colorado and Chile's central valley, they get similar temperatures and relatively low humidity. That's what corn wants."

SUMMARY

Dr. Tom Hoegemeyer summed it up: "I think we had lots of issues that caused PS (photosynthetic) stress, some of which impacted our irrigated acres worse than our dryland acres. (My home dryland area had lots of 200 to 220 bpa corn and 65 to 70 bpa soybeans. After a dry spring, we had more rain than we've had for years). Irrigated corn in the area often wasn't as good as the dryland, even with more N applied.

"The more stressors — hot nights, light limitations, too high N for the amount of light/PS-exacerbating disease issues, multiple leaf diseases combined with high humidity, continuous corn, etc. — the bigger

the yield loss. And, in some instances, I think adding water to these fields hurt more than it helped."



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Endicott Farm and Ranch Supply



"Why not me?" That was the thought that occurred to Doug Zabokrtsky as he was once again driving to Crete Lumber to pick up fencing supplies.

Doug has spent most of his working life working for others. He spent his whole life managing cattle and building fences. He realized that now was the time to take all these skills and apply them to the dream that was growing in his mind.

Frequent trips to Crete Lumber were necessary to pick up quality supplies. Doug knew he wasn't the only person who had to make these time-consuming trips. Being someone who believed action was the only way to bring his dream to fruition, he took that step.

Unable to find a location that would meet his specific needs, he looked closer

to home. He had a pole shed that was housing his farm equipment. So, starting in mid-September, he began the long process of converting that shed into a viable store. He had the outside space to display equipment and supplies. Slowly Endicott Farm and Ranch Supply was born.

Doug began working with closely with Crete Lumber. The owners became as excited about the prospect of a farm and ranch supply store in this area as Doug himself. They generously provided Doug with guidance and support. They also agreed to become the conduit for much of the supplies for his store.

Realizing that providing supplies to his fellow farmers and ranchers was not fully utilizing his skills, he decided that he wanted to share his knowledge along with said skills. Sharing this mastery through the store, he wanted to continue doing what he really enjoyed doing, fencing and cross fencing.

When he broached the idea with owners of Crete Lumber, they were immediately on board. They placed and order for fiber glass posts that were always in short supply to be filled as soon as possible. Doug began setting up shop, purchasing a chop saw and specialized drill that would turn raw materials into fencing posts. Hence the service portion of the business he began to develop.

"Then as soon as locals heard about me developing this business, I was asked about building fences," laughed Doug. "I hadn't thought about it but again, why not me?"

Doug has a strong reputation surrounding his ability to build and maintain high tinsel fences. He has owned and worked cattle in one farm or another his whole life. Managing his own



pastures, Doug learned cross fencing pastures increased pasturing potential by 2 to 2.5 times.

"I absolutely love this part of ranching." He proudly pointed out to his pastures. "My wife and I put those fences in right after we bought this place. That was over 30 years ago." People, knowing his reputation for his knowledge and skill in fencing, started approaching him about building fences. The second part of this service business was born.

It is taking a while to get things in place, but Doug is now on the verge of opening and his anticipation is steadily growing. He laughed saying he wished he had thought of this ten years ago but he is finally seeing his idea become a reality. "We are open to expanding our supply and/or services as people present us with needs we may not have thought of." Starting a business from the ground up is hard work but the support of his community and his lifelong interest in farming and ranching is a driving force behind Doug Zabokrtsky and he couldn't be more ready for you all to see it.

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Big Bucks ProRodeo Brings the Wild West to the Midwest: 2026 Winter Run

By: Gretchen Kirchmann

When the calendar flips to January 2026 Park City, Kansas is the first stop on Big Bucks ProRodeo Winter Run. The stock contracting firm rooted in Utah and Nevada are bringing their wild west entertainment to agricultural communities across the Midwest. The Big Bucks ProRodeo crew will transform indoor venues into rodeo arenas, bringing in dirt, setting up panels, showcasing their livestock and entertaining crowds. Diehard rodeo fans will recall Big Bucks ProRodeo purchased the Mosbrucker Rodeo Company card in 2024.

•Park City PRCA Rodeo in Park City, Kansas – January 23-24, 2026

•Council Bluffs PRCA Rodeo in Council Bluffs, IA – March 20-21, 2026

Why It Matters to Farm Families

Rodeo is more than sport—it's a celebration of rural life. From ranch-raised bucking stock to cowboys who grew up working cattle, rodeo reflects the same values farmers live by: hard work, resilience, and community. These winter rodeos offer a chance for Heartland farm families to step away from chores for an evening and share an experience that honors western heritage. The perceived cabin fever during the winter can be relieved with socialization at a rodeo.

Friday night is Kids Night—every general admission adult ticket comes with a FREE kid's ticket. This makes for affordable family entertainment and a great holiday gift to give.

Big Bucks ProRodeo a multi-generational production

Big Bucks ProRodeo was founded in 2024. It carries 75 years of rodeo heritage, blending the legendary Mosbrucker and Kerby bloodlines into a powerhouse string of bucking horses and bulls.

Cody Flitton's great grandfather, D.A. Swanny Kerby wrangled wild horses from the slick rocks of Moab, Utah. Swanny had a dream of putting on wild west shows. He became part of the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association (PRCA) in 1940 with his bred to buck horses and bulls. Bud Kerby worked with his dad from an early age, competed in the sport as a saddle bronc rider and worked as a pickup man for many years. Bud raised many horses that competed at the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo (WNFR). Flitton was born and raised

into the Kerby rodeo company and continues the tradition today as co-owner of Big Bucks ProRodeo. His wife, Linda, is the rodeo secretary and their daughters Kate and Tera work alongside their parents. The sisters also are professional trick riders performing their specialty act Stellar Trick Riding Cowgirls.

Jody Burnside and his wife Nicole are co-owners of Big Bucks ProRodeo too. They have rodeo contestant lineage dating back four generations

in the PRCA. Their family members have competed in bull riding, steer wrestling, team roping, bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, and calf roping. Their son Cache Burnside is an experienced pick-up man and brings his livestock experience to the forefront during the opening pageantry.

The PRCA-sanctioned events include bareback riding, saddle bronc, bull riding, steer wrestling, team roping, tie-down roping, and WPRA barrel racing—all under one roof.

From Las Vegas Lights to Prairie Nights Broncs and Bulls Perform

Freckles—a bay mare with Mosbrucker bloodlines from North Dakota will compete in Las Vegas this December. She was selected again to compete during the 40th anniversary of the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo Dec. 4-14, 2025.

In August, she carried Brody Wells to a 91-point ride and a \$38,000 payday at the Xtreme Broncs Finals in Rapid City, earning the high-marked bronc score of the event. "Most cowboys underestimate her," said Flitton, co-owner of Big Bucks ProRodeo.

"She looks like a sweet hopper, but she has power."

Regan Lyons drew her recently at the Helldorado Days Rodeo in Las Vegas on November 8, 2025. In October Brody Wells scored 89.50 points on Freckles at the Brad Gjermundson Extreme Broncs in North Dakota.

Park City: Kick Off the Year

Start 2026 with a bang at Hartman Arena in Park City. Friday night is Kids Night—every general admission adult ticket comes with a FREE kid's ticket. Tickets start at \$32.80 online, making it an affordable family

outing.

Council Bluffs: Spring Fever Meets Rodeo Fever

By March, the Mid-America Center will roar with rodeo action. Kids tickets are just \$5 at the box office, so bring the whole crew. This stop is a Great Lakes Circuit highlight, drawing top PRCA talent and livestock.



Big Bucks ProRodeo photo credit Click Thompson

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FROM MY SIDE OF THE FENCE

"Are you Kidding Me?"

By Dennis Kenning

I try to stay away from any political topics. The topic in this article is dear to my heart and is part of our livelihood, importing Argentina beef, and the use of tariffs. All of these years of producing beef and many years of struggling to raise cattle, now our President says we need to lower beef prices for consumers. This administration is attempting to increase the supply of beef by bringing outside beef into the country. "Are you kidding me?"

By definition this is a case of market manipulation. According to Wikipedia, "Market manipulation occurs when someone or an organization intentionally alters the supply or demand to influence the price." Clearly bringing more beef into the country is increasing the supply, thus lowering the price for the producer. Does the government tell other companies or industries that they are making too much money? Look at the profitability of companies such as Wal-Mart, Amazon, Apple, Berkshire Hathaway, or Exxon Mobile. How about the companies a farmer or rancher must buy from for seed, fertilizer, and chemical, their making a huge profit. You know when a producer sells his commodities he's at the mercy of market, there's no price fixing.

We raise and sell feeder cattle and the market has reacted to this policy of importing foreign beef. The Manhattan Commission Company in Kansas reported on November 7, 570 pound steers at \$4.22 and lighter calves in the \$5.00 range. On November 21 they quoted those same weights at \$3.75. If you do the math, that's a difference of \$267 dollars per animal. Thank you Mr. President, I now have less income and that will not make any difference in the grocery store. I have always found it interesting that even when live beef prices fall, the price at the grocery store never seems to go down.

I have always been around cattle all of my life, and there has been good and bad years. Some years you make a little, break even, or you're in the red. Someone told me that if farming or ranching is so tuff, just get out of it. Agriculture doesn't work that way, you can't jump in and out of the farming or ranching business. You don't just say, well I'm getting out of the business and I will go back into farming in a couple of years. Once you stop, you're done and when you let go of the land and other resources, you're not getting them back.

The part that bothers me, we hear that beef is too high and yet no one is talking about the costs of producing beef. None of the inputs to produce beef have gone down. Try factoring such inputs such as the costs of land, machinery, animal health, storage, transportation, and labor. When has your taxes, fuel, insurance, equipment repairs went down?

A lot of people don't understand the beef industry. A



cow produces one calf per year and this means one pay check per year. Actually, you don't get one calf per year because even under the best management you will never have a 100% calf crop. The average US calf crop is 84-85% for a commercial herd. As a producer your goal is 100% calf crop but you're going to have some loss from such things as weather, disease, abortion, acts of nature, or other factors. So that means about 15% of the cows will lose their calf, which means if it's a good female you'll keep her, and feed her for another year. This just means added expense with no income from that cow.

And then, some people say we just need younger people to expand the beef industry. That would be great! Keep in mind that more land continues to be lost to urban sprawl, green energy initiatives, transportation roadways and industrial development. At the same time, a young person starting out with nothing and no family help doesn't have a chance. I'm sorry but unless you have a rich relative that's not going to happen. It's a long time for a return on your investment. Keep in mind that it takes two years to produce offspring if you start with a heifer calf. So increasing the supply doesn't happen overnight, it will

see MY SIDE OF THE FENCE next page

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MY SIDE OF THE FENCE, from previous page

take 2 to 3 years. The bottom line is that if you want to get into the cattle business you've got to want it, make scarifies, work your tail off, and never mind that beef manure on your boots.

There are just a lot of other issues that go along with this idea of importing beef from Argentina. One issue is labeling those products with the country of origin, so consumers know. Then how will the beef come into this country, will it be boxed beef already processed or live on the hoof? It should make consumers nervous if the beef is processed in a foreign country without USDA inspection. If live cattle come into this country for processing, what safe guards are in place for the spread of disease and parasites like the most serious "New World Screw Worm". I'll be honest I'm a little nervous, with the cattle market reacting to foreign beef coming into the country. Adding to this is Tyson Meat Packing House in Lexington is closing, what will that mean to our local markets?

And then we have all this talk about tariffs and China not buying US soybeans. I don't think that people understand that agriculture is getting hooked both directions when it comes to tariffs. For example, I picked-up parts needed for a repair, examining one of the parts it read; "Made in China". As you know, the US placed tariffs on our soybeans thus making grain unaffordable for China. So as a farmer, I'm paying tariffs for products coming into the country and then taking a hit with tariffs on commodities going out to China.

It's tuff enough to make a buck in farming and ranching. The President keeps telling us that he is going to have a bailout for the farmers and ranchers. "Are you kidding me?" I don't want a bailout I just need the government to stop all this market interference. You can agree or disagree, that's just how I see it from, "My Side of the Fence".

Around the Farm

Harvest was good; it's a lot more fun harvesting when you have a good crop. Like another farmer told me, you don't mind having harvest an extra week or two, because that means there is a lot more grain. After two years of drought it's such a bless-

ing from above to have good yields. Don't get me wrong we had our share of hiccups along the way. We blew out a combine tire, and sheared off a drawbar on a tractor with the grain cart. So then we needed to get the grain off the cart and brought in the straight truck and proceeded to break the rear differential in that truck. We had an old grain trailer that we had to retire because the fifth wheel plate was breaking away from the main frame. I still think it was a good harvest with no major breakdowns, no one got hurt, and we are still talking to one another.

Cattle did well in the pasture this summer with rainfall, and the calves look great. What a difference rainfall can make for forage. Cattle are in the corn stocks and the stover is much better than previous years, once again because of the moisture. Calves are weaned and in the feedlot.

Lots of work to do this winter with equipment to repair, fence to fix, making plans for next year, and taking care of cattle. Before you know it will be calving season. I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and please remember the reason for this season.

Now Is The Time To Enroll In A Hunter Education Class

Certified volunteer hunter and bowhunter education instructors across Nebraska host classes throughout the year, but late summer and early fall are when most classes are offered.

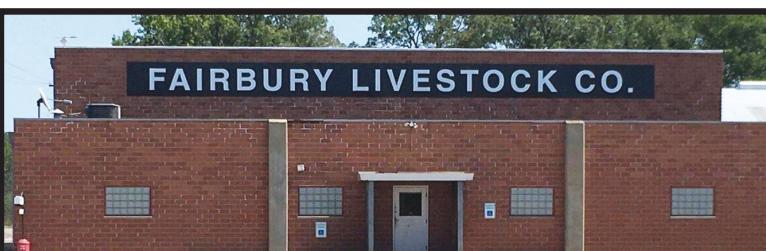
Hunters ages 12 through 29 must take firearm hunter education to hunt any species with a firearm or air gun, and bowhunters age 12 through 29 must take bowhunter education to hunt deer, antelope, elk or bighorn sheep with a bow or crossbow.

Participants must be at least 11 years old to enroll in a class. Those ages 11-15 can complete an in-person or hybrid class (online and in-person requirements). Those ages 16 and older can complete online, hybrid or in-person classes.

Apprentice Hunter Education Exemption Certificate – Anyone ages 12 through 29 who has not completed firearm or bowhunter education may purchase an Apprentice Hunter Education Exemption Certificate that temporarily exempts them from hunter and bowhunter education requirements when they follow certain rules.

For more information on the Apprentice Hunter Education Exemption Certificate, enrolling in hunter education classes, or to sign up to be notified when classes are scheduled, visit HuntSafeNebraska.org. Instructors typically schedule classes one month in advance.

Become a certified volunteer instructor – Game and Parks is seeking applicants interested in becoming a certified volunteer hunter and/or bowhunter education instructor. To view requirements and to fill out an application, visit OutdoorNebraska.gov/hunt/learn-to-hunt/become-a-hunting-mentor/ or contact Kyle Gaston at kyle.gaston@nebraska.gov or 402-471-6134.



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November Firearm Deer Harvest Down 7% Statewide

Preliminary results from the 2025 Nebraska November firearm deer season show statewide harvest fell 7% from 2024, which was expected, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

Harvest went from 28,056 last year to 26,029 this year. Given that populations are down after several years of drought, harsh winters, and disease outbreaks — and permit numbers have been reduced to aid in recovery — the lower harvest was no surprise.

Whitetail harvest is down 10% from last year. Whitetail buck harvest is off 3% from 2024. Antlerless harvest fell 26% from last year and 54% from five years ago.

Mule deer harvest rose 4% from last year. Mule deer buck harvest is up 6% from last year. Antlerless mule deer harvest is down 9% from last year and 67% from five years ago.

Game and Parks' goal is for herds to recover to a high enough population that buck harvest can increase 20% for whitetail and 25% for mule deer.

"It's important to remember herd recovery takes time," said Luke Meduna, Game and Parks' big game program manager.

"We've taken action to help our deer populations rebound. We've reduced antlerless tags 64% over the last five years and buck permit sales have been reduced more than 15% — but we have a way to go before we get back to where we want to be."

"November Firearm permits were reduced 2% and antlerless tags were reduced 20% from last year, so the changes we've seen from last year's harvest correlate with the changes in permits," he said.

Meduna added that hunters should start seeing the results of the reduced antlerless whitetail harvest in buck harvest results over the next few years.

Nebraska's deer herds have faced several years of challenges, contributing to the current results. Permit numbers and harvest were increased in 2019 and 2020 to address depredation issues affecting producers across much of the state. Since then, severe drought has affected nearly all the state, increasing hemorrhagic disease and reducing habitat quantity and quality, which negatively impacted deer abundance. Severe winters also have reduced available food sources and increased stress, further affecting



deer populations in northern Nebraska.

Available November Firearm permits have decreased each year since 2022. They decreased by 2% in 2025, 13% in 2024, 6% in 2023 and 4% in 2022.

Final harvest results will be available following the close of all deer seasons. Archery season closes Dec. 31, while muzzleloader season is Dec. 1-31. The late antlerless season is Jan. 1-15, while the River Antlerless late season is Jan. 1-15.

Hunters are invited to learn more about the 2025 season, big game research, management and more at the big game public meetings scheduled in person and online in December and January. Find a meeting at Calendar.OutdoorNebraska.gov.

Find additional information about deer management, harvest success and other hunting opportunities at OutdoorNebraska.gov.



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USDA, Trump Administration Announce \$12 Million Farm Relief

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S ADMINISTRATION RECENTLY ANNOUNCED \$12 MILLION IN ONE-TIME PAYMENTS TO FARMERS TO OFFSET WHAT THE ADMINISTRATION CALLS "UNFAIR MARKET DISRUPTIONS."

According to a statement from the USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture), "Of the \$12 billion provided, up to \$11 billion will be used for the Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) Program, which provides broad relief to United States row crop farmers who produce Barley, Chickpeas, Corn, Cotton, Lentils, Oats, Peanuts, Peas, Rice, Sorghum, Soybeans, Wheat, Canola, Crambe, Flax, Mustard, Rapeseed, Safflower, Sesame, and Sunflower."

The remaining \$1 billion of the \$12 billion in bridge payments will be reserved for commodities not covered in the FBA Program such as specialty crops and sugar, for example, though details including timelines for those payments are still under development.

The announcement indicates, "Farmers who qualify for the FBA Program can expect payments to be released by February 28, 2026. Eligible farmers should ensure their 2025 acreage reporting is factual and accurate by 5pm ET on December 19, 2025."

Nebraska Farm Bureau President Mark McHargue released a statement shortly after the announcement, "Nebraska's farm and ranch families believe in the free market and its ability to reward us for our efforts growing the food, feed, and fiber for consumers across the globe. At the same time, our businesses and our profitability are often impacted by things outside of our control including weather, international trade, and government policies both foreign and domestic."

"President Trump's announced plan to provide farmers with a 'bridge' payment given the current state of the agricultural economy is truly welcomed by Nebraska's farmers. At the same time, we remain steadfast in our support for additional policy priorities including advancing Senator (Deb) Fischer's and Congressman (Adrian) Smith's efforts to secure access to E15 year-round, and a federal legislative fix to California's Proposition 12 and Massachusetts' Question 3, as well as continued work to expand market access both domestically and abroad," wrote McHargue. "Now perhaps more than ever, Nebraska's farm and ranch families stand ready to work with President Trump and Nebraska's congressional delegation to secure these much needed policy victories."



While the news was welcomed by farmers who have been struggling with falling crop prices, increasing production costs and the loss of multiple markets, others view it as tacit admission that President Trump's trade policies are failing the American ag industry. Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden (D-Oregon) issued the following statement, "Donald Trump's trade war is taxing families, killing markets for our farm goods and driving farmers into bankruptcy. Trump's plan to bail out farmers won't even get agriculture communities back to even. They're still paying more for fertilizer, equipment and seeds, while grown-in-the-USA farm goods are facing more obstacles than ever in foreign markets. Don't forget that all of this trade destruction and taxing was to raise money for Trump's massive handouts to billionaires and the ultra-wealthy."



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From The Desk of Joni Johnson

FSA/USDA--County Executive Director

Updates from the Fairbury FSA

Our team has been busy with program implementation and working with customers to address their end-of-year needs. Here are a few things that are important for you to know as we wind down 2025 and prepare for 2026.

Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs)

If you are considering taking a Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) on your 2025 grain, and want the proceeds for this calendar year, please note we need to see you sooner rather than later to complete the loan process. Because there are several steps to securing a MAL, we suggest your request be made to the office by Dec. 23rd to enable us to process the application before our end of year payment cutoff date.

SUPPLEMENTAL DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAM (SDRP) STAGE 2

This program was announced on Nov. 24. It is designed to provide financial relief to producers with losses incurred due to certain weather-related events in 2023 and/or 2024. SDRP Stage 1, which launched earlier this year, is geared toward producers with indemnified losses. Most of you have already worked with us on Stage 1 applications. Stage 2 addresses unindemnified, uncovered, and quality losses for eligible crops, trees and vines. Applications are being accepted through April 30, 2026, but now is a good time to contact our office to learn more and apply.

FALL ACREAGE REPORTING

We were out of the office during the normal deadline for fall acreage reporting. If you seeded any crops in the fall (such as wheat, rye, triticale), and have not yet reported those acres to us, please contact us as soon as possible to complete your certification.

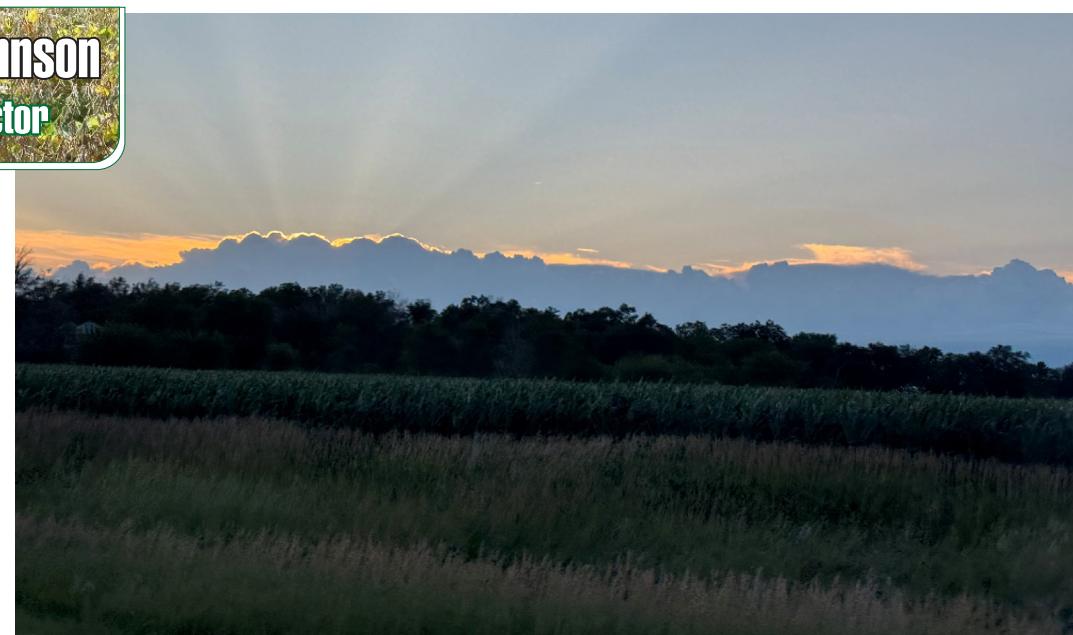
FARMER BRIDGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The recently announced USDA Farmer Bridge Assistance (FBA) program implementation will be based on FSA reported planted acres. If you have accurately completed your 2025 Acreage Reporting, no action is needed at this time for the Farmer Bridge Assistance program.

COELECTION

The 2025 County Committee election timeline has been adjusted, and ballots are to be mailed to eligible voters in Local Administrative Area #3 in early January. Ballots need to be returned to our office, or postmarked, by Feb. 2, 2026.

Jefferson County FSA Office, 305 5th St., Fairbury, 402-729-6134, fsa.usda.gov/ne



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