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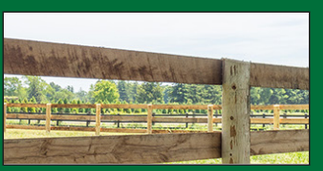
SUMMER 2026

NEBRASKANSAS
Farming Tool Magazine

CROP OUTLOOK 2026

LET'S TALK DROUGHT



FROM MY SIDE OF THE FENCE

WEATHER AND ECONOMIC CHANGES

SCREWWORMS
IMPLICATIONS FOR NEBRASKA LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS

FROM MY SIDE OF THE FENCE

DROUGHT WITH ERIC HUNT

NEBRASKA FARM INCOME PROJECTED TO REACH RECORD HIGH IN 2026

HIGHLIGHTS

▪Nebraska net farm income is projected to increase 12% in 2026, reaching a record $9.96 billion.

▪The projected increase is driven by higher government payments, continued strength in livestock markets and improved crop receipts.

▪Government payments in Nebraska are projected to rise 71% to $2.97 billion, largely from commodity program payments and ad hoc assistance.

▪Corn receipts are projected to increase 5% to $7.86 billion, supported by higher prices and inventory sales from a record 2025 crop.

▪Livestock receipts are projected to increase 3%, with cattle receipts expected to reach $21.52 billion.

▪Production expenses are also projected to reach a record high, keeping margins tight for many producers despite the strong aggregate income outlook.

Nebraska net farm income is projected to reach a record $9.96 billion in 2026, driven by higher government payments, strong livestock receipts and a rebound in crop revenue. Craig Chandler | University Communication and Marketing

Nebraska net farm income is projected to increase by 12% in 2026, reaching a record $9.96 billion, according to the latest projections from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Missouri.

Higher government payments, continued strength in the livestock sector and a rebound in the crop sector are driving the projected $1.10 billion increase over 2025 levels, according to the Spring 2026 Farm Income Outlook for Nebraska. The report is a collaboration between the Center for Agricultural Profitability at Nebraska and the Rural and Farm Finance Policy Analysis Center at Missouri.

Nebraska's projected increase contrasts with the national outlook, with projections showing U.S. net farm income holding relatively steady or declining slightly in 2026. The report attributes Nebraska's improved outlook to strong livestock receipts and the outsized impact of government payments in the state.

Government payments in Nebraska are projected to increase by $1.24 billion, or 71%, to $2.97 billion in 2026. The increase is expected to come from higher Title I commodity program payments under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act and ad hoc assistance.

The projected income reflects important support for the state's farm economy but may not tell the full story of producer profitability, according to Brad Lubben, agricultural policy specialist at Nebraska.

"Strong cattle prices and higher government payments are helping push Nebraska's projected farm income to a record level in 2026," Lubben said. "At the same time, production expenses are also projected to reach a record high. That means many producers may still be working with tight margins, even in a year when the aggregate income number looks very strong."

Total livestock receipts in Nebraska are projected to increase by $708 million, or 3%, to $23.55 billion in 2026. Cattle receipts, which account for 91% of Nebraska livestock receipts, are projected to increase by $1.09 billion, or 5%, to $21.52 billion. That's due to continued high cattle prices driven by tight supplies and stable marketings of heavier cattle, according to the report.

After three consecutive years of decline, crop receipts are projected to increase by $517 million, or 4%, to $12.01 billion. Corn receipts are projected to increase by $374 million, or 5%, to $7.86 billion, supported by higher prices and inventory sales from a record 2025 crop. Soybean receipts are projected to increase by $116 million, or 4%, to $3.08 billion.

"The crop side of the outlook is important because it marks a positive change from the past few years," Lubben said. "That does not mean margins suddenly become easy, especially with fuel, fertilizer and other costs still elevated, but it does point to some improvement in the revenue picture for crop producers."

Production expenses are projected to increase by $829 million, or 3%, to a record $30.37 billion in 2026. The report indicates key drivers are higher purchased livestock expenses, fuel costs and fertilizer costs. Purchased livestock expenses are projected at $10.55 billion, up 5% from 2025, while fuel and oil expenses are projected to increase 26% to $903 million. Fertilizer expenses are projected to increase 4% to $2.25 billion.

Looking ahead, the report projects Nebraska net farm income to decrease by $1.22 billion, or 12%, to $8.74 billion in 2027. That's primarily driven by a projected $1.32 billion reduction in government payments, assuming a substantial drop in supplemental and ad hoc program payments.

"The information in the Farm Income Outlook is intended to help policymakers, industry analysts and agricultural practitioners understand the expected profitability of the state agricultural sector and the factors driving it," said Alejandro Plastina, director of the Rural and Farm Finance Policy Analysis Center at Missouri.

"For 2026, the Nebraska outlook points to strong aggregate income, but also continued exposure to high costs, policy uncertainty and changing market conditions."

The report notes that its projections do not account for all market uncertainty and that small changes in cash receipts, production expenses or unannounced government assistance can substantially change the outlook for net farm income.

A webinar covering the report and current U.S. and Nebraska net farm income projections will be held at noon Central time on May 7. The full report and registration link are available on the Center for Agricultural Profitability's website.

Reinke Expands RC3 Remote Management Line of Irrigation Solutions

Reinke Manufacturing, announces additions to the RC3™ family of irrigation solutions. The RC3 EOS, RC3 WELL and RC3 DUAL will join the RC3 ULTIMATE as devices specially designed to seamlessly integrate with ReinCloud® telemetry.

The RC3 family of hardware products provides solutions for connecting pivots and water management equipment to ReinCloud telemetry, regardless of panel type. With an industry-leading 3-year warranty, RC3 remote management devices put the power of efficiency and productivity directly into growers' hands to monitor and control their irrigation equipment.

"Each day, growers face challenges that require them to make water management decisions that could have an impact on their crop yield," said Ken Goodall, Reinke director of North American sales. "Reinke is dedicated to developing innovative irrigation technology to help growers operate more efficiently, saving them time and money. With the expanded RC3 lineup, growers have the flexibility to select the level of control that best suits their needs, whether it is full remote control of the irrigation system or basic control and monitoring."

RC3 EOS – Works with most pivot brands, delivering complete monitoring and limited remote control through one easy-to-use interface. It is powered by ReinCloud, so information is easily accessed with the user-friendly interface.

RC3 WELL – Growers can monitor their water usage and link well controls to irrigation with the WELL. It is located at the well station where it can monitor water pressure and connect to other RC3 devices on the farm.

RC3 DUAL – Comprised of an EOS mounted on the last tower of the machine, and an ULTIMATE mounted at the main control panel, DUAL also includes an RC3 expansion module to provide additional sensor inputs.

Built to last, the RC3 EOS, WELL and DUAL components are all tightly sealed inside a weatherproof enclosure and offer growers peace of mind with the industry's best warranty.

"The RC3 hardware family is built for reliable service, season after season, making it a more cost-effective choice for growers," Goodall said. "By combining RC3 and ReinCloud for a seamless connection to their pivots, growers are able to monitor irrigation systems remotely with any smart device. That's the type of solution that saves them valuable time, money and resources."

USDA EXPANDS PAYMENT LIMITATION AND PAYMENT ELIGIBILITY

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is expanding payment limitation and payment eligibility provisions that affect program payments including allowing for the equitable treatment of business entities. Additionally, producers will benefit from an increased payment limitation for certain programs, and a broader definition of farming income that will result in more exceptions to income limitations.

"The 2026 program year will be a monumental change for farmers and ranchers who can now structure their farm entities to benefit from the legal protections of certain business structures without limiting their access to the farm safety net," said Bill Beam, FSA Administrator. "Producers have had to make difficult decisions for far too long when it comes to structuring their operations. The administration is proud to give farmers and ranchers more options to build and protect their legacy for generations to come while receiving full support from USDA."

These changes were outlined in the Working Families Tax Cuts Act which provides a large investment in American agriculture by improving eligibility provisions, the farm safety net, disaster assistance, and price support programs. USDA previously announced that this fall, producers will benefit from increased reference prices for major commodities. Today's announcement gives producers more flexibility in structuring their operations and provides a stronger safety net.

PAYMENT ELIGIBILITY

Starting with the 2026 crop year, for payment eligibility purposes, FSA will treat applicable limited liability companies (LLCs) and S-Corporations (S-Corps), and other similar entities, as "pass through entities." Each member of the qualified pass-through entity who meets actively engaged in farming criteria will help qualify the entity for expanded payments.

Previously, farm operations that were structured as an LLC or an S-Corp were limited to a single payment limitation, which varies by program. Now, partnerships, S-Corps, qualifying LLCs, and joint ventures or general partnerships will be treated the same.

For program year 2026 only, farm operations that are structured as LLCs or S-Corps or one of the new qualified pass-through entities must file updated farm operating plans with FSA for program year 2026 by Sept. 15, 2026. After program year 2026, FSA will continue to use June 1 as the date for determining ownership interest in an entity. Producers who have crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program coverage should contact their crop insurance agent or local FSA office before restructuring their farm operation to ensure appropriate timing for restructuring without impacting current insurance coverage.

Members of qualified pass-through entities must provide contributions and be engaged in farming for the entity to be considered actively engaged in farming.

An additional change allows members of all entity types to receive compensation for labor and management contributions and use the same contribution to qualify as "actively engaged in farming." This update provides consistent treatment of member contributions across all entity types.

PAYMENT LIMITATION AND ATTRIBUTION

Payment limitation changes include an increased payment limit for the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Starting with crop year 2025, the ARC and PLC payment limit will increase from $125,000 to $155,000. This payment limit will be adjusted going forward annually based on inflation.

Payment limitations are the maximum amount that a person or legal entity can receive for any crop year, directly or indirectly, through certain USDA programs. The same maximum payment limitation that applied to joint ventures and general partnerships will apply to qualified pass-through entities.

The policy change to payment limitation calculations takes effect beginning with program year 2026 for all qualified pass-through entities.

AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME

The Working Families Tax Cuts Act broadened the definition of farming income to be more reflective of modern agricultural business practices. As a result, diversified producers will not be penalized under USDA's requirements for average adjusted gross income (AGI).

Producers are exempt from the $900,000 AGI cap for conservation and disaster programs if at least 75% of their average gross income is from farming, ranching, or silviculture, which now includes agri-tourism, direct-to-consumer sales, and certain equipment sales.

Additionally, qualified pass-through entities are not required to certify compliance with the average AGI limitation at the entity level. However, members individually must meet average AGI requirements, which is the same requirement for joint operations.

STRATEGIC NEW INVESTMENT FOR DAYKIN MILLING LLC-

Central Valley Ag (CVA) recently announced what it describes as a "strategic investment" in its Daykin feed mill, Daykin Milling LLC, intending to support the evolving needs of protein production across the region.

Construction is expected to be completed in May 2027.

Daykin Milling LLC, is a partnership between CVA and Livingston Enterprises, Inc., LLC.

This investment will include expanding pelleting capabilities, additional ingredient storage, improved loadout capacity, and the addition of natural gas service.

"This investment reflects our commitment to growing alongside our customers and the broader protein production industry," said Doug Rowse, Senior Vice President of Feed at Central Valley Ag. "As production continues to evolve, we're focused on making strategic improvements that enhance efficiency, expand capacity, and position CVA to capture future opportunities."

CVA currently supports a range of livestock and poultry producers across its trade territory.

"This project reinforces CVA's long-term focus on supporting producers, adapting to market challenges, and investing in infrastructure that enables sustainable growth," Rowse said.

Crop Progress

Nebraska Corn, Soybean Stay on Pace as Wheat Struggles Through Extreme Drought
From the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Nebraska corn and soybean development remained largely on track with historical averages last week, while sorghum planting made strong progress and matched the five-year pace.

Dry conditions continued to shape the broader crop outlook, particularly for winter wheat, oats, and pasture and range. Winter wheat development was slightly ahead of normal, but crop condition ratings continued to reflect the impacts of drought and spring stress. Oats and pasture conditions were also limited, with most ratings falling in the fair to very poor categories.

For the week ending June 15, 2026, there were 5.6 days suitable for fieldwork. Soil moisture supplies remained a concern statewide, especially at the subsoil level, where a majority of acres were rated short to very short. Topsoil moisture supplies rated 30% very short, 26% short, 39% adequate and 5% surplus, while subsoil moisture rated 28% very short, 35% short, 35% adequate and 2% surplus.

FIELD CROPS REPORT:

CORN

▪Emerged: 97% — equal to 97% last year and the five-year average.

▪Condition: 1% very poor, 7% poor, 37% fair, 46% good, 9% excellent.

SOYBEAN

▪Planted: 98% — slightly ahead of 97% last year and equal to 98% for the five-year average.

▪Emerged: 92% — slightly ahead of 91% last year and the five-year average.

▪Condition: 1% very poor, 7% poor, 37% fair, 46% good, 9% excellent.

Sorghum

▪Planted: 84% — well ahead of 66% last year, but equal to 84% for the five-year average.

WINTER WHEAT

▪Headed: 96% — ahead of 93% last year and 92% for the five-year average.

▪Condition: 58% very poor, 28% poor, 10% fair, 4% good, 0% excellent.

OATS

▪Headed: 54% — equal to 54% last year, but behind 58% for the five-year average

▪Condition: 22% very poor, 28% poor, 41% fair, 9% good, 0% excellent.

Pasture and Range:

▪Condition: 47% very poor, 32% poor, 16% fair, 5% good, 0% excellent.

Data for this news release were provided at the county level by USDA Farm Service Agency, Nebraska Extension, and other reporters across the state.

Emergency EQIP Assistance Extended for Nebraska Producers Affected by Wildfires

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is extending the deadline to offer critical assistance to Nebraska farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners affected by recent wildfires. This sign up for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) will remain open and applications are being accepted from producers impacted across the state until July 31, 2026.

Nebraska NRCS is actively providing both technical and financial assistance to help landowners recover from wildfire damage and restore the health and productivity of their working lands. NRCS understands the value and the need to extend this emergency EQIP opportunity, eligible producers may receive support for a variety of conservation practices, including:

▪Repairing or replacing damaged livestock grazing system infrastructure,

▪Restoring and or replacing valuable forage resources essential for livestock needs.

Producers affected by the wildfires need to contact their local USDA Service Center as soon as possible to complete an application and early start waiver if necessary. NRCS staff are available to assess damage, develop conservation plans, and help determine which practices best support recovery efforts.

FROM MY SIDE OF THE FENCE

By Dennis Kenning

THE WAR ON FLIES

I love sending the cow and calf pairs to pasture. It's their natural habitat. After being on pasture for just one week, I see a difference in the cattle. After two weeks I see shiny hair coats on both the cow and the calf. I always tell the grandkids that these are truly happy critters with room to roam, grass up to their belly, and those tails swishing and flicking. Those tails are swishing not because of contentment, but because of those nasty flies. So the battle begins: the war on flies.

Some producers seem unconcerned about fighting this war on flies. But here's the deal, cattle are worth some money so why not get ever pound you can? I can't stand, pulling into a pasture and finding flies covered all over animals. We know that flies can lead to weight loss, poor growth, hide damage, and unneeded stress. Flies can transmit several diseases and especially pinkeye. If left untreated pinkeye can cause complete blindness. During the summer you're busy with farming and now you need to catch a cow for treatment. That's not very handy. Over the years I've tried a number of treatments including pinkeye vaccinations, back rubs, fly baits, pour-on, and insecticide sprays. This year I went back to using fly tags and trying mineral with Altosid. I don't think you can totally stop flies in cattle, but you can at least reduce those big numbers. I feel like some fly control is better than no treatment. The fly tags may run out of their chemical residue before the end of the season, but at least I've slowed them down for a while.

As we look into the future the War on Flies will be even more important with the additional of the New World Screwworm (NWS). New World Screwworm is a parasitic fly that lays its eggs in any fresh wound or body opening. These opening can be mouth, nose, rectum, and navels. The larvae hatch and burrow into living tissue. This causes un-healing wounds, illness, and if untreated the result is death in just one to two weeks. Flies are drawn to wounds from tick bites, minor wire cuts, injection sites, and navels of new born calves. Wounds will increase in size, generally bloody and produce a foul smell because the screwworms are feeding on the flesh.

If you think that New World Screwworm is just a cattle problem, then guess again. According to the US Commission for the Eradication and Prevention, of the those cases showed: 85% were bovine, 6% canine, 3% swine, 3 % equine, and one case in a human. Keep in mind it can infect any warm blooded animal. The USDA is well aware of the problem. According to the Drovers.com, the screwworm infestation has moved through Central American into Mexico. Now several new cases have popped up in the United States. Most of the cases have occurred in Texas, but now a dog has NWS 400 miles away in New Mexico.

I appreciate the USDA trying to place certain restrictions to stop the spread of New World Screwworms. These restrictions have included the closing of the Mexico and US Border. They have also launched a Sterile Insect Program, Border Surveillance, and Rapid Containment Protocols. This is going to be a very difficult to stop the movement of flies. Think about it, flies don't just travel on livestock. Flies can travel on other animals, in trailers, vehicles, and animal to animal. New World Screwworms can spread so easily with many rodeos, livestock, and horse shows. Competitors travel from hundreds of miles away, leading to the spread of NWS across the country. Also think about how fast flies multiple, usually in 7 to 10 days.

The New World Screwworm is not a topic for most Americans, but it should be. This topic affects a lot of people, not just farmers and ranchers. We already have short supply of beef, this could add to the problem. Many people have pets such as dogs and cats, which are subject to infestations. If you enjoy hunting wildlife keep in mind that they are warm-blooded animals. Let's not forget the other animals such as sheep, goats, equine, swine and remember New World Screwworm can be found in humans. I'm not writing this article to portray doom and gloom, but hopefully make people more aware of the problem and what the USDA is doing to tackle the situation. There is some early research showing that Ivermectin will play a part in this problem. Fly control will always be a problem if you have livestock. New World Screwworm is another reason to wage the war on flies. That's just how I see it "From My Side of The Fence."

AROUND THE FARM

Like all springs we have been super busy with planting, field work, custom farming, working cattle, hauling cattle to grass, and repairing fence. All this moisture has been a blessing from above. We had some hail and wind damage to roofs and some the rain came hard and heavy. The run-off was great for filling ponds and one dam is really eroded away due to all that water. I'm not complaining the moisture is great and hopefully it continues throughout the growing season. Crops really look good but don't count your bushels until there in the bin.

I had a bull run over me, which lead to a trip to our local ER. I was very fortunate, it could have been much worse.

We are planning to dig a new well because our water table has dropped. In 1980, we dug a new well which produced over 10 gallons a minute and now we have less than 3 gallons per minute.

It makes it tuff for a household while needing water for livestock and the sprayer. Traveling across the country, I'm concerned about the number grain bunkers that are still filled with corn. Hopefully grain moves and there is no problem going into harvest. I hope everyone has a good safe summer and stay away from those bulls.

Until next time, may the good Lord bless you and keep you.

Changing Irrigated Agriculture--Francis Hayes

New Study Details Changing U.S. Irrigated Agriculture, Viability Strategies

By Frances Hayes - Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute

A new study by researchers at the Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute at the University of Nebraska offers a comprehensive national-scale assessment of irrigated agriculture in the United States in recent years. Published in Agricultural Water Management, the findings carry important implications for the future of food production, water policy and rural livelihoods across the country.

The study, "Irrigated agriculture in the United States: Current status and future frontiers," draws on multiple datasets supported by robust geospatial analysis to paint a detailed picture of where irrigated agriculture stands today, where it is headed and what must change if the U.S. is to sustain its role as a global food security anchor. The study is a collaboration by Daugherty Water for Food scientists Ivo Zution Gonçalves, Christopher Neale, Thais Murias Jardim, Regiane de Carvalho Bispo, Randall Ritzema and Renata Rimšaitė.

Irrigated agriculture in the U.S. remains geographically concentrated. Five states — California, Nebraska, Arkansas, Texas and Idaho — account for about half of all irrigated farmland nationally. The study notes that water management decisions in these states carry outsized consequences for domestic food production.

The researchers identify a gradual eastward shift in irrigated agricultural activity. As groundwater depletion, particularly in the High Plains Aquifer, constrains production in parts of the Great Plains and West, some agricultural expansion is occurring in eastern states where surface water and rainfall are more abundant. The authors note this shift has implications for water infrastructure, land use and agricultural policy in regions not historically associated with large-scale irrigation.

Corn and soybean acreage under irrigation has grown in recent years, while irrigated area for alfalfa, cotton and rice has declined. The study attributes these shifts to a combination of market conditions, regional water availability and efforts to use limited water supplies more efficiently.

Adoption of low-flow irrigation methods and soil moisture monitoring has increased across the country. However, the study finds that adoption is uneven, with small and medium-sized producers often lacking the capital and technical resources to implement advanced irrigation systems. The researchers describe the gap between available technology and widespread practice as an ongoing challenge.

The paper documents pressure on water resources from several directions: groundwater depletion, climate variability, and rising energy and operational costs. In key irrigated regions, aquifer levels are declining faster than they are being replenished. The study also highlights governance challenges, including fragmented water rights systems and inconsistent regulatory oversight, which complicate management at the scale current conditions require.

The authors call for stronger groundwater monitoring and policy frameworks; broader adoption of precision irrigation practices; and expanded access to irrigation technologies for smaller producers. They argue that effective water governance will be as important as technological investment in determining the long-term sustainability of U.S. irrigated agriculture.

The Drought Monitor released last week shows that much of the western half of the state is still in severe drought (D2) or worse with an area of exceptional drought (D4) in the Panhandle and portions of southwest Nebraska. However, the percentage of all drought categories has improved somewhat in the last few weeks. Furthermore, roughly 20 percent of the state is now free of drought and 9 percent of the state (all southeast NE) has no drought or abnormal dryness.

RECENT MOISTURE

The last 30 days have delivered significant moisture to much of south central and southeastern Nebraska, pockets of good moisture to west central sections of the state, and below average precipitation to much of the Panhandle and the area north of O'Neill.

Water-year deficits and surpluses

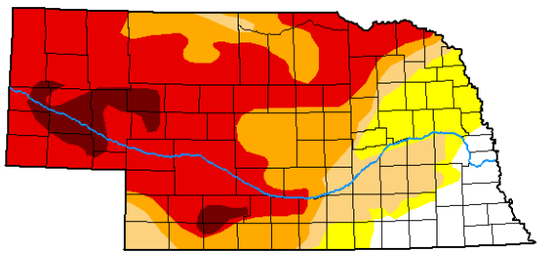
The water year to date (starting October 1) departure from normal map shows that the rainfall over the past month has led to an eradication of WYTD deficits across much of the southeast quadrant of the state, with some significant surpluses between Beatrice and Auburn. Deficits have improved a bit across southwestern Nebraska. However, deficits are still significant in most of the Panhandle, Sand Hills, and are closing in on 10 inches to the north of O'Neill where exceptional drought was in place the week before.

SOIL MOISTURE

The recent precipitation has not necessarily left a truly full profile of root zone moisture (outside a few spots in southeast NE) but it has improved for many of us. Most of south central and eastern Nebraska are now safely above the 30 percent available water threshold in the top 2 meters according to NASA's SPORTLIS (Short-term Prediction Research and Transition). However, the western half of the state is still short of that mark, meaning vegetation is much more likely to experience stress without supplemental water through irrigation. Fire danger risk will remain elevated on any days with lower humidity and wind until this situation improves.

U.S. Drought Monitor

Nebraska



June 9, 2026

(Released Thursday, Jun. 11, 2026)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	9.01	90.99	80.89	69.64	49.98	5.98
Last Week 06-02-2026	6.87	93.13	82.95	75.18	55.04	8.80
3 Months Ago 03-10-2026	3.92	96.08	89.46	40.99	8.45	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-06-2026	2.38	97.62	42.11	10.91	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 09-30-2025	65.62	34.38	9.08	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 06-10-2025	0.41	99.59	86.00	25.06	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

None
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Moderate Drought
D2 Severe Drought
D3 Extreme Drought
D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx

Author:

Brian Fuchs
National Drought Mitigation Center

From The Desk of Joni Johnson
FSA/USDA--County Executive Director

Updates from the Fairbury FSA

It's been a challenging planting season with storms containing high winds, hail and, much needed rain. During this busy time, don't forget to contact the FSA office when you're done with spring planting, so we can set up a time for you to pick up your maps and fill them out with crops planted, plant dates, etc. and then return them and set up an appointment to complete the certification process.

Please remember prevented plant and failed acres should be reported to us as well. Reporting prevented plant and failed acres ensures maintenance of acreage history and is important to maintain eligibility for potential program benefits. Prevented planting is the inability to plant the intended crop acreage with proper equipment by the final planting date for the crop type because of a natural disaster. Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest, but because of disaster-related conditions, the crop failed before it could be brought to harvest.

To complete your 2026 acreage certification, you must sign form FSA-578 by July 15, 2026. Thank you for your assistance with this annual process.

Base Acre Allotment

Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced eligible landowners have from June 1 until Aug. 31, 2026 to review and consider base acre increases on farms enrolled in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, as authorized by provisions included in the Working Families Tax Cuts Act, also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act.

The Act provides landowners with the opportunity to increase base acres in preparation for enrollment in ARC and PLC beginning with the 2026 and future crop years. Nationwide, up to 30 million new base acres can be added by eligible farms.

FSA began notifying eligible landowners, by direct mail, that Base Allocation Summaries outlining potential base acre increases will be available for review beginning June 1, 2026. These Base Allocation Summaries can be accessed online at fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc using a Login.gov account. Landowners who do not currently have a Login.gov account are encouraged to contact their local FSA county office to obtain their Base Allocation Summary beginning June 1, 2026. The Base Allocation Summary should be reviewed and any necessary actions completed by Monday, Aug. 31, 2026.

COC Election

The 2026 County Committee nomination period begins June 15, 2026. Local Administrative Area (LAA) #2 is up for election this year. LAA #2 contains the townships of Eureka, Meridian, Richland, Lincoln and Fairbury. Nominations will be accepted through August 3, 2026. If you live in LAA #2 and would be interested in filing a nomination form to run for a spot on our County FSA Committee, contact the office to set up a time to stop in and submit a nomination form.

New World Screwworm Returns to North America: Implications for Nebraska Livestock Producers

By Dave Boxler, Nebraska Extension Educator, Matt Hille, DVM, MS, PhD Diagnostic Veterinary Pathologist and Nebraska Extension Specialist

The New World Screwworm (NWS), Cochliomyia hominivorax, is among the most destructive livestock pests ever encountered in the Western Hemisphere.

Unlike most fly species whose larvae develop in decaying organic matter, New World Screwworm larvae feed exclusively on live tissue of warm-blooded animals.

This feeding behavior causes severe localized tissue destruction, promotes secondary bacterial infections, reduced productivity, animal welfare concerns, and frequently death if infestations are not detected and treated promptly.

Re-emergence and Northward Expansion

The current outbreak began in 2023 when Panama and Costa Rica reported increasing numbers of Screwworm cases north of the traditional containment zone at the border of Panama and Columbia. Since then, the pest has expanded throughout Central America and into Mexico.

By June 2026, more than 171,700 animal cases and over 2,000 human cases had been reported across Mexico and Central America. Infestations have been documented in livestock, companion animals, wildlife, and humans.

Detection of New World Screwworm in Texas

A major development occurred on June 3, 2026, when USDA-APHIS confirmed New World Screwworm in a three-week-old calf in Zavala County, Texas. The infestation was identified in the calf's umbilical region. This represented the first confirmed case in the United States in decades and demonstrated that the pest had successfully crossed the international border.

Within days, USDA confirmed two additional cases, including another calf in La Salle County, Texas, and a dog in Andrews County, Texas. Investigations suggested that the dog had recently traveled from Mexico. These detections triggered an aggressive federal and state response designed to contain and eradicate the infestations before establishment of a reproducing population could occur.

Biology and Economic Importance

Adult female Screwworm flies are attracted to fresh wounds on warm-blooded animals.

Common sites of infestation include branding wounds, dehorning sites, castration wounds, ear tag injuries, tick bites, surgical incisions, and the navels of newborn animals.

Females deposit eggs around wound margins, and larvae hatch within hours.

Unlike secondary myiasis-producing flies that consume dead tissue, Screwworm larvae aggressively invade healthy living tissue. As the larvae feed, wounds become progressively more severe.

The odor associated with the infestation attracts additional female flies, often resulting in multiple generations of larvae within a single wound.

Left untreated, infestations can lead to severe tissue damage, bacterial infections, toxemia, debilitation, and death.

The broad host range of New World Screwworm contributes significantly to its economic importance. The pest attacks:

- Beef and dairy cattle
- Sheep and goats
- Horses
- Swine
- Companion animals
- Mammalian and avian wildlife species.

Because wildlife can serve as reservoirs, eradication and containment efforts are substantially more challenging than those for many other livestock pests.

USDA APHIS Response and Management

The progressive spread of NWS cases northward through Central America over the past 3-4 years has allowed regulatory officials to develop appropriate management strategies in the event of a detection in the United States. Given the increase in cases over this time period and the progressive geographic spread, the recent cases in Texas are not surprising and more cases should be expected.

The previous NWS eradication efforts by the US of the 1960s were extremely successful in eventually pushing the pest down to southern Panama. Thankfully, these efforts have provided a proven blueprint for regulatory officials to follow relative to the current outbreak.

In April of 2026, the USDA published an updated version (V2) of what they call their NWS Response Playbook which incorporates many of the same strategies proven successful in the 1960s. The NWS Response Playbook lays out 8 primary activities which include:

1.Effectively manage a coordinated response and communications with stakeholders and the public

2.Reduce the spread of NWS and prevent established populations in new areas

3.Manage NWS on infected premises

4.Implement NWS surveillance and management strategies in wildlife

5.Implement NWS fly surveillance and management strategies

6.Maintain continuity of business

7.Ensure information flow and management

8.Identify and maintain resource requirements.

One of the most important techniques for NWS management includes implementing sterile insect technique (SIT).

A unique behavior of female NWS flies is that they only mate once in their life.

Sterile insect technique (SIT) involves rearing sterile flies and releasing them into areas with established adult fly populations to promote matings involving sterile males and wild-type females.

The result is a female fly that will lay non-viable eggs for the remainder of her life (about 3 weeks), effectively removing her from the reproductive population. Over time, the continual release of sterile flies results in fewer and fewer reproductively viable adults leading to eradication.

Unfortunately, the current availability and capacity to produce sterile flies is much lower than what is needed to effectively eradicate the fly again. The USDA has made efforts prior to the official US detections to dramatically increase production. While SIT is currently in use along the US-Mexico border, it will likely be fall of 2027 before the sterile fly production and dispersion facilities in the works are fully functional. This means that while the long-term prospect of successful eradication is very promising, we will need to be diligent in our management practices in the meantime to minimize the geographic spread until an adequate number of sterile flies are available.

Implications for Nebraska Livestock Producers

NWS populations of larvae and pupae do not survive sustained soil temperatures below about 46 °F which means the likelihood of an established population in Nebraska is very unlikely. However, given the time required to ramp up sterile fly production, Nebraska remains susceptible to NWS during the warmer months.

The most significant risk for the state of Nebraska currently is the introduction of NWS larvae via animal transport into the state.

Although only a small number of U.S. cas-

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es have been confirmed to date, livestock producers should remain vigilant as new detections are likely to occur in southern states. Producers should routinely inspect livestock and monitor for:

- Foul-smelling wounds
- Visible maggots in wounds of living animals
- Enlarging or non-healing lesions
- Excessive licking or irritation
- Unusual restlessness or discomfort
- Infestations associated with navels, branding sites, dehorning wounds, or castration sites.

Veterinarians should be consulted immediately whenever screwworm infestation is suspected. Rapid reporting and response are essential components of containment efforts.

NWS is officially designated as a Category 1 Foreign Animal Disease requiring immediate reporting in all 50 states. Anyone who suspects NWS adults or larvae on their operation should contact their local veterinarian, the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, and/or the USDA immediately. Early detection remains the most effective defense against widespread establishment.

Contact information for additional NWS information:

Nebraska Department of Agriculture: 402-471-2351

USDA: 402-434-2300

Weather and Economic Changes Brings Mixed Blessings

Pat Baxa, Seed Sales Specialist for Polansky Seed out of Belleville, Kansas, has some observations about the current climate.

Baxa told Farming Tool, "Wheat yields will be less than last year mostly due to spring drought stress and late spring freezes. Corn and soybeans have had positive starts due to favorable moisture received except where areas of severe weather from hail and high winds have damaged/destroyed."

While recent storms have wreaked havoc across central and eastern Nebraska, the rains were definitely needed in that part of the country, that has suffered under drought conditions for years. Baxa put it bluntly, ***"Precipitation helps everything."***

Of course, it is not just weather that can help or hurt both the farmer and the seed supplier. Increasing expenses for everything from farm equipment to fertilizer to fuel have been putting the squeeze on every element of the ag business for years.

"Rises in fuel cost as any input increase, definitely makes a difference in the bottom line," said Baxa.

Recent announcements from the White House about the potential reopening of the Straight of Hormuz, a vital waterway where both oil and urea (an important component of fertilizer) bring hopes that both fertilizer and fuel costs may soon come. However, it is unclear how soon the ag business will see those reductions or if they will, in turn, translate into cost reductions in all the other things farmers and their suppliers must buy to keep operating.