



Nebraska Weather and Crops

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Issue NE-CW 0908

Released March 3, 2008

Agricultural Summary: For the month of February 2008, below normal temperatures made livestock care difficult for producers who had to worry about newborn calves. Precipitation during February was below normal as well with the exception of areas along the South Dakota border. As the month ended, soil temperatures were above freezing across the majority of the state except for an area in the northeast. In the southwest, soil temperatures were reaching the lower 40's. Activities included calving, hauling grain, paperwork, and equipment maintenance.

This release is based on data from FSA county directors, county extension educators, NOAA, and the High Plains Regional Climate Center. County comments and reports can be found at:

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

Weather Summary: At the end of February snow depth averaged less than one inch across the entire state. The Southwest and South Central Districts reported none. Precipitation and temperatures for the month were below normal.

Field Crops Report: **Wheat** conditions remained near last month and rated 1 percent very poor, 6 poor, 36 fair, 51 good, and 6 excellent, near last year's condition of 59 percent good or excellent. **Hay and forage** supplies rated 2 percent very short, 12 short, 85 adequate, and 1 surplus well above year ago levels.

Livestock, Pasture, and Range Report: **Cattle and Calves** conditions rated 0 percent very poor, 2 poor, 19 fair, 75 good, and 4 excellent, well above year ago levels. Calving progressed to 22 percent complete with calf losses near average.

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

NORTHWEST

DAWES: Hay supplies are low with a lot of hay being trucked in. Calving is moving into high gear.

SIOUX: Snow is still covering much of the rangeland; however, warm weather threatens to melt most of it.

NORTHEAST

ANTELOPE: Cold temperatures have been very difficult for cattle producers so far, with very few days over freezing. Ice remains on the ground. Snow cover remained until the beginning of this week. Farmers are preparing equipment for spring and actively hauling grain.

CEDAR: Cedar County has had a return to normal winter with conditions much colder than the last few years. Snow and ice have been on the ground since the first part of December with very little thawing until the last week in February. Cattle have been given hay and silage most of the winter as the corn and bean fields have been covered with snow.

CENTRAL

BUFFALO: There is some concern among producers that the ice that we had early and stayed most of the winter could potentially damage some of the wheat and alfalfa. We will not know the damage, if any, until the crops start to green up.

DAWSON: Farmers are gearing up for spring by attending informational meetings, gathering up inputs, and repairing equipment. Calving is coming into full swing with pretty normal results to this point.

EAST

DODGE: Producers are attending chemical registration meetings and other types of meetings. Lots of grain has been hauled to town since the better weather conditions.

MERRICK: If it were not for drifts of snow still in the fields we would have no snow cover, but in some places there are still snow filled ruts and drifts. The melted snow remains in some areas of the fields and turns to ice when temperatures are below freezing, which is most of the time.

SOUTHWEST

FRONTIER: Warm weather and wind has finally thawed the remaining snow and ice. Ranchers are getting a good start on calving and the weather is cooperating with them.

SOUTH CENTRAL

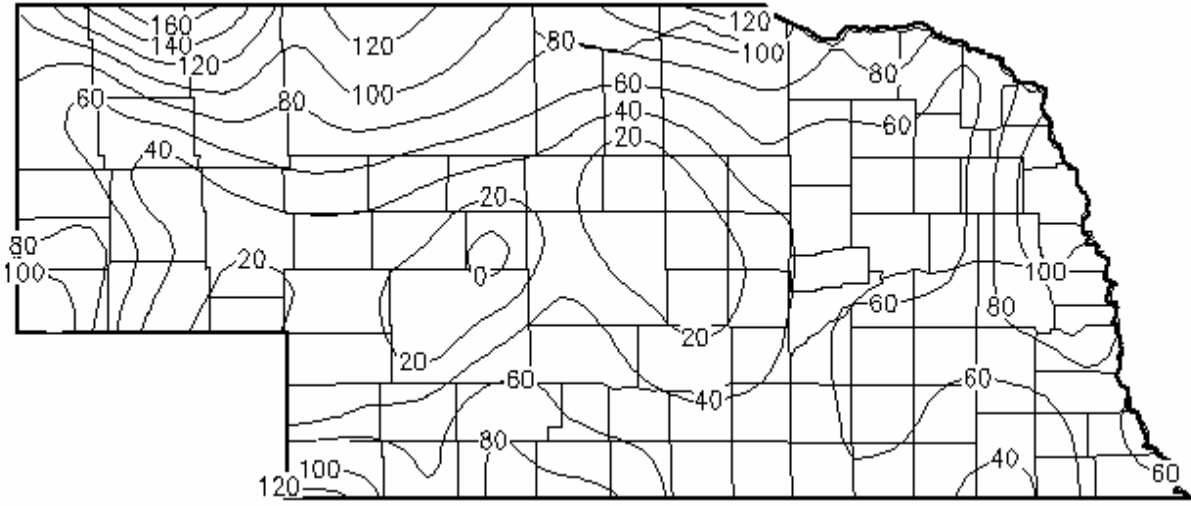
ADAMS: Crop conditions are normal for this time of year. Cold weather has had some affect on livestock but most producers are just starting to calve, so it hasn't affected a large amount.

HARLAN: The ice has finally left the fields open for livestock grazing. The only snow left is in road ditches and shaded areas. I think that most of the frost has gone from the open areas. The wheat looks ok at this time as it was under cover for most of the coldest temperatures this winter.

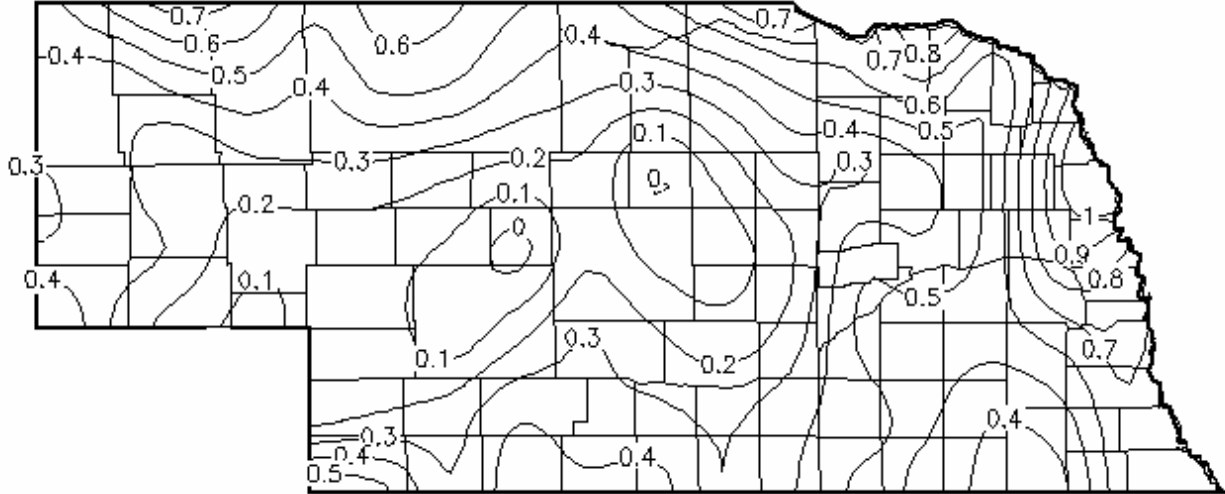
SOUTHEAST

JOHNSON: We have received above normal moisture for the month of February. Activities include calving, hauling grain, preparing income tax returns, and maintenance on equipment for spring field work.

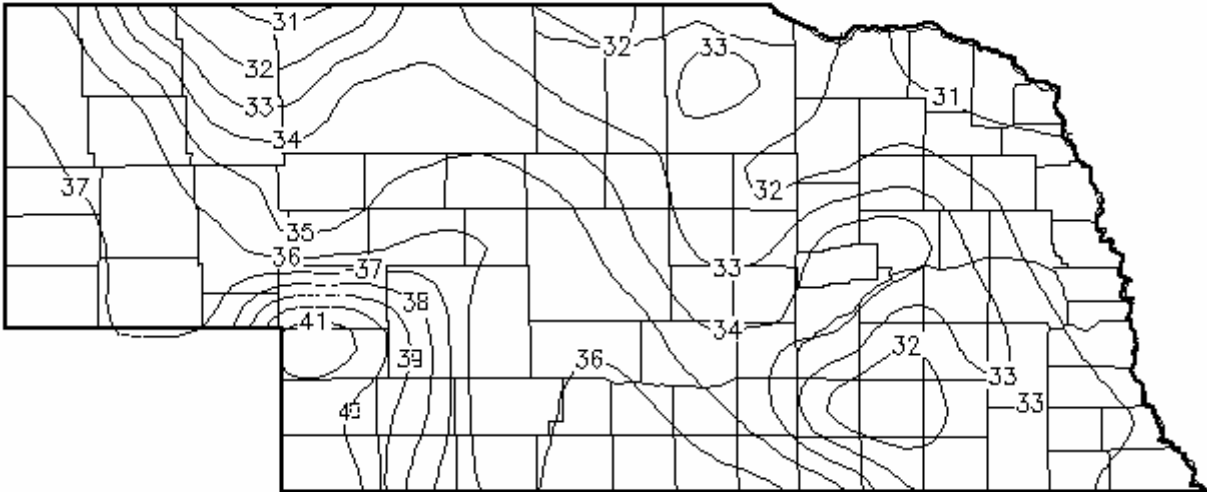
PRECIPITATION AS PERCENT OF NORMAL FOR FEBRUARY 2008¹



PRECIPITATION IN INCHES FOR MONTH OF FEBRUARY 2008¹



**SEVEN DAY AVERAGE TEMPERATURE AT THE FOUR INCH DEPTH UNDER BARE SOIL
FEBRUARY 25, 2008 – MARCH 2, 2008¹**



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