



Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch

An Introduction

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Home

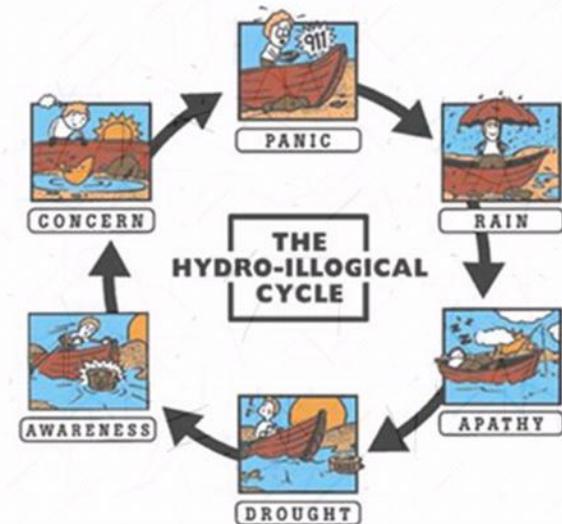
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Welcome to the National Drought Mitigation Center

Save the date: Dec. 13

The next webinar organized by the Engaging Preparedness Communities working group of the National Integrated Drought Information System will be Dec. 13, 2011, at noon central time. To register or for more information, please contact Nicole Wall, nwall2@unl.edu, 402-472-6776.

Pause Slideshow



Mission: To lessen societal vulnerability to drought by promoting planning and the adoption of appropriate risk management techniques.

<http://drought.unl.edu>

Drought is a Normal Part of Climate



1930s



1974-77

Farms wither

Wells dry, herds cut

JUN 22 1988

By Robert C. Bjorklund

Farm editor

Lack of pasture, a shortage of hay, the increasing need to sell cattle and drying of wells is putting Wisconsin farm families to the test as they become more desperate with worsening drought conditions, the Governor's Drought Task Force reported Tuesday.

- There are possible drought winners/3A
- Heat won't let rainfall soak in/3A
- Hay harvests are approved/3A
- Area fireworks are jeopardized/1B
- How some people beat the heat/1B

Peter Senn, state executive director of the Wisconsin Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Committee, said farmers may not have any crops to harvest if these conditions persist.

"Farmers are cutting everything green but the trees," he said. "They are harvesting canary grass and marsh hay on marshland they haven't been able to put a tractor on in 30 years."

Wisconsin's five dairy farms have sold up to 100,000 head of water as a result of the drought. The state's stock market has also suffered. The state's share of the shipment of cattle to bring numbers in line with expected feed supplies had led to panic conditions among farmers in parts of Richland and Trempealeau counties.

Normally, feed supplies would be at their seasonal peak in late June, but this year county Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices reported that farmers in four counties would be out of feed in July.

An ASCS survey showed feed supplies would be depleted in August in 11 counties, in September in 29 counties, in October in four counties and in November in 10 counties. Only two counties had enough feed to last farmers through February.

The task force met to prepare a set of drought assistance recommendations that Gov. Tommy Thompson will take to Chicago for Thursday's meeting of the National Governors Association Agriculture Committee. The committee will meet with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng.

One of Thompson's emergency measures, a 30-day authority to get permits to pump water from rivers, streams or lakes, has resulted in 312 permits being granted, Robert Roden, of the state Department of Natural Resources, reported.



1952-56

Baylor University, Texas Collection



1999-2007

Planning: Can it REALLY Help?

- Many recommend having a plan for drought
- Just paperwork and busywork?
- What difference will it make?



Let's Ask Some Folks Who Have a Drought Plan



- Daybreak Ranch
- Reed-Hamilton Ranch
- Tippets-Myers Ranch
- Shamrock Ranch
- Adams Ranch
- Alexander Ranch
- Welch Ranch
- Johnson Ranch



Common Strategies

- Maximize health and flexibility of the overall operation
- Drought Plan: *WHAT* to do during drought and *WHEN*
- When conditions require it, implement the plan and don't second-guess it
- After drought, plan to restore the health of all parts of the ranch operation
- Monitor the plan, and improve as you learn

2012

Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch

A Planning Guide for Great Plains Ranchers



University of Nebraska - Lincoln
National Drought Mitigation
Center



Available Online at:
www.drought.unl.edu/ranchplan



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This guide to help rangeland managers better prepare for and manage drought is a project of the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) and other collaborators at UNL, South Dakota State University, and Texas A&M Kingsville. This project was made possible through funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Risk Management Agency.

Much of the content of this handbook and the companion website was developed with information provided by Dr. Pat Reece, Professor Emeritus at UNL and now owner/consultant with Prairie Montarie Enterprises, LLC.

The handbook and website were developed by, and will be maintained by, the National Drought Mitigation Center. Comments and questions about the handbook and website can be directed to the NDMC at ranch_ndmc@unl.edu or 402-472-6781.

<http://drought.unl.edu/ranchplan>

DROUGHT MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS:

- ⇒ Communication and Planning Partners
- ⇒ Ranch Vision and Objectives
- ⇒ Understanding of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats during Drought
- ⇒ Inventory of Ranch Resources
- ⇒ Critical Dates for Making Decisions
- ⇒ Monitoring Schedule
- ⇒ Management Strategies : Before, During, and After Drought
- ⇒ Ongoing Review of Drought Plan

WORKSHEET 4: CRITICAL DATES AND TARGET CONDITIONS

Date _____ Form Completed by _____

Critical dates are timely monitoring points in annual management cycles. Current and predicted forage resources are the primary focus of critical dates.

Each critical date should have an action plan that clearly states target points for initiating the plan.

Target points may be based on carrying capacity of current forage or a percentage of average precipitation, i.e., 75%.

See "Identify Critical Dates and Targets" at <http://www.drought.unl.edu/ranchplan> for suggested critical dates by region.



CRITICAL DATE	TARGET CONDITION

WORKSHEET 7: EVALUATE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES DURING DROUGHT

Date _____ Form Completed by _____

DROUGHT STRATEGIES	IS IT FEASIBLE?	WILL IT HAVE AN IMPACT?	WILL BENEFITS OUTWEIGH COSTS?	TO CONSIDER?
FORAGE SAVING STRATEGIES				
FINDING ALTERNATIVE FEEDS & FORAGES				
FINANCIAL STRATEGIES				
FAMILY & PEOPLE STRATEGIES				
OTHER				

<http://drought.unl.edu/ranchplan>

Overview

Drought Basics

Inventory & Monitor

Before Drought

During Drought

After Drought

Write a Plan



Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch

Overview

Register Login

Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch

Drought is a normal part of climate...it will happen again. Fortunately, there are things you can do before, during, and after drought to reduce your risk. Ranchers are increasingly implementing new ways to better prepare for and respond to drought.

The information, strategies and resources on this site are designed to provide livestock producers in the [Great Plains region](#) with information on how to incorporate management strategies to reduce the threat drought poses to livestock and forage operations.

[Download "Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch" Handbook](#)

Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch: Great Plains Examples

South Dakota



[Daybreak Ranch](#)
(Central)

Nebraska



[Tippets-Myers Ranch](#)
(Western Sandhills)
[Reed Hamilton Ranch](#)
(Sandhills)
[Shamrock Ranch](#)
(Southwestern)

Kansas



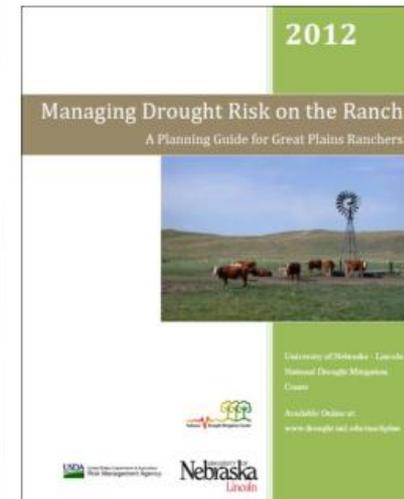
[Alexander Ranch](#)
(South Central)
[Adams Ranch](#)
(North Central)

Colorado

[Welch Ranch](#)
(Southern)

Texas

[Johnson Ranch](#)
(West Central)



[How to use this site](#)

Drought Conditions

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#)

[Water Year Precipitation \(Oct. 1st to present\)](#)

Today!

- Use cards to ask questions. We will use these during discussion in final ½ hour of the workshop.
- Use the handbook to keep notes and thoughts, it may be a start to your plan.
- Please fill out the workshop info form now as we get started. We'll collect those at break.



Thank you!

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<http://www.drought.unl.edu/ranchplan>

