

Tri-Basin Irrigator

Volume 21, Issue 2

May 29, 2025

PROGRAM INFORMATION

EQUIP: CONTRACTS ARE BEING OBLIGATED FOR 2025 FUNDS. MORE CONTRACTS WILL BE OBLIGATED AS FUNDS BECOME AVAILABLE. **SIGN-UP NOW FOR 2026 FUNDS TO ENSURE NOT MISSING THE CUTOFF DATE.**

CSP: CONTRACTS ARE BEING OBLIGATED FOR 2025 FUNDS. MORE CONTRACTS WILL BE OBLIGATED AS FUNDS BECOME AVAILABLE. **SIGN-UP NOW FOR 2026 FUNDS TO ENSURE NOT MISSING THE CUTOFF DATE.**

NSWCP: NSWCP FUNDS ARE APPROVED MONTHLY FOR FLOW METER ONLY AND SOIL MOISTURE SENSOR APPLICATIONS. ALL OTHER IRRIGATION APPLICATIONS FOR UNDERGROUND PIPE, SURGE VALVES, ETC. ARE REVIEWED FOR FUNDING 4 TIMES A YEAR, SEPTEMBER, DECEMBER, FEBRUARY, AND MAY (FOR SLIPPAGE).

NEW FUNDS COME JULY 1ST SO GET YOUR IRRIGATION APPLICATIONS IN BY AUGUST 31ST IN ORDER TO HAVE FIRST CHANCE AT THE NEW FUNDS IN SEPTEMBER. APPLICATIONS MUST BE SIGNED BY THE OWNER. INSTALLATION WORK CANNOT BE STARTED UNTIL APPROVED. - AS A SIDE NOTE, ALL NON-IRRIGATION APPLICATIONS ARE APPROVED MONTHLY.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY GRANT: IN 2025, THEY ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT APPLICATIONS FROM APRIL 1ST THROUGH JUNE 30TH. WITH THAT, **THE NEXT APPLICATION DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 30TH.** IN ADDITION, THE COST-SHARE RATE RIGHT NOW IS UP TO 25%. THIS GRANT / PROGRAM IS FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO IRRIGATION SYSTEMS SUCH AS CONVERTING GRAVITY SYSTEMS TO PIVOTS OR SDI, AND NATURAL GAS/PROPANE/DIESEL ENGINES TO ELECTRIC MOTORS, WELL REBOWLS, ETC. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT JOLENE AT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE KEARNEY USDA SERVICE CENTER AT 308-455-9840 OR AT JOLENE.JONES@USDA.GOV.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2: CNPPID BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
JUNE 9 THRU AUG 31: CNPPID 12 WEEK IRRIGATION SCHEDULE
JUNE 14: FLAG DAY
JUNE 15: FATHER'S DAY
JUNE 18: TBNRD BOARD MEETING
JUNE 19: JUNETEENTH – BANKS & GOV'T OFFICES CLOSED

Tri-Basin Irrigator via EMAIL

Benefits of receiving this newsletter via email:

1. Access to websites via direct links
2. You will receive via email weekly Crop ET from the TBAWMN information.
3. Can read it from your phone.

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, please provide me with your email address. Call me at 308-995-6121, Ext. 3, call your local NRCS office (see contact info. on page 4), or you can email me at curtis.scheele@usda.gov.

CURTIS'S COLUMN

Now is the Time to Install Soil Moisture Sensors

If you have soil moisture sensors to install, now is the time to be getting them installed for best accuracy. You want to install these at emergence or shortly thereafter in order to not destroy larger crops and to let the crop roots grow naturally around the sensors. This will also give the soil time to gel around the sensors by irrigation season.

Accurate soil moisture readings can help you better schedule your irrigations, potentially saving you money.

If you are getting paid for sensors from EQUIP or CSP contracts, you need to get these installed. If you don't have them yet, you need to be getting them so that they can be installed in a timely manner for 2025. Contact your local NRCS office for more information.

Soil Moisture Conditions – Do You Know???

After a very dry off-season and running pivots to germinate seed, do we know our current moisture levels in the soil profile?

A lot of conversations these days involve needing more rain. It seems easy to get caught up in what we hear all the time.

Does hearing repeatedly that we need more rain make us turn on the pivot? If so, then we need to regather our thoughts, eliminate the emotions, and figure out what our soil profile looks like so we can make good sound irrigation decisions. Let's not get too quick in spending money, wasting water, wearing out equipment, and leaching nitrates into the groundwater.

A week ago, I installed sensors in a dryland field and a couple of pivot fields, all next to each other northwest of Holdrege about 3-4 miles. These fields are treated the same, pivots separate. See moisture levels in the table below.

| As of 11 AM on Wednesday, May 28, 2025 Pivot - No-till Soybean planted into Corn Holdrege Silt Loam soil (2.25 inches per foot) | | |
|---|---------|--------------|
| Soil Depth | Dryland | Avg 2 Pivots |
| 1 foot | 100 + % | 100 + % |
| 2 foot | 86% | 100% |
| 3 foot | 53% | 100% |
| 4 foot | 61% | 99% |
| 4 ft. avg. | 67% | 100% |

The dryland has some work to do to get full but we can't control that. One pivot was a little drier than the other one. It could have been run less this spring or was dried down more last fall. After irrigating this spring and the recent rains, we are at or near a full profile on the pivots. This can vary by rainfall amounts and our irrigation management strategies.

Having sensors on a dozen sites for 9 years from 2011-2019 across the Tri-Basin NRD, corn and soybean pivots ended the year in that 75-80% moisture level on average. Never as bad as dryland and never as bad as the dry talk around town if we let that dry talk affect our irrigation decisions.

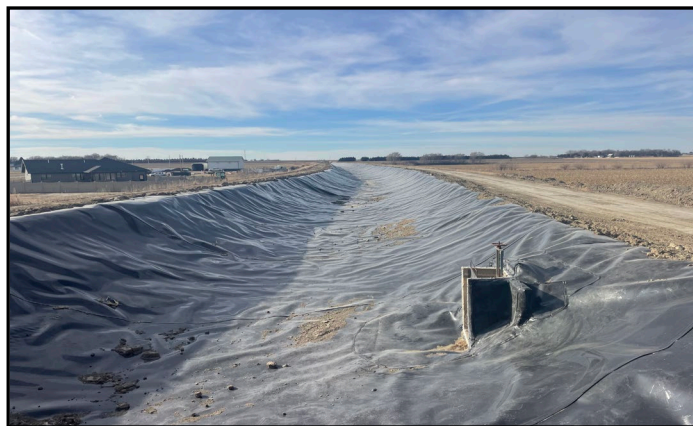
To know where we are moisture wise, soil moisture sensors are an excellent tool in knowing what the moisture levels are to 3-4 feet. They also show you the depths of where the moisture is being taken from during the crop season. The sensors will help take the emotion out of the dry talk.

CNPPID NOTES



Axtell Protection Project

During the fall of 2024, Central protected portions of the E65 and Phelps irrigation canal systems by installing geomembrane synthetic canal liner. The canal liner was installed along the bed and banks of the canals creating an impermeable layer that separates the canal water from the surrounding soil to prevent erosion and piping (leaks) through the canal banks. The largest protection effort was near Axtell where over a mile of liner was installed. Lined sections of canal reduce Central's long term maintenance cost while reducing the risk of a canal breach. Lined canals also eliminate seepage ensuring nearly zero loss for the water Central customers pay to have conveyed, which then allows more water to be used for growing crops (which is the intended beneficial use of the water). Central will continue to identify areas of the irrigation system where this protective liner can be installed.



Visit www.cnppid.com or follow @CNPPID on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for updates throughout the year.

TRI-BASIN NRD NEWS



CHEMIGATION DEADLINE JUNE 1ST

Check Flowmeters Before Starting Irrigation

Please check the flowmeters on your wells before starting irrigation this season. Double check that your beginning meter reading matches the reading from the end of last season. Check the meter periodically throughout the season to confirm it is working properly. This benefits both you and Tri-Basin NRD. Keeping accurate irrigation records helps you be more efficient, which in turn will help your bottom line. It is the responsibility of the producer to make sure the flowmeter is functioning properly during the irrigation season.

Please be aware that **Senninger brand flowmeters** will not work properly if the battery size is not correct. **These meters require lithium 3.6-volt batteries, NOT standard 1.5-volt AA batteries.**



NEBRASKA EXTENSION EXTRAS



Grazing Exchange

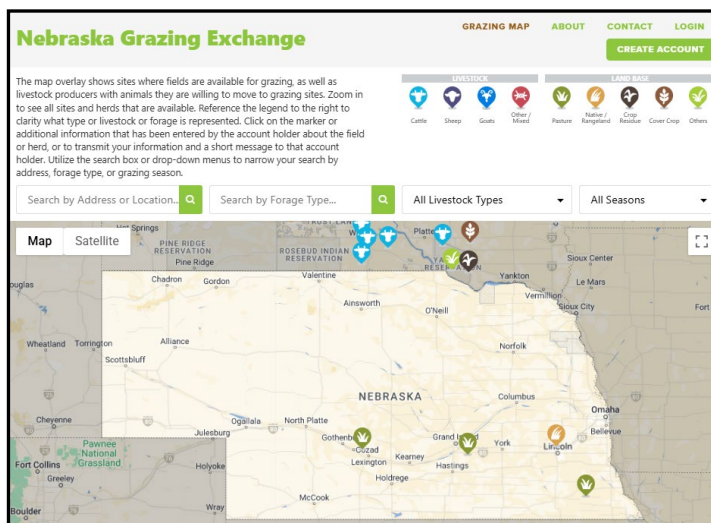
The Nebraska Grazing Exchange is an online platform designed to connect livestock owners with landowners who have available forage land. It serves as a matchmaking service to promote rotational grazing, land stewardship, and soil health across Nebraska.

The platform helps reduce feed costs for ranchers while providing landowners with ecological benefits like reduced weed pressure and enhanced nutrient cycling. There are producers all over the United States and some in Canada!

You can go to the Nebraska Grazing Exchange website at <https://nebraskagrazingexchange.com/> to create a free account.

You can create a pin by entering your information about either your grazing herd or about the land you have available for grazing. After you create a pin, other producers can see what you have and connect with you! In the photo below you will catch a glimpse of how this works.

If you have any questions, you can contact Alexa Davis with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources at alexa.davis@nebraska.gov or at 402-471-3948.

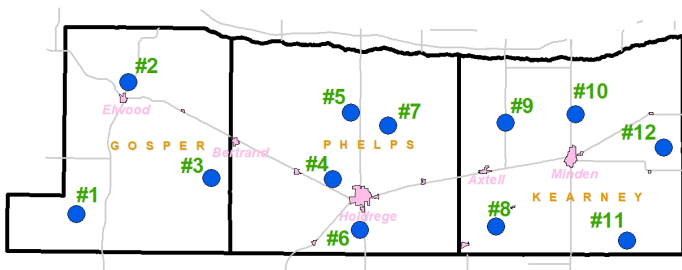


NAWMN CROP ET INFORMATION

Additional Information and other ET resources can be found at websites listed under "Crop ET Information" below.

$$\text{Inches of Crop Water Use (ET)} = \text{Reference ET} \times K_c$$

| | May 12 – May 18 | | May 19 – May 25 | |
|------|-----------------|------|-----------------|------|
| Site | Reference ET | Rain | Reference ET | Rain |
| 1 | NA | NA | 1.10 | 0.45 |
| 2 | NA | NA | 1.10 | 1.14 |
| 3 | NA | NA | 1.10 | 0.54 |
| 4 | NA | NA | 1.50 | 0.83 |
| 5 | NA | NA | 0.80 | 1.07 |
| 6 | NA | NA | 1.20 | 0.51 |
| 7 | NA | NA | 0.80 | 0.64 |
| 8 | NA | NA | 1.30 | 0.53 |
| 9 | NA | NA | 1.00 | 0.84 |
| 10 | NA | NA | 1.10 | 0.69 |
| 11 | NA | NA | 1.10 | 0.54 |
| 12 | NA | NA | 1.10 | 0.66 |



2025 Map of TBAWMN Sites across the Tri-Basin NRD.

Crop Coefficients (Kc)

| Corn | | Soybeans | |
|--------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| Stage | Kc | Stage | Kc |
| 2 leaf | 0.10 | Cotyledon (VC) | 0.10 |
| 4 leaf | 0.18 | 1st Node (V1) | 0.20 |
| 6 leaf | 0.35 | 2nd Node (V2) | 0.40 |
| 8 leaf | 0.51 | 3rd Node (V3) | 0.60 |
| 10 leaf | 0.69 | Beg. Bloom (R1) | 0.90 |
| 12 leaf | 0.88 | Full Bloom (R2) | 1.00 |
| 14 leaf | 1.01 | Beg. Pod (R3) | 1.10 |
| 16 leaf | 1.10 | Full Pod (R4) | 1.10 |
| Silk – Beg. Dent | 1.10 | Beg. Seed (R5) | 1.10 |
| ¼ Milk Line | 1.04 | Full Seed (R6) | 1.10 |
| Full Dent (½ Milk) | 0.98 | Yellow Leaf (R6.5) | 1.00 |
| ¾ Milk Line | 0.79 | Beg. Mat. (R7) | 0.90 |
| Black Layer | 0.60 | Full Mat. (R8) | 0.20 |
| Full Maturity | 0.10 | Mature | 0.10 |

CROP STAGE INFORMATION

Corn (V1-1 Leaf to V7-7 Leaf stage): At V6, the determination of kernel rows per ear begins which is strongly influenced by hybrids, the growing point and tassel are above ground, and the stalk is beginning to elongate.

Avg. daily water use from May 19 – May 25 was 0.01"-0.11".

Soybeans (VC-Cotyledon to V3-3rd Node stage): At V2, lateral roots are proliferating rapidly into the top 6 inches of soil between rows. Nitrogen-fixation begins at V2-V3.

Avg. daily water use from May 19 – May 25 was 0.01"-0.15".

May 19-May 25 (12 of 12 TBAWMN sites reporting): Average weekly rainfall was 0.70 (range 0.45 to 1.14). Average weekly ET for corn was 0.17 and for soybeans was 0.51.

CROP ET INFORMATION

TBAWMN Sites: <https://www.tribasinrrd.org/tbawmn>

CropWatch: <https://cropwatch.unl.edu/gdd-etdata>

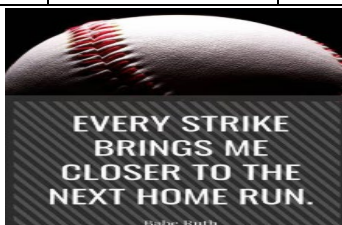
Texting: Sasha Hahn at TBNRD: 308-995-6688

| CORN STAGE | | DESCRIPTION |
|---------------|------------|---|
| V2 | 2 Leaves | Leaf stage is defined by number of leaves with visible collars. The collar is a discolored line where the leaf meets the stalk. This line circles the stalk. TIP: Mark the 6th leaf or a higher leaf by cutting a notch in it or some other way so as to know that leaf number. Reason is the lower leaves will be lost as the plant develops. Flag or somehow mark the plant in the field as a reference plant when determining later leaf (vegetative) stages. |
| V6 | 6 Leaves | |
| V8 | 8 Leaves | |
| SOYBEAN STAGE | | DESCRIPTION |
| VC | Cotyledon | Shortly after emergence. Cotyledons and unifoliate leaves are unfolded. (1 node) |
| V1 | First Node | One trifoliate leaf has 3 leaflets. V1 is the first trifoliate leaf with unrolled or unfolded leaflets. Leaflet edges are no longer touching. (2 nodes = 1 unifoliate + 1 trifoliate) |
| V3 | Third Node | V3 has 3 nodes on main stem, each with a trifoliate leaf with unfolded leaflets. Plant as 4 nodes total: 1 unifoliate + 3 trifoliate |

LAKE AND RIVER LEVELS

CNPPID Reservoir Elevation and Capacity as well as Platte River Flow data listed below and other locations can be found on CNPPID's website at <http://cnppid.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/lakeRiverData.html>.

| | May 29, 2025, 8:00 AM | 1 Year Ago |
|--|--------------------------|------------------------|
| El. & Cap. – Lake McConaughy | 3236.2 ft - 57.6% | 3242.3 ft - NA% |
| Inflows to Lake McConaughy | 1250 cfs | 933 cfs |
| Flows on the North Platte at North Platte | 1650 cfs | 458 cfs |
| Flows on the South Platte at North Platte | 321 cfs | 348 cfs |
| Flows on the Platte at Kearney | 1950 cfs | 669 cfs |



WEBSITES OF INTEREST

NRCS Nebraska www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov
 Farm Service Agency www.fsa.usda.gov
 TBNRD Home Page www.tribasinrrd.org/
 Central Irrigation District www.cnppid.com/
 UNL Cropwatch cropwatch.unl.edu
 UNL Extension extensionpubs.unl.edu/
 Drought Monitor <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/nadm/Home.aspx>
 No-till On The Plains www.notill.org
 Soil Health: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/soils/health/
 NE State Irrig Assoc www.nebraskastateirrigationassociation.org/

RAINFALL

Rainfall amounts listed below and other locations come from NeRAIN which can be found at website <https://nednr.nebraska.gov/NeRain/Maps/maps>.

| Location: | May 15 – May 28 | May 1 – May 28 |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Elwood 1.81 mi. NW: | 2.07 | 2.56 |
| Loomis 0.2 mi. SW: | 1.50 | 1.92 |
| Holdrege 1.7 mi. W: | 0.91 | 1.04 |
| Minden 7.2 mi. W: | 1.25 | 1.30 |
| Minden 5.8 mi. E: | 2.62 | 2.67 |

Average Rain for May in Holdrege = 4.06 Inches

*** If you wish to receive this newsletter via e-mail, or have any questions, comments or ideas, feel free to contact Curtis Scheele at the NRCS office in Holdrege or you can email him at curtis.scheele@usda.gov. ***

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

1609 Burlington Street
 PO Box 798
 Holdrege, NE 68949-0798
 308-995-6121, Ext. 3

309 Smith Street
 PO Box 41
 Elwood, NE 68937-0041
 308-785-3307, Ext. 3

1005 South Brown Street
 Minden, NE 68959-2601
 308-832-1895, Ext. 3

Central Nebraska Public Power & Irrigation District

415 Lincoln Street
 PO Box 740
 Holdrege, NE 68949
 308-995-8601



Tri-Basin Natural Resources District

1723 Burlington Street
 Holdrege, NE 68949
 308-995-6688



Nebraska Extension



1308 2nd Street
 Holdrege, NE 68949
 308-995-4222

PO Box 146
 Elwood, NE 68937
 308-785-2390

424 North Colorado
 PO Box 31
 Minden, NE 68959
 308-832-0645

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