

Tri-Basin Irrigator

Volume 22, Issue 5

July 9, 2026

PROGRAM INFORMATION

EQIP: SIGN-UP NOW FOR 2027 FUNDS TO ENSURE NOT MISSING THE CUTOFF DATE.

CSP: CONTRACTS ARE BEING PREPPED FOR RANKING FOR 2026 FUNDS. SIGN-UP NOW FOR 2027 FUNDS TO ENSURE NOT MISSING THE CUTOFF DATE.

NSWCP: NEW NSWCP FUNDS CAME JULY 1ST. IRRIGATION APPLICATIONS FOR UNDERGROUND PIPE, SURGE VALVES, ETC. ARE REVIEWED FOR FUNDING 4 TIMES A YEAR, SEPTEMBER, DECEMBER, FEBRUARY, AND MAY (FOR SLIPPAGE). APPLICATIONS MUST BE SIGNED BY THE OWNER. INSTALLATION WORK CANNOT BE STARTED UNTIL APPROVED.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY GRANT: AS OF NOW, USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT IS NOT ACCEPTING NEW APPLICATIONS DUE TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 14315. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT JOLENE JONES AT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AT THE KEARNEY USDA SERVICE CENTER AT 308-455-9840 OR AT JOLENE.JONES@USDA.GOV.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 22: TBNRD BOARD MEETING
JULY 17-20: KEARNEY COUNTY FAIR
JULY 21-25: GOSPER COUNTY FAIR
JULY 25-30: PHELPS COUNTY FAIR
AUG 3: CNPPID BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

REMINDER!!!

Leaf Tissue Samples

For CSP contract holders who need to complete corn leaf tissue samples as a part of your CSP requirements for your 2020 payment, now would be a good time to start planning for this.

EQIP Dryland, No-till, & Grass Field Checks!!!

NRCS will be starting their annual field checks for dryland, no-till, and grass contract obligations for EQIP contract holders. These checks will take place starting in July sometime. **Failure to comply with your EQIP contract could result in termination, repayment of funds, and/or penalties.**

Ultrasonic Flow Meter Measurements Are Available!!!

If you wish to request an ultrasonic flow meter measurement, you can contact Curtis Scheele, NRCS, at 308-995-6121, Ext. 3 OR Pat Nott, TBNRD, at 308-995-6688 to schedule an appointment.



CURTIS'S COLUMN

Profit or Yield – What's Your Goal?

In the last issue of this newsletter was a summary of nitrogen/yield comparisons from the 2025 UNL On-Farm Research Results publication. I ended my column with "It's worth it to try something, learn from it, which can ultimately save more money in the long run." The long run is not looking at one year and saying it doesn't work. Every year is different. Hopefully you are looking at how much you are making over the long haul. Ya, you might lose some in one year. Are you losing in the long haul to avoid that one year? How much do you actually lose versus the gain in other years?

Below is a chart showing results of UNL On-Farm Research from 2021 thru 2025. Listed are the results showing which nitrogen rates were the most profitable on pivots. I did not include research with biologicals or technology. Same results.

I used \$0.70 per pound of nitrogen and \$4.50 corn. Ex. On line # 1, the most profitable nitrogen rate for this research field was 80 lbs lower than the producers rate, 3 bushel less yield than the producers yield, and \$42.50 more profit per acre than the producer based on nitrogen and yield costs.

	#'s of N Diff	Yield Diff	\$ per Ac Diff
1	-80	-3	\$ 42.50
2	-90	-2	\$ 54.00
3	-90	-6	\$ 36.00
4	-39	-4	\$ 9.30
5	-59	-1	\$ 36.80
6	-40	-2	\$ 19.00
7	-30	6	\$ 48.00
8	-50	-3	\$ 21.50
9	-82	-4	\$ 39.40
10	-20	3	\$ 27.50
11	0	0	\$ -
12	-40	-3	\$ 14.50
13	-60	-7	\$ 10.50
14	-118	3	\$ 96.10
15	-105	-6	\$ 46.50
16	-40	-3	\$ 14.50
17	-41	-1	\$ 24.20
18	-43	-1	\$ 25.60
19	0	0	\$ -
20	-40	0	\$ 28.00
21	-35	3	\$ 38.00
22	-35	3	\$ 38.00
23	0	0	\$ -
Average	-49	-1	\$ 29.13

If the producer was the most profitable, then I entered 0 difference in nitrogen and yield, thus no profit since the producers rate is the baseline. You will notice only 3 of 23 scenarios where the producer was most profitable.

On average, the most profitable came with 49 less pounds of nitrogen than what the producer applied, yielding 1 less bushel, but profiting \$29.13 per acre more than the producer.

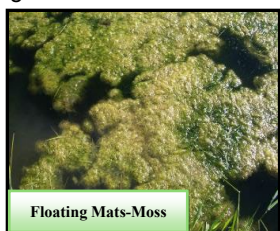
The 3 blue projects are the ones in Kearney County that Pat Nott and myself assisted with over the last three years.

When I look at this, I see how much money is being wasted on nitrogen and watching it leach into the groundwater.

Aquatic Weeds

Aquatic weeds, such as filamentous algae/moss and sago pondweed can make delivering surface water through a canal system difficult without mechanically removing or making treatments throughout the irrigation season to control the aquatic weed growth.

Filamentous algae/moss start as hairlike strands that grow toward the water's surface, eventually forming floating mats. Sago pondweed is a bottom rooted aquatic weed that grows up towards the water's surface and grows very thick, which can eventually slow or stop the movement of water. Excess nutrients from fertilizers, stormwater runoff from fields, wastewater, abundant sunlight, and warmer temperatures are key factors in providing the essential need to fuel and feed these aquatic weeds, which causes them to grow and eventually break off which can plug the screening and the flow of water to the irrigation system. Central's irrigation division is constantly on the lookout to control these aquatic weeds before they grow and hinder the delivery of surface water for irrigation.



Floating Mats-Moss



Sago Pondweed

Find us at www.cnppid.com or @CNPPID on Facebook, Instagram, X and LinkedIn.

Visit *Colors of Water Tool* <https://cnppid-cow.vercel.app>

TRI-BASIN NRD NEWS**Assistance to Treat Infestation**

Invasive **Phragmites australis**, also known as **common reed**, is a highly aggressive perennial plant that thrives in wet environments such as rivers, ponds, creeks, ravines, and road ditches. It spreads rapidly through both seeds and rhizomes, allowing it to expand its presence significantly within a single season. Unfortunately, it offers no forage value for livestock or wildlife, making it a problematic species.

Landowners must control phragmites on their property as it is on Nebraska's Noxious Weed list. The Twin Valley Weed Management Area (TVWMA) and Platte Valley Weed Management Area (PVWMA) have worked diligently over the past several years to combat phragmites along river channels. The TVWMA and PVWMA, with grant funding from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, can aid landowners in treating phragmites.

If you have phragmites on your property, contact your County Weed Superintendent to see if you are eligible to have it sprayed free of charge.

Gosper:

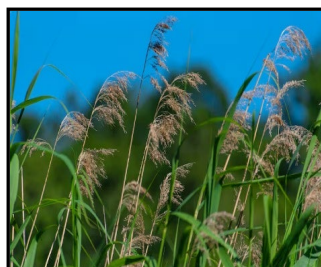
Marty Craig: 308-324-3771

Phelps:

Jim Clappitt: 308-991-0139,

Kearney:

Joe Anderson: 308-832-2854

**A Day with The TAPS Competition**

On July 7th, I had the opportunity to attend two field days for the yearly TAPS competition. The first was in Gothenburg, NE, at the Bayer Research Farm, formerly the Bayer Water Learning Center. While there, we learned about their new Preceon short corn lines, including some food-grade lines they're currently developing. We were also able to tour the plots that are part of the TAPS program, belonging to teams currently competing.

My team doesn't have plots at this location, so I took the opportunity to scout for active diseases and found common smut on the leaves and stalks of corn. Common smut generally occurs when injury to the plant allows fungal spores to enter and germinate. I also found some bacterial leaf streak, a fairly common foliar bacterial disease.

I then attended the TAPS field day in North Platte, NE, where my team has irrigated corn plots, and checked on the general health of those plots. I found no disease pressure at all. The difference in disease severity between the two locations comes down entirely to environment.

What I love about the TAPS program is that it lets farmers and industry experiment with different irrigation, fertility, and hybrid choices throughout the year — there's also a marketing component built in. TAPS brings in new technologies to try out as well, from ET and soil moisture sensors to fertility programs like Sentinel Ag. If you have practices you want to test but don't want the risk on your own farm — or if you believe your current practices are already the best and could win the prizes this program offers — TAPS gives you the chance to find out.

#ScoutNebraska

This year, Nebraska Extension launched a new social media initiative that Extension Educators have been using across the state. Dr. Dylan Mangle and Talon Muse (Extension Instructor in Buffalo Co.) introduced the initiative at the Plant Pathology Program Planning meeting in Scottsbluff, NE. Since then, myself and several other Educators have been posting under the #ScoutNebraska hashtag.

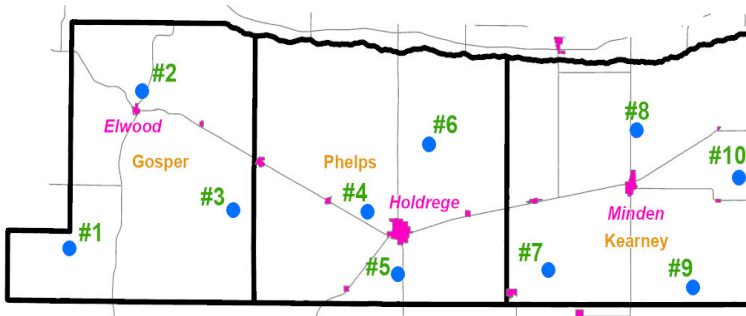
Our posts have racked up thousands of views covering a variety of topics. I post mostly on X under the handle @modernscholar2, sharing short videos about the disease conditions I'm seeing, along with any new or exciting trends in ag. I'd encourage everyone to search the hashtag on YouTube, Instagram, or X to see what we're up to.

NAWMN CROP ET INFORMATION

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

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

	June 22 – June 28		June 29 – July 5	
Site	Reference ET	Rain	Reference ET	Rain
1	1.30	0.62	2.50	0.85
2	1.20	2.40	2.10	1.40
3	1.20	2.45	2.30	0.61
4	1.20	1.94	2.10	0.43
5	1.10	2.25	2.10	0.50
6	1.20	1.55	1.90	0.44
7	1.10	1.16	1.90	0.16
8	1.10	0.81	2.00	0.13
9	1.10	0.73	2.10	0.24
10	1.30	0.96	2.20	0.09



2026 Map of TBAWMN Sites across the Tri-Basin NRD

Crop Coefficients (Kc)

Corn		Soybeans	
Stage	Kc	Stage	Kc
2 leaf	0.10	Cotyledon	0.10
4 leaf	0.18	1st Node	0.20
6 leaf	0.35	2nd Node	0.40
8 leaf	0.51	3rd Node	0.60
10 leaf	0.69	Beg. Bloom	0.90
12 leaf	0.88	Full Bloom	1.00
14 leaf	1.01	Beg. Pod	1.10
16 leaf	1.10	Full Pod	1.10
Silk – Beg. Dent	1.10	Beg. Seed	1.10
¼ Milk Line	1.04	Full Seed	1.10
Full Dent (½ Milk)	0.98	Yellow Leaf	1.00
¾ Milk Line	0.79	Beg. Mat.	0.90
Black Layer	0.60	Full Mat.	0.20
Full Maturity	0.10	Mature	0.10

CROP STAGE INFORMATION

Corn (V8-8 Leaf to V16-16-Leaf stage): A lot of corn is heading towards R1-Silking stage. Silking is the peak water use period for corn. Moisture stress at silking causes poor pollination and seed set. The result will usually be a nubbin.

Avg. daily water use from June 29 – July 5 was 0.14"-0.39".

Soybeans (V4-4th Node to R1-Beginning Bloom stage): Vertical root growth increases sharply at R1. Secondary roots and root hairs proliferate after R1 in the top 9 inches. Environmental stress at R3-Beginning Pod will start reducing yields significantly.

Avg. daily water use from June 29 – July 5 was 0.16"-0.29".

June 29-July 5 (10 of 10 TBAWMN sites reporting): Avg. weekly rainfall was 0.49 (range 0.09 to 1.40). Avg. weekly ET for corn was 1.80 and for soybeans was 1.58.

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
V16	16 Leaves	Leaf stage is defined by number of leaves with collars. The collar is a discolored line where the leaf meets the stalk. This line circles the stalk. After V6-6 Leaf, lower leaves will be lost.
R1	Silking	Begins when any silks are visible outside the husks.
R2	Blister	The kernels are white on the outside and resemble a blister. The cob should be at or near full size by R2. The silks are beginning to dry out and darken in color.

SOYBEAN STAGE		DESCRIPTION
V5	Fifth Node	V5 has 5 nodes on main stem, each with a trifoliate leaf with unfolded leaflets. Plant has 6 nodes total: 1 unifoliate + 5 trifoliate
R1	Beg Bloom	At least one open flower is present at any main stem node.
R2	Full Bloom	At least one open flower is present at any one of the two uppermost main stem nodes that have fully developed leaves.

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>.

	July 9, 2026, 8:00 AM	1 Year Ago
El. & Cap. – Lake McConaughy	3215.3 ft - 34.7%	3230.1 ft - NA%
Inflows to Lake McConaughy	151 cfs	313 cfs
Flows on the North Platte at North Platte	662 cfs	327 cfs
Flows on the South Platte at North Platte	112 cfs	199 cfs
Flows on the Platte at Kearney	127 cfs	386 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:	June 25 – July 8	May 1 – July 8
Elwood 1.81 mi. NW:	3.69	9.69
Loomis 0.2 mi. SW:	2.47	8.20
Holdrege 0.49 mi. WNW:	1.39	7.52
Minden 7.2 mi. W:	0.46	5.30
Minden 8.8 mi. ESE:	0.49	7.23

Average Rain for May-June in Holdrege = 8.04 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
 308-832-2280, 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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