



Farming In Right Of Way Is Not Allowed

PIERRE — The South Dakota Department of Transportation says it is against the law to plant crops within the right of way of a public road and it also can be a safety hazard for motorists.

According to director of operations Greg Fuller, the purpose of the highway right of way is to create an obstruction free area for the safety of the traveling public. Farmers who unlawfully plant crops in the right of way can create a visual obstruction and possibly limit sight distances for motorists, especially near intersections.

Tall crops also can cover important signage and create cover for deer and other wildlife. That gives motorists less of a chance to see wildlife in time to avoid a serious accident.

Highway right of way also is used by utility companies to install gas lines, power lines, telephone lines and fiber optic cable. Plowing and tilling can damage these lines and create a potentially dangerous situation for farmers, utility workers and area residents. It also can cause possible service interruptions.

Along with safety concerns, farming activity in the right of way can create erosion and landscape changes that can affect proper drainage, clog culverts and jeopardize the stability of the shoulders and the roadbed itself.

Right of way widths can vary depending on location. Landowners should verify where the right of way line is prior to farming. If there are any questions on where the right of way line is, they should contact their local region or area DOT office.

Contact information can be found on the SDDOT website: <http://www.sddot.com/contact/>.

Farmer's Market Online Database Offered

LINCOLN, Neb. — Nebraskans interested in purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables have a new tool for sourcing their produce from farmers in their local area, Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach has announced the rollout of a new Farmers' Market Online Database. The database is designed to make it easier for consumers, as well as retailers, to find local produce growers and farmers' markets across Nebraska.

According to Ibach, the database is easily navigated and will allow consumers to quickly locate farmers' markets in their area, as well as individual farmers. The database includes details such as vendor names, location, contact information, hours of operation and produce options. Consumers can also find vendors who participate in "One of NDA's fresh produce coupon programs for low income individuals.

The online database can be accessed at <http://ne.gov/go/neproduce>. Individuals without online access can receive information about farmers' markets or individuals growers in their area by contacting NDA at 800-422-6692.

Drought Monitor

May Climate Outlook: A Look Back And A Look Ahead

BROOKINGS — As South Dakota transitions from April to May, warmer-than-average air and soil temperatures are prevalent throughout the state. However, spring precipitation has failed to appear across most of the state creating winter wheat and forage issues, explained Dennis Today, SDSU Extension Climate Specialist & South Dakota State Climatologist.

"Lack of precipitation has led to a number of agricultural issues," said Today. "If we don't receive adequate moisture in May, the issues could increase.

To clearly explain the climate outlook, Today begins by taking a look back at the year-to-date conditions.

A LOOK BACK

April was very dry across most of South Dakota, with only a few weather locations to the west recording slightly above average precipitation. Total precipitation across the state ranged from 0.11 inches to just more than 2 inches. The largest deficits were in the southeast where April was 2 inches or more below average, Today said, referencing precipitation totals in Chamberlain, 0.41 inches; and Mellette, 0.11 inches; which ended with their driest April on record.

Madison, Roscoe and Big Stone City recorded their second driest April on record, and another 11 weather stations recorded April 2015 among the top five driest on record.

"The dry situation has been a continuation of a weather pattern that set up in February, which resulted in longer term precipitation deficits," Today said.

Records for low precipitation are much more apparent looking back for the year-to-date, explained Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension Climate Field Specialist.

She went on to say that as of Jan. 1, 2015, several weather stations in the middle of the state documented January 2015 as the driest on record including: DeSmet, Forestburg, Murdo, Kennebec, Pierre, Wessington Springs, Madison and six others. "A few stations accumulated less than an inch of precipitation for the year so far," Edwards said.

Another 33 stations ranked January through April 2015 as one of the five driest on record. "Across a large part of the state, these totals are less than half their average precipitation to this point in the year," Edwards said.

In addition to lack of moisture,

"Precipitation deficits across most of the state are severe enough, that even with decent precipitation amounts, improvements will be difficult to see."

DENNIS TODAY

Today added that nearly all of the state recorded above average temperatures for April.

"Eastern parts of the state were warmest overall, with several places 4 to 5 degrees Fahrenheit above average for April," he said. "Although, a few daily high and low temperature records were set in April, the widely varying temperatures for the year have left temperatures close to average so far."

The dryness early in the spring was not a serious issue, and was actually beneficial for early agricultural work and livestock producers, explained Edwards.

"However, now the precipitation deficits are having a negative impact on agriculture due to limited soil moisture, rangeland and forage concerns as well as some problems with seed emergence," she said.

Along with the dry spring conditions, much of the state's winter wheat crop experienced multiple challenges resulting from the dry fall conditions and low snow cover which resulted in winter kill.

The dryness has also obviously contributed to the large number of spring wildland and grass fires.

WHAT CURRENT CLIMATE & DROUGHT OUTLOOK HAVE TO SAY

The National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA) Climate and Drought Outlook for May 2015 tells us a little about where we might be headed, explained Today. "Basically, the drought conditions are unlikely to make major shifts in the next month," he said.

The NOAA U.S. Monthly Drought Outlook Map indicates drought conditions are likely to persist across the state and region, because precipitation totals are not expected to be sufficient to make large drought improvements.

"Precipitation deficits across most of the state are severe enough, that even with decent precipitation amounts, improvements will be difficult to see," Today said.

On average, in most areas of South Dakota, the month of May is the wettest

month of the year. Moisture averages often total between 3 and 4 inches of precipitation. "Thus, larger precipitation totals will be needed not to lose more ground," Today said.

The NOAA Climate Prediction Center Precipitation Outlook for the next 30 days is not pessimistic, but Today said it also not as optimistic as it is in some states to the south of South Dakota.

"The precipitation outlook indicates increased chances of precipitation along the southern edge of South Dakota and further south into the Central Plains," he said. "Thus, areas to the south have better chances for drought improvement into May."

Bottom line, Today explained that the precipitation chances are equally as likely to fall below average as they are to fall above average. "In most years that would not be a major issue. This year, above average precipitation is needed to help overcome the deficits accumulated since last fall," he said.

CROP LOSSES ARE NOT GUARANTEED

This situation does not yet mean crop losses are guaranteed in all fields across the state, explained Edwards. "Winter wheat yields have been negatively impacted and rangeland will need precipitation very soon to limit losses, however due to the fact that April and May are critical months for summer forage production, and given the fact that corn and soybeans are just being planted this week, there is still time to limit damage to other crops across the state," she said.

However, Edwards said regular, heavier precipitation amounts are needed to limit the problems for the remainder of the growing season.

"In general, summertime precipitation tends to be localized in thunderstorms, and not widespread events like we typically see in the winter season," she said.

Throughout the growing season, SDSU Extension will publish frequent climate updates. To learn more, visit iGrow.org.

Decisions

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with current prices, which hover around \$3.30 per bushel of corn and current cost of production at about \$2.84 per bushel, a farmer raising 300 acres of corn in 2014 would have earned about \$19,800 after expenses based on the S.D. Dept. of Agriculture per acre statewide average of 148 bushels per acre. This is a 77 percent loss over 2012 prices.

Whereas in 2012, corn prices were at \$6.72 and the state was in a drought, so average corn yields were only 101 bushels per acre. Cost of production was \$3.91 per bushel — resulting in the same farmer earning a net income of \$85,116 on those same 300 acres.

Sombke says acres not planted to corn this year may be replaced by another commodity, like soybeans, or planted to forage which farmers will either feed to their cattle or sell to neighbors who raise livestock.

LOCAL MARKETS INCREASE PROFIT MARGINS

The livestock industry and other local markets, like ethanol, provide a small profit advantage to South Dakota's grain farmers, explains Lucas Lentsch, S.D. Secretary of Agriculture.

"Local markets are absolutely the bread and butter of our farms and ranches — in terms of adding value locally — just look at what the ethanol industry has done for our state's economy," he says, referencing the industry which has a \$3.8 billion impact on the state's economy each year. "Keep in mind, South Dakota is land locked. If commodities we raise here aren't sold to a local market, they have to be driven out or shipped out by rail car because we don't have access to barge traffic."

Lentsch explains that counties with a local demand for corn — stemming from ethanol plants and high concentrations of livestock including: dairy, beef, pork, poultry and sheep operations, are able to provide farmers with greater profits per bushel because basis levels are lower.

Basis is the cost associat-

ed with exporting commodities out of state, explains DuWayne Bosse, 36, a Britton crop farmer and co-owner of Bolt Marketing, LLC, a commodity marketing firm. "Basis is supply and demand in its purest form. In a farming community like Britton, we produce a lot of corn, but we don't have enough demand to meet the supply — so to pay to ship it out, local elevators have to charge the farmer basis," Bosse says, explaining further that if the Chicago Mercantile Exchange is paying \$3.94 for a bushel of corn, but it costs 64 cents to ship that corn, the local elevator will only pay farmers the difference, which as of March 25, 2015, was \$3.30.

Whereas in a community with greater local demand, the basis may only be 34 cents, because the grain elevator is able to market more of the grain it purchases from local farmers,

reducing the amount it needs to export.

"A 20 to 40 cent difference is a big deal in today's market. In some cases it means the difference between breaking even and losing money," Sombke says.

Lentsch adds, "The ripple effect of having a diversified ag portfolio within our communities is tremendously valuable to everyone." Lentsch points out that in South Dakota most concentrated animal feeding operations, or CAFOs, are family owned and operated. "Agriculture in South Dakota has not stood still. Family farmers have continued to invest in their operations and have discovered efficiencies, which in the case of CAFOs, provide a fantastic engine to process locally grown grains and forages."

To learn more about this topic and review more data, visit sdfu.org.

NATIONAL
TRAVEL &
TOURISM
WEEK MAY 2-10, 2015

TRAVEL IS ADVENTURE
TRAVEL IS FAMILY BONDING TIME
TRAVEL IS SERIOUS BUSINESS
TRAVEL IS MORE THAN JUST FUN
TRAVEL IS CREATING AMERICAN JOBS
TRAVEL IS ESSENTIAL TO OUR ECONOMY AND OUR LIVES

Fun Fact
Tourism is the 4th largest industry in Yankton County.

Brought to you by:
Yankton Convention & Visitors Bureau
and Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan

#FillitForQuinn

STORM

Quinn Pesicka Benefit & Silent Auction Friday, May 8, 2015

Quinn Pesicka is a 4th grader at Pettigrew Elementary, Sioux Falls, but also attended JFK Elementary for grades K-3. She has battled cancer twice in her life, and this benefit is to support her, and her family. Quinn's mom, Kate (Heine) grew up in Yankton and teaches math at Roosevelt High School.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP!

1. Purchase tickets to The Sioux Falls Storm VS Green Bay Blizzard IFL game. Tickets are \$10 each, and The Storm will donate \$5 of every ticket sold to Quinn and her family. Purchase tickets by contacting Jim Loria, Sioux Falls Storm, at 605.610.5902 or jim@siouxfallsstorm.com
2. Pledge to donate \$50 or more for every Storm touchdown at the game.
3. Make a donation to the Quinn Pesicka Foundation. Please drop off at Roosevelt High School, donations will also be taken at the game or drop off/mail to Home Federal Bank, 2100 Broadway Ave, Yankton, SD 57078 or any Home Federal Location.
4. Bid on Silent Auction Items at the Storm game. Bidding will begin at 6:00pm, and end at the start of the 3rd quarter.

*Silent Auction Item – a few examples, but there is NO limit on items
Pheasant Hunting Package
College Game Day Tickets
Fun in the Sun Theme – pool tickets, ice cream, beach towels, etc.
Pamper Mom Package – massage, facial, shopping
Movie Night – Best Buy, Century Theater, Candy and Popcorn