

NOAA

Climate Outlook: Warm Conditions To Continue

BROOKINGS – The recent National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration Climate Outlook predicts warmer conditions to linger into winter with a mixed precipitation outlook.

“As usual precipitation continues to be the most inconsistent issue to forecast as the chances for a wetter fall have been reduced with the outlooks released Thursday,” said Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension Climate Field Specialist. “For most of the state, the expected chances for precipitation did not materialize in September.”

Edwards added that the current outlook for October continues on that trend. “Currently there is no specific indication as to whether or not South Dakota will see wetter or drier conditions during the month.”

The current longer-range models indicate chances for precipitation in the state especially in the early part of the October.

“Overall expected precipitation amounts do not look extraordinary for the month of

October,” said Dennis Todey, South Dakota State Climatologist & SDSU Extension Climate Specialist.

With wetter conditions less likely, Todey said warmer than average temperatures are likely to continue into October and through the winter months.

“This warmth was expected through the main part of the winter because of the current El Nino, which will continue to affect the country through the winter,” he said. “But the additional fall warmth has been a little bit of a surprise.”

Throughout the month of September the warmth created pleasant conditions; but it has also delayed the first freeze - with only some spotty areas of frost in the east.

“With the warmer temperatures the chances for rain are likely going to be slim throughout the rest of September,” Todey said.

From a harvest standpoint, these conditions have continued to push crops to

maturity, Edwards said. “With early harvest getting kicked off from the early drying of crops, the delayed frost is good news as the additional time will allow crops to continue to mature.”

She added that there seems to be limited concern for frost that would damage crops at this time. “Horticultural plants also have their reprieve on frost conditions allowing gardens to continue to produce. The only downside has been the continuation of mosquito and fly issues with the warm weather and lack of frost,” she said.

The lack of precipitation will also allow for continued progress on harvest. “At this time there is little excessive precipitation expected,” she said.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The outlooks for the rest of the winter leave South Dakota “in the middle.”

“The NOAA outlooks hint at wetter conditions possible throughout the winter, mostly

to the south of the state, while indicating drier conditions north of South Dakota throughout much of the winter,” Todey said. “Thus, the outlook for South Dakota is rather mixed for precipitation.”

These winter precipitation outlooks are rather difficult to assess. “The impact of El Nino on precipitation in the region is not very clear. And even in an overall dry winter, one large storm can throw off precipitation totals because the winter precipitation averages are so low. Even in the middle of an El Nino winter we cannot forecast an individual event,” he said.

The take home message - El Nino is currently on track for winter with warmer than average conditions still quite likely. Though it is impossible to guarantee,” Todey said. “As for harvest season - it should continue without major issues are crops are able to mature.”

Questions About Blue-Green Algae And Livestock

BROOKINGS – Recently there have been concerns about algae blooms on stock dams. The predominant question is, “Do I need to be concerned about my livestock?”

The answer is maybe, said Adele Harty, SDSU Extension Cow/Calf Field Specialist.

“With the recent warmer temperatures, the conditions are right for blue-green algae blooms,” she said. “The different species of blue-green algae contain various toxins, which can poison livestock, resulting in rapid death.”

Blue-green algae does not look like traditional green algae, that typically forms in a mat, but rather it can appear like small grains of green sand at the water surface.

There are different types of blue-green algae that also have varying appearances. Some may resemble spilled paint around the edge of the stock dam, some will give the entire water source a pea-green appearance, while others will have a teal green appearance.

Harty explained that blue-green algae blooms when weather is hot and winds are calm. As the algae begin to die, gas is produced in the cells causing the colonies to float to the water surface. “The wind blows the algae blooms to the shorelines resulting in their concentration and easy access to livestock,” Harty said.

She added that identification of blue-green algae blooms in water can be difficult because the blooms appear and disappear rapidly.

These blue-green algae blooms can contain neurotoxins (nervous system damage) or hepatotoxins (liver damage), depending on the type of blue-green algae present. “If water containing blue-green algae is consumed by livestock, death will typically occur within 24 hours or less after ingestion,” she said. “Cattle, sheep, horses and small animals are all susceptible to these toxins, as well as humans!”

Due to the rapid advancement to death, Harty said the observation of clinical signs including tremors, paralysis, respiratory failure, diarrhea and salivation, are not often seen. “The most frequent indicator of toxicity from blue-green algae is to find a dead animal close to the contaminated water,” she said.

If the animal survives initial poisoning, photosensitization (sunburn) will be noticeable, however Harty said the animal will likely die

later due to liver failure.

Unfortunately, there is not a typical treatment for blue-green algae toxicity due to the rapid progression to death.

“If you suspect that you have lost livestock to blue-green algae toxicity, work with your veterinarian to collect the appropriate samples to confirm or deny the blue-green algae toxicity,” Harty said.

A complete set of tissues (liver, brain, stomach contents) and a water sample is needed for diagnosis.

COLLECTING WATER SAMPLES

Water samples should be taken from concentrated areas. The diagnostic lab requires two water samples; 10 milliliters of water mixed with 10 milliliters of 10 percent formalin, and a quart of frozen water.

Your local veterinarian can then submit the samples to the SDSU Animal Disease Research and Diagnostic Lab.

PREVENTION

The only way to prevent poisoning from blue-green algae is to remove the animals from the contaminated water. Harty encourages producers to move the livestock to a different pasture with a different water source, free of blue-green algae.

If this is not possible, she said it is necessary to control access to the pond, especially in areas downwind where the concentration occurs.

“Pump water from below the surface in the middle of the stock dam to a holding tank so that the scum on the top can be avoided,” she said.

The stock dam can be treated with copper sulfate as an algicide, but consider the risk to fish and wildlife and ensure that the appropriate amount is added to the dam to control the algae bloom. Copper sulfate should be applied at 2 pounds per acre-foot of water, which is equal to 8 pounds per 1 million gallons.

If you suspect a blue-green algae bloom in your cattle drinking water, the first step is to move the livestock to a clean water source, then send samples of the water for analysis.

For more information, contact Harty at 605-394-1722 or adele.harty@sdstate.edu or Robin Salverson at 605-374-4177 or robin.salverson@sdstate.edu.

SD Stockgrowers Annual Convention Oct. 1-2

RAPID CITY — South Dakota Stockgrowers Association and SD Cattlewomen are set to host the 124th Annual Convention and Tradeshow Oct. 1-2 at the Best Western Ramkota Convention Center in Rapid City. The two-day convention will feature a strong line-up of speakers and events along with policy discussions, and the annual business meetings for both associations.

“We are looking forward to hosting our members and friends at the 124th Annual Convention and to celebrate a great year in the livestock industry,” said Bob Fortune, President of

Stockgrowers from Belvidere. “I really encourage everyone to join us in Rapid City for a great convention that will be a lot of fun.”

The 124th annual convention will feature a number of speakers on issues impacting the livestock industry and several workshops to help ranchers learn tools to strengthen their businesses. The S.D. Cattlewomen’s convention will feature planning sessions for future beef promotions, crafts, and a workshop on the Masters of Beef Advocacy program and social media training.

Thursday’s program will open with Bill Bullard, CEO of R-CALF USA followed by a variety of speakers and committee meetings on international trade, property rights, and animal health. Thursday evening’s keynote speaker is Alan Guebert, the author of the “Farm and Food Files” and critical analyst on a number of issues important to the livestock industry.

Friday will begin with an inspirational breakfast and more great speakers and committee meetings. The annual membership meeting will be held at 3:30 p.m. to consider policy changes,

directives to the board, and to elect board members and officers.

The Friday evening Awards and Recognition Banquet will recognize leaders and the retiring president, Bob Fortune. For a full agenda and details of the convention, visit www.southdakotastockgrowers.org or call the SD Stockgrowers Office at 605-342-0429. Hotel Reservations can be made by calling the Ramkota at 605-343-8550 and asking for the SD Stockgrowers rate. Registration can be completed online or at the convention.

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