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## Dial-an-Expert Tip Sheet: Drought in the Southern Plains

**April 4, 1996**

BOULDER-Images of dust clouds and parched fields are again haunting residents of Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas. This year the heart of the 1930s Dust Bowl has experienced one of its driest winters of the century.

Dodge City, Kansas, recorded its driest July-to-February period in 120 years of records, even exceeding the worst of the Dust Bowl years. (See climate summary at end of this release.)

The winter wheat crop from Kansas to Texas has been decimated. At times, clouds of blowing dust have reduced visibility in Kansas to the point where streetlights and headlights are needed. Should the dryness persist into spring and summer, regional effects could be even more severe.

Here is a list of experts on drought assessment and the effects of drought on agriculture. Several of these experts are affiliated with the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colorado, or with one of the 61 universities that make up the University

Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR), also based in Boulder. UCAR operates NCAR under sponsorship of the National Science Foundation.

### Drought analysis and background

**Michael Glantz**, 303-497-8119, [glantz@ucar.edu](mailto:glantz@ucar.edu)

Director, NCAR Environmental and Societal Impacts Group (ESIG)

*Specialty:* Societal effects of weather and climate; relationship between drought and agricultural practices

**Linda Mearns**, 303-497-1625, [lindam@ucar.edu](mailto:lindam@ucar.edu)

Agricultural climatologist, NCAR Climate and Global Dynamics Division (CGD)

*Specialty:* Studies of variability in temperature and precipitation, especially across the Great Plains, and the resulting long-term impacts on agriculture

**Kevin Trenberth**, 303-497-1318, [trenbert@ucar.edu](mailto:trenbert@ucar.edu)

Head, NCAR/CGD/Climate Analysis Section

*Specialty:* Analysis of El Nino/Southern Oscillation and other global climate regimes, including

persistent patterns that can lead to drought or flooding

**Donald Wilhite**, 402-472-4270, [dwilhite@enso.unl.edu](mailto:dwilhite@enso.unl.edu)

Director, National Drought Mitigation Center/International Drought Information Center

University of Nebraska at Lincoln *Specialty*: Drought mitigation and planning; drought preparedness and response

## Current reports and statistics on the drought

**Dave Miskus**, 301-763-4670, [miskus@climon.wwb.noaa.gov](mailto:miskus@climon.wwb.noaa.gov)

Meteorologist, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center, Washington, D.C.

*Specialty*: Tracking of drought and other global weather anomalies, particularly in North America, over the scale of two weeks to three years

**Al Peterlin**, 202-720-8651

Chief meteorologist, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Washington, D.C.

*Specialty*: Briefing the secretary of agriculture weekly on U.S. weather outlook

**Douglas LeComte**, 202-720-7919, [lecomte@jawfsrv.wwb.noaa.gov](mailto:lecomte@jawfsrv.wwb.noaa.gov)

Meteorologist and editor, Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin (NOAA/USDA)

*Specialty*: Reporting on short-term U.S. weather situation and on global weather anomalies, particularly in Africa

**Ken Hubbard**, 402-472-6706, [khubbard@hpcsun.unl.edu](mailto:khubbard@hpcsun.unl.edu)

Director, High Plains Climate Center, University of Nebraska at Lincoln

*Specialty*: Short-term monitoring of weather and climate over the High Plains

## Fall and winter precipitation readings for selected locations

(courtesy National Weather Service; all readings are in inches)

Location	Total		Normal	Total	
	1/1/96 - 3/26/96			10/1/95 - 3/26/96	Normal
<b>Kansas</b>					
Concordia	1.28		2.82	2.82	7.13
Dodge City	1.44		2.37		
Topeka	1.72		4.00	3.16	10.42
Wichita	1.63		3.78		
<b>Oklahoma</b>					
Oklahoma City	0.87		5.04		
Tulsa	1.54		6.39		
<b>Texas</b>					
Abilene	0.91		3.34		
Amarillo	0.45		1.92		
Dallas-Ft. Worth	2.51		6.39		

Lubbock	0.26	1.85	1.25	4.99
Midland	0.09	1.52	0.88	4.51
San Antonio	0.83	4.78		

-The End-

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