

*Icy Weather Cuts Grazing Season Short;*

# Warming, Some Precipitation Expected in January

**COLUMBIA, MO.**

Look for a welcome warming of winter weather, says Pat Guinan, climatologist with University of Missouri Extension.

"The January outlook calls for above-normal temperatures for much of the United States east of the Rockies, including all of Missouri," said Guinan, with the MU Commercial Agriculture Program.

The new report from the National Climate Prediction Center is more uncertain on the amount of precipitation for the month. "Basically, the model calls for a toss-up for above-or below-normal precipitation," Guinan said.

Expect above-normal precipitation from Southeast Missouri up the Ohio River Valley. However, states southeast of that region, deep into Florida, will see a lack of rainfall.

During the past 15 years, Missouri winters have been warm and wet, Guinan said. Ten of the past 15 winters have been warmer than normal with three ranking in the top five warmest winters since 1895. Eleven of those 15 winters have been wetter than normal. However, Missouri snowfall has been below normal. With warmer temperatures, there were fewer chances for frozen precipitation.

Guinan said that last winter was an exception

with both above-normal snowfall and colder temperatures. Portions of Northwest Missouri received more than 50 inches of snow last winter, making it the snowiest winter in 30 years.

December weather this year has been quite unlike the forecast for January. A large area of low pressure east of the Rockies drew cold winds and frigid temperatures from the Arctic.

In north Missouri severe wind chill factors accompanied ice and snow, making unsafe conditions for livestock. Ice-covered pastures cut short the winter-grazing season and caused difficulties for farmers feeding hay to their livestock.

The corn harvest, delayed by high moisture content from late plantings last spring, stopped with the icy conditions in some areas.

The highest likelihood of above-normal temperatures in the United States will be a small area in Arizona and a large area over the Great Lakes from Wisconsin through Ohio. The southern part of that region will also have chance for above-normal precipitation as well.

With 2008 going into the records as one of the wettest for the state, water resources are above-normal with livestock ponds are full, Guinan said. Ground water is in good shape for the start of next year. "Soil moisture levels range from sufficient to above-normal for the next growing season."     Δ



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