



Southern Colorado Ag and Range Newsletter

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(excluding holidays)

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All articles written by Tom Laca unless otherwise indicated.

Ag Agent Greeting

Summer is about over and what a summer we have had. It has been a busy one with fairs, classes and trainings all taking place. I always have a good time at the county and state fair helping with the livestock shows while watching and educating the youth who will become the future food producers. We also held a range walk with over 50 participants. We toured three locations across the county discussing plants we found and their significance as well as general range monitoring principles. Most recently, we have been involved in a drill to evacuate people and animals from the Beulah area if there was a wildfire. The CART (Community Animal Rescue Team) participated by providing information on what pet and livestock owners could expect in the way of shelters and assistance in the event of an actual evacuation.



Now on to what we are planning for this fall. We currently have a ristra making class planned for October 20 and are looking for dates to hold another beekeeping class. Also, be looking for a Beef Quality Assurance training and a class on trees and tree care for this area.

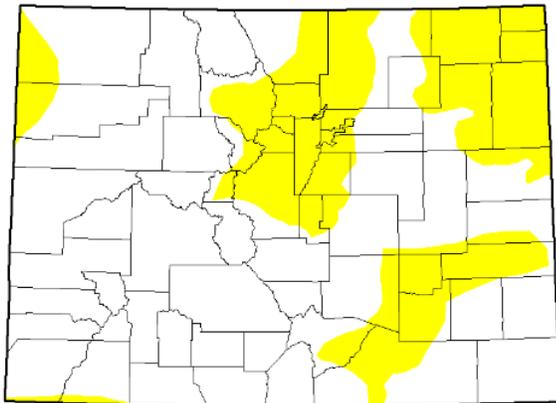
On another note of interest, Linda McMulkin, our Horticulture Coordinator, has retired and we are currently attempting to have that position refilled. In the meantime, I have been fielding the horticulture calls along with the Colorado Master Gardener volunteers in order to continue to provide service and education to those in that area. Although it is a little outside of my realm, it has been a great experience and learning opportunity for me. We wish Linda the best of luck in her future endeavors.

As always, if you have any needs, questions or concerns, let me know and I will do my best to get you the answers you need. The number here at the office is 719-583-6566 or you can send me an email at lacat@co.pueblo.co.us. We are also on Facebook now where we will post current happenings and other educational information as we see fit. Like our page at www.facebook.com/PuebloAg.

U.S. Drought Monitor Colorado

September 29, 2015
(Released Thursday October 1, 2015)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Statistics type: **Traditional Percent Area** Export table: [PNG](#) [CSV](#) [XLS](#)



Week	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current 2015-09-29	71.49	28.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 2015-09-22	74.43	25.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 2015-06-30	74.22	25.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 2014-12-30	69.87	30.13	21.26	12.26	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 2014-09-30	68.96	31.04	22.94	13.82	2.31	0.00
One Year Ago 2014-09-30	68.96	31.04	22.94	13.82	2.31	0.00

Estimated Population in Drought Areas: **0** [View More Statistics](#)

Intensity:

- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)

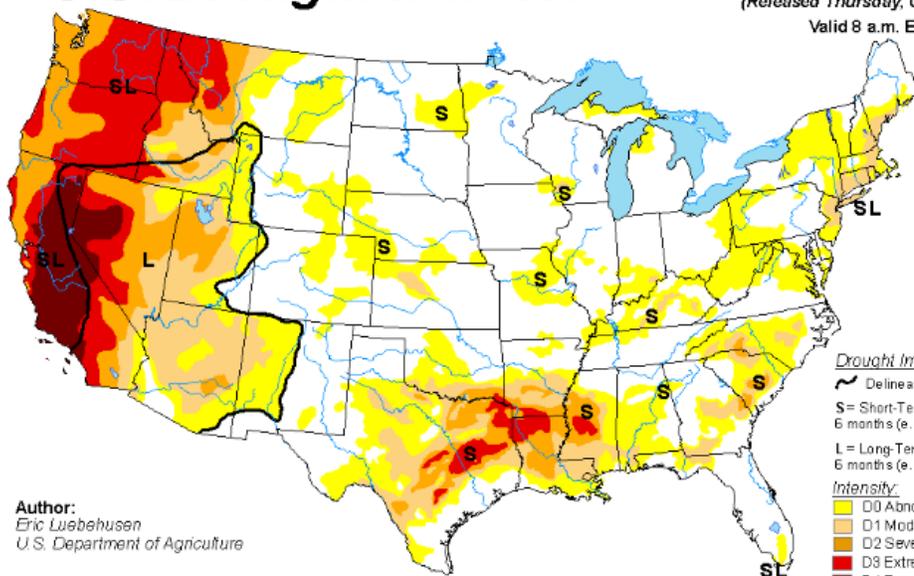
The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying [text summary](#) for forecast statements.

Author(s):
Eric Luebehusen, U.S. Department of Agriculture

For more details and maps go to:
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/expert_assessment/sdo_summary.php

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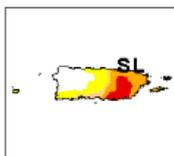
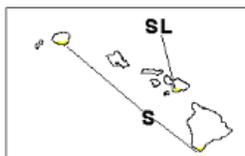
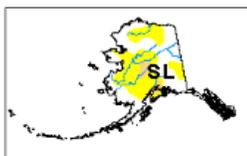


Author:
Eric Luebehusen
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Drought Impact Types:
~ Delineates dominant impacts
S = Short-Term, typically less than 6 months (e.g. agriculture, grasslands)
L = Long-Term, typically greater than 6 months (e.g. hydrology, ecology)

Intensity:
■ D0 Abnormally Dry
■ D1 Moderate Drought
■ D2 Severe Drought
■ D3 Extreme Drought
■ D4 Exceptional Drought

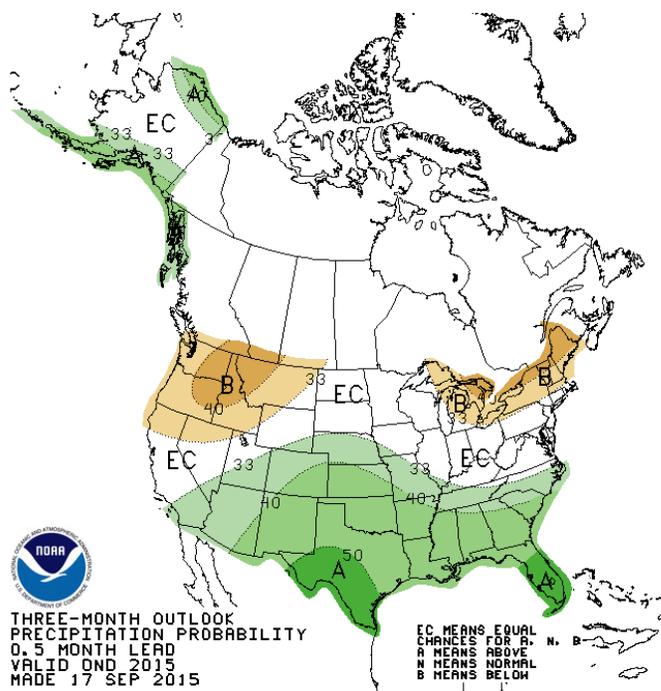
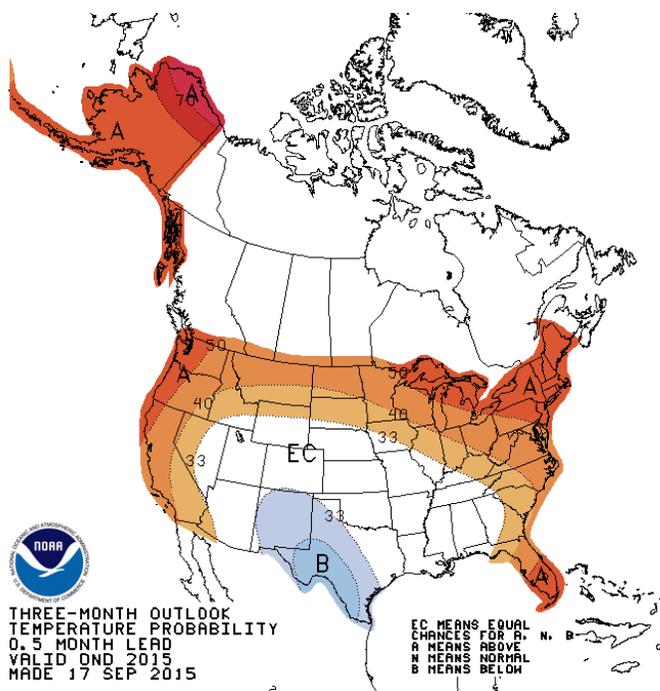
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<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

This map is updated weekly and can be viewed at
<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

From this website, if you are viewing the US map, click on the state of Colorado to view a more detailed map.



Know a Native— Tumblegrass *Schedonnardus paniculatus*

Facts:

- ▶ Native, warm season, perennial
- ▶ Bunch grass
- ▶ Grows 8 to 20 inches tall
- ▶ Seeds from July to September
- ▶ Seed heads turn downward when mature, break off and roll in the wind like tumbleweeds
- ▶ Seed heads are over twice as tall as blades
- ▶ Poor to worthless as forage
- ▶ Frequently found in disturbed areas



Sources: USDA Plant Database

Noxious Weed Control Plan

- 50% **Cost Share** is available to property owners who apply and are afflicted with a species of weed listed on the Colorado Noxious Weed A or B List.
- Turkey Creek Conservation District highlights their role in Pueblo County's **Noxious Weed Control Program**.
- User friendly method of making this cost share an easy reality for landowners.
- Contact Turkey Creek Conservation District at 719-543-8386 ext. 116 or email: info@puebloweeds.com

Our soils are the lifeblood of food production. They produce the fruits and vegetables we eat as well as the grass our animals graze on. Keeping our soils productive and healthy should be a priority among all producers. There are many ways in which to maintain our soils. One that has recently gained a lot of attention is that of cover crops or green manures.

Cover crops are a plant or plant mixture that is often grown during the fallow period to protect and enrich the soil. They can be a single species or a mixture of many. Either way the goal of improving the health of the soil is held constant. In return, we may start to see increased production with fewer inputs.

The benefits of cover cropping are often easily seen but hard to measure. Cover crops offer protection from erosion, both wind and water, keeping the soil in place. Through competition cover crops can also suppress weeds. As plants grow, they will store nutrients in their tissues. When these plants are tilled back into the soil, those stored nutrients become more readily available for the next crop. Also, when the plants are reincorporated back into the soil, we increase the organic matter of the soil the roots aid in the creation of soil structure. Water retention and infiltration is increased. Finally, we may see a reduction in crop pests as many cover crops can attract beneficial insects or provide an environment that eliminates pest species of insects.



Clover in wheat
Photo courtesy of SARE.

Cover crops can be utilized anywhere from large fields to backyard garden plots, and from irrigated ground to dry rangeland, green manure can benefit the soils. No matter what situation you are planning to use cover crops, you first need to do your homework and determine the plant species that will not only help you to reach your goals, but also will grow in your conditions.

Like I said earlier, cover crops can be a single species or may be a mixture of several species with each contributing to the overall soil health in some way. Grasses or small grains can offer good ground cover and protection from erosion. If planting in the fall, many of the winter variety grains would be a good choice. These will establish this time of year and continue to protect the soil through the winter. Annual grasses that are terminated prior to seed production seldom become a nuisance later. Some good species to consider are Annual Ryegrass, Winter Wheat and Winter Triticale.

Legumes are another common group of plants used in cover crops. Legumes have the ability to store nitrogen taken from the air in their plant tissues. When these plants are incorporated back into the soil, that nitrogen becomes available to other plants by decreasing the amount of fertilizer needed. Winter annual legumes are commonly used for fall plantings and include winter peas, hairy vetch and crimson clover.



Brassica Rapa Photo courtesy of [SARE](#)

Brassicas and mustards are gaining more and more popularity as cover crops. Their rapid growth in the fall and thick canopy function well in erosion and weed control. Some in this group such as radish and turnip, contain deep taproots that are effective at breaking up tight soils. Chemical compounds that are released by the plants as they are incorporated into the soil can suppress pests such as fungi, bacteria, insects, nematodes and weeds.

Most all brassicas will winterkill in the area but if planted early enough in the fall, the benefits of this crop can still be realized.

The possibilities for cover crops are endless. Almost any plant or mixture of plants could be considered a cover crop when managed accordingly. As this management practice becomes more popular, the research and available resources has also expanded. Like any decision you make concerning your resources, do your homework. Find your goals and then research what it will take to accomplish those goals. SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) has great information at <http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Topic-Rooms/Cover-Crops>. If you have any further questions or need advice on what to plant feel free to contact me by phone: (719)583-6566 or by email: lacat@co.pueblo.co.us.

Events and Classes

Facing Open Enrollment- Make a Smart Choice

CSU Extension-Pueblo County is offering two **Smart Choice Health Insurance** Workshops to help you tackle the task of selecting health insurance coverage by explaining the process in plain language, outlining the differences in plans and highlighting the factors that may influence your decisions.

This two-hour workshop will help you:

- Analyze your health care needs
- Compare insurance plans and
- Apply knowledge learned to make a smart health insurance choice based on what you can afford.



Plan to attend one session:

Dates offered: Wednesday, October 14, 2015,
Thursday, October 29, 2015

Time: 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Place: CSU Extension- Pueblo County
701 Court Street, Suite C
Pueblo, CO 81003

Fee: \$10.00 (cash or check only)

To Register: Bring payment or mail check (payable to Extension Program Fund) to CSU Extension- Pueblo County

Questions: Christine or Lois at 719-583-6566
Limit per class-25 participants



Extension Programs are available to all without discrimination.



Ristra Making Class

CSU Extension/Pueblo County

DATE: Tuesday, October 20, 2015
TIME: 6:30-8:30 p.m.
PLACE: CSU Extension/Pueblo County
701 Court Street, Suite C
Pueblo, CO 81003
COST: \$15 per person (cash or check only)
Class size is limited
Registration deadline: October 16, 2015

Learn how to string a Chile Ristra. Chile and instructions included.
Take home what you make.



CSU Extension/Pueblo County

701 Court Street, Ste. C
Pueblo, CO 81003
719-583-6566

Payment by check or cash only registers you for this class.
Checks payable to: Extension Program Fund

Colorado State
Extension



Extension programs are available to all without discrimination. If you have a disability for which you seek an accommodation, please notify CSU Extension at 719-583-6566 at least five (5) business days in advance of the event.
Colorado State University Extension, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Colorado counties cooperating.

Internal Parasites

Internal parasites in livestock can be a significant source of economic loss to all animal owners. Internal parasites rob their hosts of valuable nutrients as they spend part of their life cycle inside the host animal. This taking of nutrients can cause a decrease in feed efficiency, a reduction in weight gain and general unthriftiness causing an increase in costs to increase and even maintain weight. In this article I would like to go over some basics that may be applied to all livestock regardless of species.

Most internal parasites spend some portion of their life outside the host animal. The host animal generally sheds eggs from adult parasites in their feces. These eggs then hatch and the larval form begins to migrate to an area in hopes of being consumed by the host. Once inside the host the parasite will mature and begin reproduction, thereby continuing the infection of the herd.

Control of these parasites requires the interruption of the lifecycle at some point. One way to do this would be to limit the intake of the parasite from the environment. Most parasites require moist conditions to hatch and survive in the environment, thus a spring like the one we



had could potentially have increased the parasite load on the land. Overgrazing also leads to increased opportunities for ingestion of parasites as the animal grazes closer to the ground. As the parasite eggs hatch and the larva develops, they leave the fecal material and soil to moist grass where they are consumed. Larvae can survive on pasture for up to a year but hot dry weather can cut down on the

population. Proper pasture management will not get rid of all the parasites but it can lower the rate of infection.

The other method for controlling parasites is the use of anthelmintics, or dewormers as they are often called. There are many broad spectrum dewormers on the market that are effective on a number of parasitic species. One thing to remember is to always follow label directions and use the proper dosage. The administration of dosages less than recommended can lead to resistance of the parasite to the drug, thus making it no longer useful. Another way to aid in the prevention of resistance is to alternate the drug used to treat parasitism with each treatment. This changing of active ingredients works by killing those parasites that may have been resistant to the first treatment with a new product in which they are not resistant.



Another key when treating for parasites is to treat the entire group at the same time. Treating only those that show signs and symptoms and leaving the other healthy appearing animals untreated is ineffective. The healthy animals are most likely infected as well and shedding eggs thus the chances for re-infection are very high. I would recommend that you talk to your vet about your parasite control options. They can assist you with developing a treatment schedule and what product to use.



Photos courtesy of T. Laca

Palmer Land Trust revealed the slate of four winners for the 2015 Southern Colorado Conservation Awards (SCCA). The quartet of conservation champions were honored on September 23, 2015, at the sixth annual SCCA at Cheyenne Mountain Resort in Colorado Springs.

“The Southern Colorado Conservation Awards is an evening of storytelling and celebration. By showcasing land conservation achievements through short films, SCCA always stands out as a memorable and not-to-be-missed event. This is THE event of the year for those passionate about land conservation and for those who want to learn more about the role of land conservation in our region,” says Rebecca Jewett, Executive Director of Palmer Land Trust.



2015 Southern Colorado Conservation Award Recipients:

The Stuart P. Dodge Award honors a lifetime achievement in conservation.

Winner: Lewis Fillmore, Boone, Colorado

Lewis Fillmore cares deeply about the country north of Boone, Colorado, with roots that go back two generations. He has harnessed his passion for his natural surroundings in his innovative land management and conservation practices. At 81 years old, Fillmore still manages his land four days a week.

The Friends of Open Space Award honors efforts that lead to the protection of a significant property or important landscape in southern Colorado.

Winner: Dan Pike, Evergreen, Colorado

Dan Pike has worked in land conservation for nearly 40 years. During his 17-year tenure with Colorado Open Lands in Denver, Pike worked on nearly 100 projects that conserved more than 167,000 acres in southern Colorado. Most notable among these were the Trinchera Blanca Ranch project that preserved 81,400 acres and the Cheyenne Mountain project that protected 919 acres.

The Stewardship Award honors an individual or organization that has positively impacted the land and the way members of our communities understand and respect their relationship to the land.

Winner: Dr. Curt Sorenson, Canon City, Colorado

Over the last five years, Dr. Sorenson has spearheaded the largest collaborative forest restoration project in the region. Across Garden Park, north of Canon City, Sorenson motivated and coordinated the involvement of 37 private landowners and five agencies, resulting in wildlife habitat and diversity improvement.

The Innovation in Conservation Award honors the development of new conservation models, the creation of new conservation funding mechanisms, and implementation of unique conservation partnerships that protect our natural heritage.

Conservation Awards Continued from page 7

The Innovation in Conservation Award continued

Winner: Colorado Birding Trail

The Colorado Birding Trail is a major nature tourism initiative to promote outdoor recreation, conservation of resources by private landowners, and a diversified income for rural economies. One of the most unique features of the trail is the private lands that have been opened to visitation only through their participation as sites on the trail.

Award winners were nominated by the community at large and underwent a rigorous selection process by a Blue Ribbon Panel. The 2015 panel included Pueblo County District Attorney, Jeff Chostner; Bee Vradenburg Foundation President, Phillip Kendall; Founder of the Pikes Peak Conservation Fund of the Pikes Peak Community Foundation, Kathy Loo; Rocky Mountain PBS Station Manager (retired), Wynona Sullivan; El Pomar President and Chief Investment Officer, Thayer Tutt; and attorney, Bruce Warren.

SCCA has become the signature event for Palmer Land Trust and is designed to honor the winners and the many organizations and supporters that stand behind them. This, in turn, builds strength in the conservation community and greater political will for protecting the resources in Colorado that are important to all.



Congratulations!

Monthly meetings:

Pueblo County Stockmen's Association

meets the 1st Thursday of each month at Mesa Vet Clinic at 7 p.m.

Turkey Creek Conservation District

meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month, at 200 S. Santa Fe Ave., 4th floor, at 2:30 p.m.
Call: (719) 543-8386 Ext. 116 for details.

South Pueblo Conservation District

meets the 3rd Thursday of every month, at 200 S. Santa Fe Ave., 4th floor, at 6:00 p.m.
Call: (719) 543-8386 Ext. 3 for details.

