

2001 Growing Season at the Northwest Research Farms

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In the winter of 2000–01, snow lasted from November 7 until late spring, providing a full profile of soil moisture but cool temperatures and wet conditions that created a slow start to spring. Very little fieldwork was done prior to oat planting on April 18. The first corn was planted on April 19. After this, planting continued in short bursts between rains. Many farmers were forced to plant in cool, wet conditions that were less than ideal. Rainfall was above-average in April and May (see tables), including several heavy downpours. Both research farms experienced some soil erosion and some soil compaction.

Corn and soybean planting was finished by the first week of June. Normal temperatures with high rainfall helped crops take off. The last major rainfall was June 14. During the next 30 days, only .23 inches of rain fell. Subsequent dryness caused some problems with early planted corn. Later plantings benefited from late rains.

Fall weather again was ideal this year. Soybean harvest began October 1 and was completed October 17. Corn harvest began October 18 and was completed November 5. Both crops came out of the field dry, and yields were good.

We would like to thank everyone who helped make this year so successful, and we look forward to the challenges of 2002.

Table 1. Sutherland frost-free days.

Last frost (spring)	32 degrees or less	April 21
First frost (fall)	23 degrees or less	September 21
Frost-free days	153	
Avg. frost-free days	156	

Table 2. Monthly rainfall and average temperature during the 2000 growing season at the Northwest Research Farm, Sutherland.

Month	Rainfall (inches)		Temperature (°F)		Number of days temp. over 90°F or above
	At the farm	Departure from normal at the farm	At the farm in °F	Departure from normal at Sanborn	
April	5.94	+3.44	49.9	+3.8	0
May	6.88	+3.13	59.0	-.1	2
June	2.22	-2.23	68.6	-.2	5
July	5.10	+1.52	74.2	+1.1	5
August	3.11	-.66	70.4	-1.7	4
September	2.06	-1.08	60.4	-.7	0
October	.94	-1.14	48.9	+1	0
Total	26.25	+2.98		+2.3	16

Table 3. Monthly rainfall and average temperature during the 2000 growing season at the Northwest Research Farm, Doon.

Month	Rainfall (inches)		Temperature(°F)		Number of days temp. over 90° F or above
	At Rock Rapids	Departure from normal at the farm	At Rock Rapids	Departure from normal at Rock Rapids	
April	3.40	+.96	47.2	+0.2	0
May	2.74	-.20	59.6	+0.2	2
June	5.16	+1.08	68.7	-0.5	4
July	5.81	+2.50	75.1	+1.0	7
August	1.20	-2.59	72.1	+1.1	8
September	2.12	-.86	60.7	-0.4	0
October	.60	-1.30	43.2	-0.6	0
Total	21.03	-0.41		+1.0	21

For more weather information check the web page: <http://www.meteor.iastate.edu/agclimate/>