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**NATURAL RESOURCES REPORT -- Wait For The Rain**

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I'm Roger Lawson, the Information & Education Coordinator for the Middle Republican Natural Resources District in Curtis, NE

-Pause- This is the Natural Resources Report.

As irrigation season comes to a close, consider waiting for the rain until irrigating again. As I've heard at Steve Melvin's UNL Field days over and over this past August, "wait for the rain". We'll almost certainly get an inch or more of rain between August 30<sup>th</sup> and September 15<sup>th</sup>. Many of us received that rain just two days ago.

Why wait? The UNL Extension provides this answer...Because, one extra irrigation may mean wasting an additional one to three inches of water and two to five gallons of diesel fuel per acre.

In addition to saving water and lowering expenses, leaving the soil dry in the fall has several important advantages. First, soil compaction is always a concern with the heavy harvest equipment used today. Dry soils resist compaction. Second, harvest delays from rain are much more of a concern if the soil is left at a higher moisture level from irrigating. After the crop has matured and stopped using the water, the only significant way for the soil to dry out is for the water to move down into the profile. Third, soil cracking from drying is beneficial for breaking up compaction, building soil structure, and increasing water infiltration rates. And fourth, having the soil dry allows more room for storing off-season precipitation.

Wait for the rain. Make one hundred percent efficient use of the precipitation this fall by allowing for moisture storage in your soil profile.

Thank you for listening. This is Roger Lawson, keeping you informed about your natural resources.