

2006

## Soil Moisture

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### Recommended Citation

DeJong, Joel L. and Kassel, Paul C., "Soil Moisture" (2006). *Iowa State Research Farm Progress Reports*. 1138.

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# Soil Moisture

## **Abstract**

Soil moisture samples were taken at 29 sites in northwest Iowa during late October 2005. Moisture samples were taken at 1-ft increments to a 5-ft depth. Samples were weighed, oven dried, and reweighed at the Sutherland Research Farm. The moisture percentages were calculated from these data, and then they were used to calculate the inches of plant available moisture in the soil.

## **Disciplines**

Agricultural Science | Agriculture

## Soil Moisture

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Soil moisture samples were taken at 29 sites in northwest Iowa during late October 2005. Moisture samples were taken at 1-ft increments to a 5-ft depth. Samples were weighed, oven dried, and reweighed at the Sutherland Research Farm. The moisture percentages were calculated from these data, and then they were used to calculate the inches of plant available moisture in the soil. The data from these sites are listed in Table 1.

Long-term fall averages range from 4.5 in. to 6.0 in. in the top 5 ft of soil, but averages for the last 15 years have been significantly higher. The maximum plant available moisture level for most of these soils is approximately 11 in. in the top 5 ft of soil. September precipitation brought many sites back up to and above the long-term average in northwest Iowa, but some areas in west-central Iowa are still short of subsoil moisture.

**Table 1. Soil moisture available to plants in inches.**

<u>Site</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>2005 crop</u>	<u>Plant available moisture</u>
Calumet	O'Brien	soybeans	9.9 in.
Sanborn	O'Brien	soybeans	8.6 in.
Doon	Lyon	soybeans	9.0 in.
Sibley	Osceola	soybeans	7.0 in.
Boyden	Sioux	soybeans	9.4 in.
Ireton	Sioux	corn	8.5 in.
Akron	Plymouth	soybeans	4.0 in.
LeMars	Plymouth	soybeans	6.0 in.
Hinton	Plymouth	corn	3.9 in.
Kingsley	Plymouth	corn	5.6 in.
Aurelia (North)	Cherokee	soybeans	9.0 in.
Aurelia (South)	Cherokee	soybeans	7.1 in.
Cherokee	Cherokee	soybeans	8.3 in.
Marcus (North)	Cherokee	soybeans	9.8 in.
Marcus (South)	Cherokee	soybeans	6.2 in.
Lawton	Woodbury	corn	3.0 in.
Anthon	Woodbury	corn	6.7 in.
Rossie	Clay	corn	8.3 in.
Spirit Lake	Dickinson	soybeans	6.2 in.
Estherville	Emmet	corn	7.8 in.
Newell	Buena Vista	corn	4.9 in.
Ida Grove	Ida	corn	2.2 in.
Holstein	Ida	corn	6.3 in.
Battle Creek	Ida	corn	1.9 in.
Sac City	Sac	corn	6.8 in.
Schaller	Sac	soybeans	6.5 in.
Odebolt (North)	Sac	corn	5.8 in.
Odebolt (South)	Sac	corn	3.1 in.