

Water for Generations

Nebraska Water Balance Alliance

March 2013

A LEGACY OF WATER

The Nebraska Water Balance Alliance (NEWBA) is a non-profit organization formed in 2010 to foster broad-based **collaboration** to find and implement solutions to insure a legacy of water in Nebraska. Our goal is to promote **sustainable water solutions** that also **safeguard our economy and quality of life**.

With **no vested water interests**, NEWBA is uniquely positioned to bring together a wide range of interests and expertise to advance **synergistic water-saving strategies**.

WATER FOR GENERATIONS

To shorten the adoption curve for new water and energy saving technologies, growers need to understand and have confidence in equipment. Potential water and energy savings must be quantified. NEWBA Water for Generations projects bring together growers, vendors, power companies, UNL researchers, NRCS, NRDs and crop consultants to explore promising strategies.

- **2012 NEWBA Demonstration Project** involved 11 growers in the Platte and Republican River Basins evaluating the effectiveness of weather stations, ET Gages and Capacitance Probes in managing irrigation. The study also looked at inches pumped and nitrate movement in the soil.

Key findings:

- Weather information needs to be “localized”
- To be useful, data gathered must be “real time”, easy to access and read
- With AMR technology, power companies can provide real time pumping information
- Grower concerns with technologies must be heard and addressed by vendors
- Growers find other growers’ experience more credible than standard research

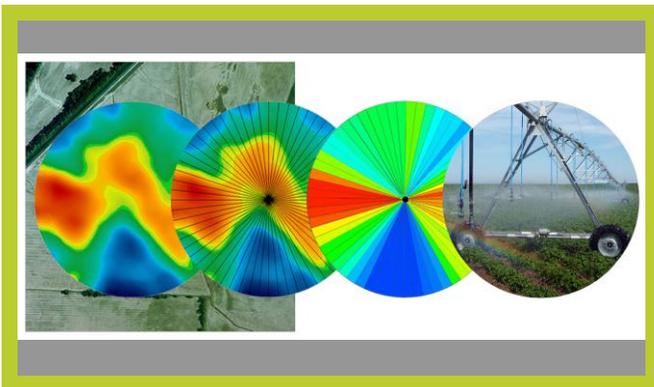
[See the full report on our website](#)

- **NEW 2013 NEWBA Demonstration Project** will work with the same growers to test ways to gather and report “real time” data from various vendors in a single database that provides easy to use information to improve irrigation decisions.

- **NEW 2013 Grower Behavior Study** will partner with growers in the Tri-Basin NRD, Lower Elkhorn NRD and possibly other NRDs to evaluate how variable rate irrigation technology can be used to improve water and power efficiency while maintaining or improving yields.



Ted Tietjen, 2012 Project Coordinator, with producer Nick Lapaseotes (Bridgeport) taking soil samples next to the capacitance probe to test for water holding capacity and nitrate movement.



In the 2013 Grower Behavior Study, water holding capacity of the soil in a field is mapped and the pivot is equipped with variable rate technology to slow down over lighter soils and speed up over heavier soils to avoid overwatering.

**For more information
Please contact us!**

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Building an Alliance



Nebraska Water Balance Alliance WATER ADVISORY BOARD

All financial contributors are members of our Water Advisory Board. Through your generous investments we are able to proactively move toward sustainable water for all.

In addition to your continued financial support we encourage your active involvement. There are many ways you can be a part of this effort:

- ✓ Become a member of our board
- ✓ Attend our monthly meetings
- ✓ Host local promotional events
- ✓ Apply for grant funding for water projects
- ✓ Recruit new members to the Alliance
- ✓ Assist / partner with us in projects
- ✓ Share new water saving ideas
- ✓ Take information to the next generation through FFA, school or University groups

Notable Alliances in 2012

- **Collaborators for the Demonstration Project** included eleven growers, four equipment dealers, three NRDs, the UNL Panhandle Research Station, six rural power companies, three NRCS offices and five crop consultant firms.
- **Matching grant funds** for equipment for the 2012 NEWBA Demonstration Project were provided by Dawson Public Power District and Tri-State Generation & Transmission.
- **Summit and Grower Symposium Sponsors** covering meal and meeting room cost included Adams Bank and Trust, 21st Century Equipment, Gothenburg State Bank, Nebraskaland Bank, Monsanto Water Learning Center and West Central Research and Extension.
- **Power companies providing substantial financial support** include Dawson PPD, Midwest Electric, McCook PPD, Northwest PPD, South Central PPD, Southwest PPD, Panhandle REA, Wheatbelt PPD, NREA and Tri-State Generation & Transmission.

WATER SUMMITS

Bi-Annual Water Summits provide information on promising water strategies and give leaders with diverse backgrounds and expertise a place where water issues and solutions can be proactively shared and evaluated. Summits held in July and January included a grower panel, updates on NEWBA projects, drought strategies and innovative water conservation ideas.



Ted Tietjen -- "Pioneer Award" winner for significant contributions to ensuring water for generations through innovation, education and collaboration

GROWER SYMPOSIUM



Growers and vendors met in January to discuss what was learned in the 2012 Demonstration Project and provide input on planning for the 2013 project.