

Developing Effective Drought Monitoring Tools for Farmers and Ranchers in the South-Central U.S.

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The South-Central U.S. is one of the main agricultural regions in North America: annual agricultural production is valued at \$44 billion dollars. In this working landscape, private landowners and producers are critical partners in drought mitigation and management. As climate conditions change, the region is expected to experience more frequent and severe droughts which will impact agriculture.

The South-Central CSC-funded project sheds light on what kinds of drought information farmers and ranchers use, evaluates several drought indicators based on their effectiveness in the region, and explores a new indicator based on soil moisture as an option for drought management. All indicators were compared to crop yields to assess variability among indicators and types of applications, recognizing that a single drought indicator may not be most appropriate for all applicants.

Photo Credit: USDA