

# PHASE II & III NEWSLETTER



## New Funding Opportunity: Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act

Doing more with less is a philosophy that resonates with most Nebraska farmers, however, does that motto hold true when it comes to nitrogen fertilizer? An analysis of nitrogen use efficiency from researchers at the University of Nebraska Lincoln in 2020 revealed that many producers in the Upper Big Blue NRD could reduce their use of nitrogen without a significant impact on yield. Now there is a program that will pay them to test the concept.

In spring 2024, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB1368, which provides more than \$1 million to Nebraska farmers who reduce their commercial nitrogen application by 40 lbs or 15 percent. While the details of this program are still being hammered out, producers who are interested in being considered for these funds can complete an interest form on the NRD website at <https://www.upperbigblue.org/NRIA> or reach out to Jerod Fling at [jfling@upperbigblue.org](mailto:jfling@upperbigblue.org)/(402)366-5272.

Of the \$1 million available in the state, the Upper Big Blue NRD area will receive more than \$95,000 for producers, to be spent over the next five years. Producers are eligible to stack incentive payments through this program with other programs, including those from the NRD and NRCS. The program will be offered to corn, sugar beet, and potato producers across the state. There will be three priority categories that will determine the amount of funding provided for a single tract of land (between \$10 and \$15 per acre). Payments will be made to cooperating producers, not landowners.

Producers who wish to participate in this incentive program must have completed the application process by January 15 and have been approved for program participation by their local NRD to be eligible for reimbursement.

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# Why Does Groundwater Nitrate Vary So Much Across Nebraska?

By Troy Gilmore, Assistant Professor, School of Natural Resources, UNL  
*Used with permission of the Nebraska Water Center*



Have you ever wondered why groundwater nitrate maps show so much variation across Nebraska? Or why wells near to your own tested well have such different nitrate levels? The answer has three parts. Nitrate in groundwater varies from place to place because of differences in:

- the amount of nitrate that travels below the root zone and toward the water table;
- the natural processes in the aquifer that remove nitrate from groundwater; and
- the length of time for nitrate to reach wells of a different depth or construction standard.

In the following, we'll break down those three pieces and explain how they affect nitrate levels.

## Nitrate Seeping Underground

Nitrate reaches the deeper unsaturated subsurface regions — below crop root zones, for instance — due to application of fertilizers, mineralization of organic matter, and/or movement of animal or human wastes into the ground. The rate at which this occurs is highly dependent on local soils and the amount and timing of precipitation or applied water in the area. Once nitrate has moved below the root zone, where it can be utilized by plants, nitrate will easily move downward toward the water table and into the groundwater system. Most high-nitrate groundwater (e.g., > 10 ppm) is located near areas with intensive row crop production, although animal agriculture can also contribute. There are cases where nitrate is naturally released from subsurface sediments, but these are relatively rare and localized.

## Naturally Breaking Down Nitrate

Since nitrate tends to stay dissolved in water, it moves along with groundwater through the aquifer. Once in the aquifer, nitrate can only be removed in two ways. One way is removal of nitrate-laden groundwater from the aquifer through pumping or through natural seepage into streams or springs. The second way nitrate can be removed is through natural removal processes within sediments. The primary natural process is denitrification, where bacteria in the

aquifer sediments consume nitrate. Denitrification only occurs in low-oxygen environments, which does not occur everywhere in the unsaturated layer or groundwater system. In Nebraska, it is possible that groundwater flowing to one well will undergo denitrification and therefore have low nitrate concentration. Meanwhile, a nearby well might receive groundwater that has undergone minimal denitrification and still has high nitrate concentration. Even though these two wells might be located on the same farm, they can have very different nitrate concentrations.

## Distance from the Source

Wells that are very shallow and close to a major source of nitrate are viewed as especially vulnerable to high nitrate concentrations. One reason is that nitrate can arrive at the well relatively quickly because it does not have far to travel in the soil profile. In fact, two wells installed at the same location but at different depths may have very different nitrate concentrations. The shallower well is more likely to have high nitrate, while the deeper well may have low nitrate. This is possible because groundwater, and the nitrate dissolved in it, moves slowly downward below the water table. In many locations, groundwater moves only a few inches of feet downward vertically in a given year depending on geology and the rate at which groundwater is being replenished by recharge. So it is not hard to imagine that it could take many years for groundwater nitrate to reach a well installed deep in the aquifer. It is possible that with current nitrate maps, these two wells would have very different nitrate concentrations even though they are in close proximity. ♦♦♦



# Groundwater Quality Sampling Schedule

The Upper Big Blue NRD is divided into 12 groundwater quality Management Zones. The median nitrate value for that zone determines the phase of management and therefore, rules and regulations.

Taking a step back, the median nitrate value for a zone is the product of water samples collected from a specific network of wells. These wells are selected based on construction and geology. A well that provides accurate results is screened in one portion of the aquifer only and does not have multiple screens. The screen also does not transect geological confining units such as clay layers,

which could mix shallow and deep water.

Currently, there are 309 wells in the water quality network. Most of the wells are irrigation, with some monitoring, domestic and public wells. To annually collect a water sample at each of these wells would be incredibly difficult given the sheer size of the District - over 1.2 million irrigated acres! Therefore, a rotation of zones below the Phase II trigger of 7.0 ppm was created. This means that if the median nitrate value of a Zone is below 7.0 ppm, it will be sampled once every three years. If the median nitrate value is above 7.0 ppm, that Zone will be sampled annually.

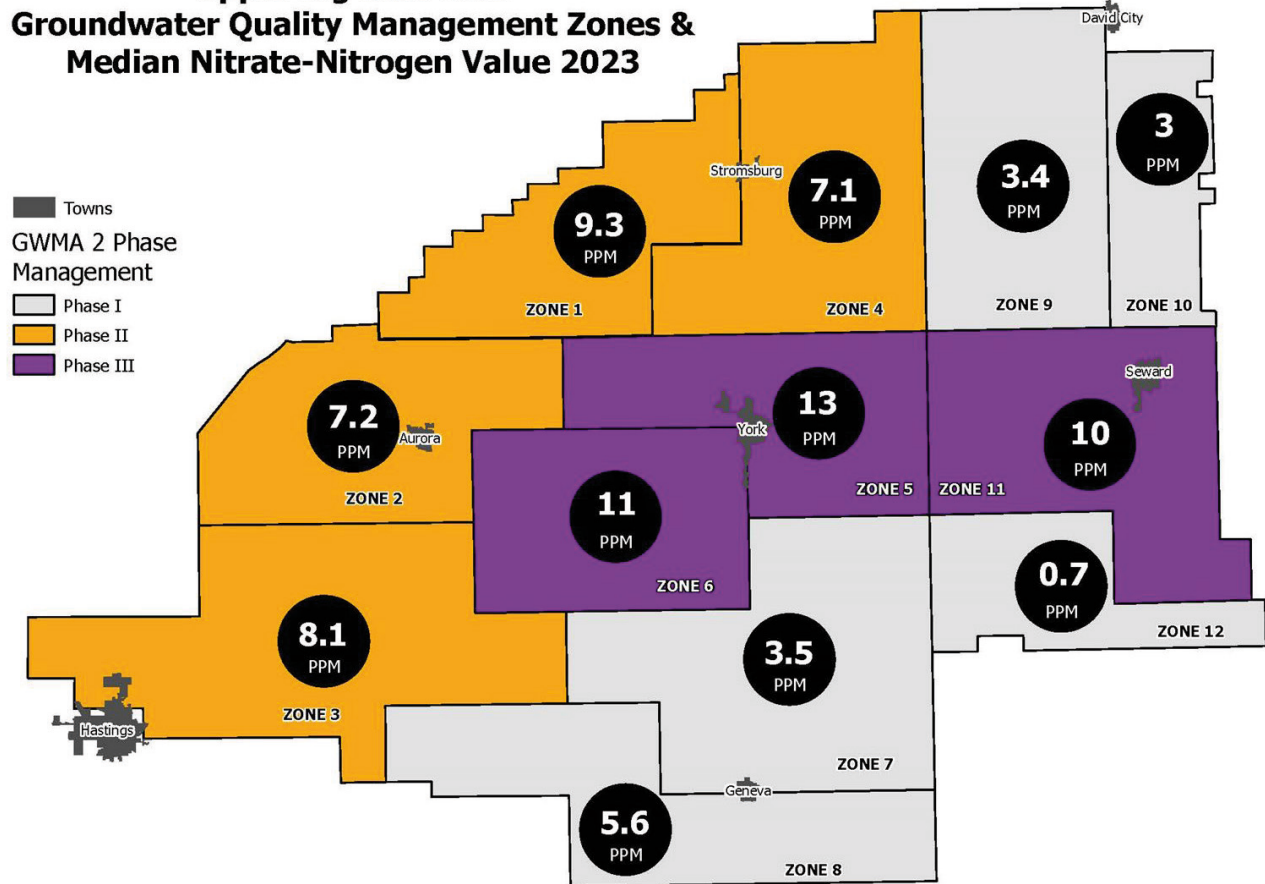
In 2024, District staff sampled wells in Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 11.

In 2025, District staff will sample wells in Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Thank you to all irrigation, domestic, and monitoring well owners for your continued cooperation. Protecting groundwater quality is an important task and your support is valuable.



**Upper Big Blue NRD  
Groundwater Quality Management Zones &  
Median Nitrate-Nitrogen Value 2023**



# Vadose Zone Study Update

have seen decreases in some areas of the district, we have had an overall increase of 54%.

The Upper Big Blue NRD has partnered with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to take part in a research study focusing on investigating the vadose zone. The vadose zone is the area beneath the root zone and above the groundwater table. It is also referred to as the unsaturated zone. The focus of the study will be to look at groundwater nitrate and agricultural contaminant occurrence in the vadose zone. To do this, we will be looking at both historic and spatial changes in groundwater nitrate throughout the district and in the 12 water quality management zones to compare the changes in nitrate levels. Nitrate levels will be determined by drilling test holes for chemical analysis, along with characterizing the soil type and physical characteristics.

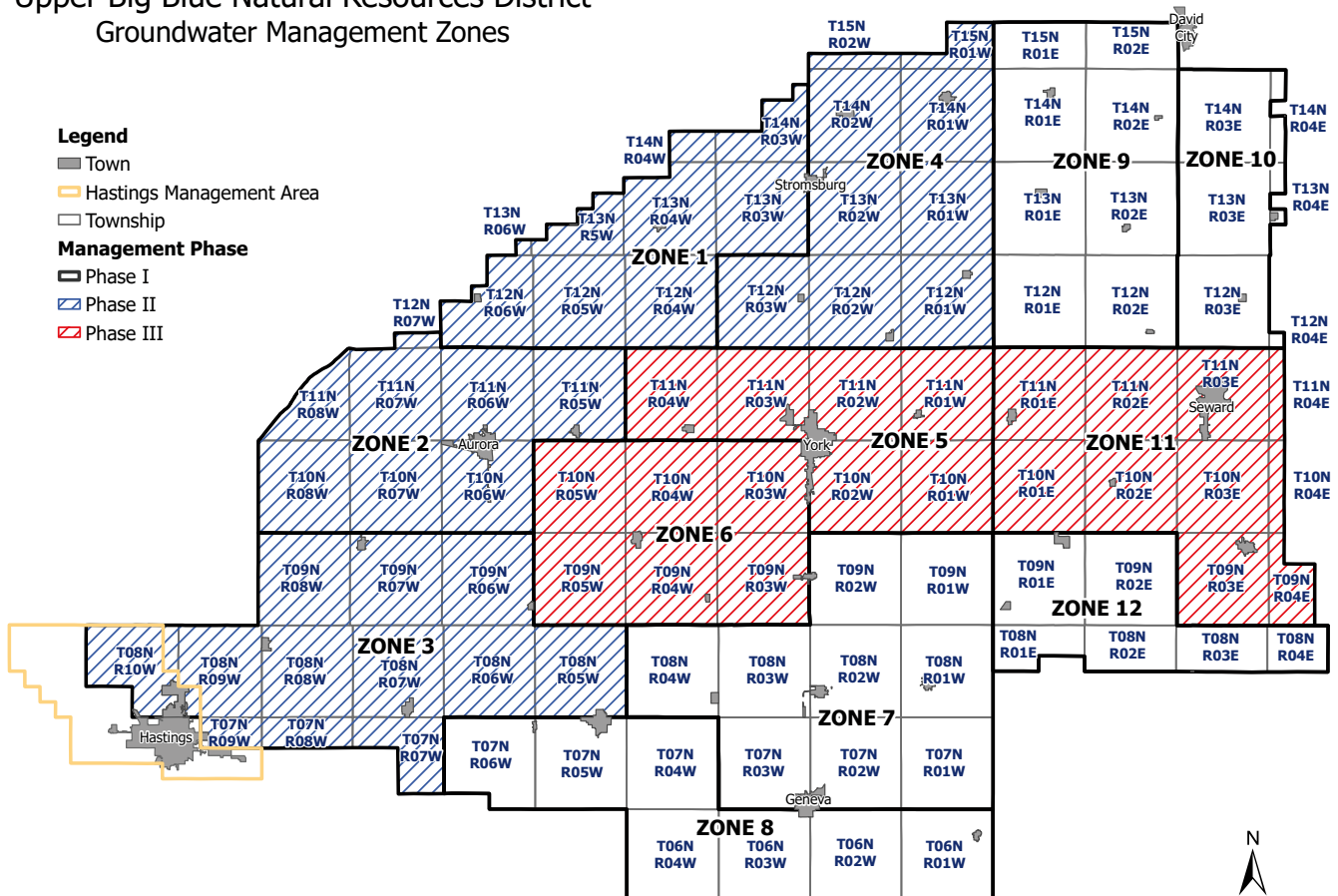
We will be continuing to take samples in the fall of 2024, and we are looking for volunteers who will be willing to take part in the study. Volunteers, if selected, will be asked to fill out a survey to look at current and historical management practices on the fields to be used in the study.

For the past few decades, we have seen a steady increase in nitrogen concentration in some parts of the district. To see the zone you are in, please refer to the map below. After that, look at the map on page three to see what the median nitrate-nitrogen levels are for your area. While we

For the fall of 2024, we will be sampling in zones 1, 2, and 3. In the Fall of 2025, we will be sampling in zones 9, 10, 11, and 12. If you have any questions, or are interested in participating in the study, feel free to contact NRD Water Resources Technician Dawson Tietmeyer (dtietmeyer@upperbigblue.org).



Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District  
Groundwater Management Zones





# Irrigation Water Nitrate Analysis – Zones 6 & 11

Operators within a management zone that has been designated a Phase III Management Zone must have their irrigation water tested for nitrates at least once every three years. Zones 6 and 11 moved to a Phase III Management Area in January 2022, and operators within these zones are now required to submit water samples. Zones 6 and 11 include the following townships:

## Zone 6

York County: Hays (09N-03W), Henderson (09N-04W), Baker (10N-03W), Brown (10N-04W)

Hamilton County: Farmers Valley (09N-05W), Beaver (10N-05W)

## Zone 11

Seward County: Map E (11N-01E), Map F (11N-02E), Map G (11N-03E), Map H (11N-04E), Map L (10N-01E), Map K (10N-02E), Map J (10N-03E), Map I (10N-04E), Map O (09N-03E), Map P (09N-04E)

Irrigation wells in Zones 6 and 11 must be sampled by April 1, 2025.

Zone 5 is a Phase III Management Area and is due the following year. Zone 5 includes the following townships:

## Zone 5

York County: Bradshaw (11N-4W), Lockridge (11N-03W), New York (11N-02W), Waco (11N-01W), Leroy (10N-02W), Beaver (10N-01W)

Irrigation wells in Zone 5 must be sampled by April 1, 2026.

Important things to remember:

- All active irrigation wells in Zones 5, 6, and 11 must be sampled.
- Comingled wells need to be sampled individually.
- Follow sampling instructions, especially the timeframe for delivery.
- If there are multiple wells per quarter, be specific when labeling – sub-quarter or physical location description is helpful to assign results and therefore, comply with rules and regulations.

The Upper Big Blue NRD is now utilizing a new database software that will allow staff to better track reporting information, such as, phase reports, sensor reports, and water samples. Wells in Zones 6 & 11 that have not been sampled by April 1, 2025, and wells in Zone 5 that have not been sampled by April 1, 2026, will be found in violation of District rules and regulations.



## Incentive Program (continued from page 1)

Producers will be notified if they have been approved for the program by March 15. Applications will be ranked, and a higher ranking will be given to producers who incorporate innovative technology into their reduction practices, including biologicals and chemigation scheduling. By the following January, producers will submit the necessary documentation to the NRD to show the reduced amount of nitrogen application to

claim their payment if they have met the goal of a reduction of 40 lbs or 15 percent per acre.

The program was established to protect groundwater from additional contamination from nitrogen, and to protect the many Nebraskans whose drinking water comes from groundwater sources from the health impacts of increased nitrogen consumption. ◆◆◆





## NRD Welcomes New Water Department Staff

The NRD water department has added a number of staff members in the last few months. You will likely see one or all of these individuals if you attend nitrogen management training through the winter.

Valerie Paul is the district's new water conservationist. In this role, she will be responsible for groundwater management area educational programming, presenting district information on water use efficiency topics to various audiences, and working one-on-one with producers to protect groundwater quality and quantity. Paul holds a bachelor's degree in Conservation and Wildlife Management from Missouri Western State University. Her previous employment has been in environmental health and safety in manufacturing settings. In those roles, she served as a member of the Nebraska Safety and Health Council, and the local emergency planning commission.

Seth Norquest serves as the precision conservation specialist, funded through a partnership between the Illinois Corn Growers Association and USDA-NRCS. Norquest is new to the NRD, but not new to the area. He has spent the last few years as a research technologist with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, working with the On-Farm Research Network. Prior experience also includes research and sales with local co-ops. Norquest holds bachelor's and master's degrees from UNL in agronomy and crop science.

Norquest will be working with producers to enroll acres in the Precision Conservation Management Program, which serves farmers by providing economic analysis of on-farm conservation practices. The program aims to help farmers understand the

economic values of adopting practices such as cover crops, nutrient timing, and tillage practices. PCM is funded by the USDA NRCS – Regional Conservation Partnership Program. Along with applied economics, water quality outcomes and carbon sequestration values are generated.

Jerod Fling serves as the integrated water program coordinator, funded through a partnership with the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture and USDA-NRCS. The position serves both the Upper Big Blue NRD and Central Platte NRD. Fling recently relocated from the Ainsworth area. Previously he worked for Rock County Agronomy Services LLC and Central Valley Ag as a commercial operator. He also has experience working for an irrigation company, and in sales for John Deere. Prior to that, he farmed for seven years.

In this new position, Fling will work one-on-one with producers to identify agronomic solutions to address water quality and quantity issues, assist producers with enrollment in conservation programs, host Conservation Program Forums for ag industry leaders, and generate materials to highlight conservation.

If you are a producer or land owner in the Upper Big Blue NRD area and are interested in funding and support for adding conservation practices to your acres, you can reach out to Paul, Norquest, and Fling at (402) 362-6601 or via email at [vpaul@upperbigblue.org](mailto:vpaul@upperbigblue.org), [snorquest@precisionconservation.org](mailto:snorquest@precisionconservation.org), and [jfling@upperbigblue.org](mailto:jfling@upperbigblue.org). ♦♦♦



# Reminders...

## Water Use Summary Reports

Earlier this year, the district mailed out water use summary reports to water users – presenting them with a visual of how much water they've used over the past several years (2013-2022), in hopes that our users can be more water conscious for the future. The report displayed the usage in acre inches (calculated based on flowmeter beginning and ending readings) and inches per acre (acre inches ÷ total number of certified acres). Although our board has not issued any allocation restrictions for upcoming seasons, this report provides a basis should such an event occur.

### *Reminder, water use reports are due December 1.*

Visit <https://www.upperbigblue.org/reporting> to access the reporting portal. There you will also find answers to FAQs as well as video tutorials. Questions? Contact [wateruse@upperbigblue.org](mailto:wateruse@upperbigblue.org) or call (402) 362-6601.

## Phase II & III Reports

The time for submitting Phase II and III reports is approaching! Each year, we see some forms completed incorrectly or submitted with data missing. Remember, our data is only as good as what **you** provide. If you do not complete your forms thoroughly, you may be contacted by our staff to provide additional information.

A few things to keep in mind as you complete your forms this year:

- Be sure to include the full legal description.
- Fill out all the columns/fields when growing corn, corn silage, popcorn, or milo.
- Subtract residual soil nitrogen per acre from the UNL total N needed.
- Include the soil nitrate ppm amount from your soil test.
- Don't forget to take credit for previous crops, (i.e. soybeans).
- PLEASE, let us know when ownership or operator changes happen.

If you need assistance in completing your forms, we are happy to help. Call the NRD at (402) 362-6601 and

ask for Valerie. These forms can be submitted online through our reporting portal, or you can complete the hardcopy versions that will be mailed to you and then return them to the NRD. Learn more about our online reporting portal and frequently asked questions here: <https://www.upperbigblue.org/reporting>.

## Irrigation Scheduling Equipment

Irrigation scheduling is a critical part of good irrigation water management. Over-irrigation increases production cost, can reduce crop yields, and leaches nitrates out of the crop root zone which pollutes the groundwater. Simple management tools are available, which can help the irrigator decide when it is appropriate to irrigate and when he or she can wait.

The district sells several of these tools at a 50 percent discount to irrigators in the district. The equipment is also for sale to others at regular prices. The irrigation scheduling equipment available includes:

- Irrrometer – Moisture Sensors, Handheld Meters and Data loggers
- Etagage Company – Atmometers
- Clement, Standard, and BackSaver Soil Probes

To maintain the life of the equipment, the best practices include:

- Remove sensors at the end of the irrigation season. This will ensure that equipment doesn't get damaged when harvesting.
- Assistant devices (such as the Watermark sensor puller) are helpful to hold onto the sensor when removing them at the end of the season.
- After removal, clean the sensors of any soil. You may need to soak them.
- Let the equipment dry and keep it in climate-controlled area such as a basement. Remember where you put them so you can use them again next year.
- If using a datalogger, make sure to download the season's data. If you need help with this, NRD staff can extract the data for you.
- ET Gages:
  - Remove them before the first hard freeze to avoid breaking the ceramic top.
  - Drain any remaining water and store until the spring.
  - Replacing the wafer and canvas annually for best results. These are available at the NRD.



# ‘Try Something’



## **Local Farmer Encourages Soil Health Practices with Field Day Event**

On a hot and breezy late summer afternoon, a fleet of pickup trucks lines the side of a gravel road one mile south of Milligan. Golden, ripening corn and soybean fields stretch into the distance on all sides as about 40 people follow local farmer Jordan Uldrich into the one section of farmland that looks different from all that surrounds it. Here, a lush growth of cover crops fills the wide space between the rows of corn.

When it comes to cover crops and other soil health practices, “it’s worth trying,” Uldrich tells the audience gathered in his field. This season, Uldrich was trying some things for the first time. With a goal of using less inputs and suppressing weeds, Uldrich used a five-acre patch of dryland corn to experiment.

Uldrich invited producers to view his test plots during a recent field day event hosted by the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District and The Nature Conservancy. The event drew area growers who were curious about getting started with cover crops on their acres, as well as those who are already implementing soil health practices and are enthusiastic about the results. The field day was an opportunity to see the results of Uldrich’s experiments and to ask questions of the grower as well as a handful of staff members from agencies including USDA-NRCS, UNL Extension, Pheasants Forever, the NRD, Nature Conservancy, and the Department of Natural Resources. Participants mostly came from the Upper Big Blue district area, but some came from as far as Sioux City, Iowa. Part of the draw of the event was the chance to network and learn what other producers are doing.



When discussing his motivation for the summer’s experimentation, Uldrich says he “wasn’t trying to win a yield contest,” but rather, he was interested in testing strategies for weed suppression, especially for palmer amaranth, and seeing if there was an economical way to use less chemical inputs while maintaining a profitable yield.

“Nitrogen management is essential to weed management,” said Uldrich, explaining that where you have excess nitrogen, you’ll have more weeds. “I’m getting serious about judicious use of nitrogen when we are trying to control weeds.”

Each plot had 30 lbs. of nitrogen applied in the spring. On four of the test plots, Uldrich applied 55 lbs. of nitrogen and 20 lbs. of sulfur in-season. The fifth plot had no additional fertilizer applied after the 30 lbs. in the spring.

None of the plots had fungicides or insecticides applied, except for what was on the pretreated, conventional seed. Uldrich added a few different biological products and all five plots were planted into a rye cover crop that had been chemically terminated six days before planting. One plot included a conventional herbicide program in 30” rows with no cover crops. The other four all included an 8-way cover crop mix interseeded at V3-V4, with varied row spacing and nutrient application. The Upper Big Blue NRD assisted Uldrich in planting his cover crop with an interseeder. The land had been no-till for 20 years, however, this was the first season Uldrich had experimented with cover crops.

The cover crop mix on the test plots included forage peas, mung beans, berseem clover, oats, turnips,







impact forage collards, buckwheat, and pie pumpkins. It had been fairly dry for the last six weeks prior to the field day, however when Extension Educator Jenny Rees lifted a spade of soil from between the rows among the cover crops, she noted subsurface moisture present, as well as good soil structure.

When it came to pest control, Uldrich noted the grasshoppers were “in the covers, not the corn,” as were the Japanese beetles. “They’d rather chew on the covers. Give them something succulent to chew,” if you want them to leave your primary crop alone, he told his fellow farmers. “The healthier the soil, the more likely you are to have the bugs that will help you.”

Field day participant Don Hilger grows organic popcorn and does custom seeding and seed cleaning. He’s a fan of cover crops for a few reasons. “If you get your nutrients right, it attracts the beneficial bugs, and the bad bugs don’t like the sugar content of your healthy plants,” he said. “If you have nitrogen and phosphorus in the soil but don’t have the biological activity, you can’t access the nutrients.” Hilger says he tests regularly through the season to determine which nutrients to add and in what quantity on his acres.

Uldrich’s test plots revealed varying levels of success. Uldrich plans to analyze results after harvest and expand on the most successful practices in the next growing season. He’s also considering carbon market influences, including how much carbon the various practices would capture and whether that will offset the cost of some yield loss. He plans to do more acres of cover crops and continue to reduce inputs, utilizing SAP testing to provide a road map for nutrient application in-season.

When it came to the various row spacing, Uldrich suggested there is no one size fits all approach, but that spacing should depend on what you’re trying to do. If you have cows that you want to graze on the cover crop, 60-inch rows are ideal. “Cows are the perfect bioreactor on the fields. Buffalo built the soil. The closest we’ve got now is grazing cattle,” he explained.

If you are looking for weed suppression, 30-inch rows work best. Why is he so concerned about weed control? He predicts that in 10 years we will not be able to control aggressive weeds with chemical means due to herbicide resistance. “I’m trying to get ahead of that curve. Biology has a lot more to do with it than chemicals,” he said. Uldrich plans to plant a rye cover crop this year after harvest as well.

“Have something green out there year-round,” he told his audience. When you do, you’ll continue pumping exudates into the soil where the plants can access it, creating an exchange of nutrients.

Uldrich suggested that everyone, “find the back four acres and try something.”

“It’s a worthwhile endeavor. If everyone can take one step in the right direction, we don’t all have to sprint to the finish line,” he said. ♦♦♦

*Photos: Field day participants spread out in Uldrich’s experimentation plot. Jordan Uldrich tells the group about what he’s learned at the conclusion of the event. Popcorn producer Don Hilger pulls a turnip out of the cover crops at the field day. Jenny Rees, UNL Extension Educator, samples the soil in the cover crops at Uldrich’s farm.*



# Management Area Rules and Regulations

## Phase I Requirements –

All operators within the district are subject to the requirements of Phase I.

1. **Fall Applied Anhydrous Ammonia**  
Application of anhydrous ammonia before November 1 is prohibited.
2. **Pre-Plant Liquid or Dry Nitrogen Formulations**  
Pre-plant nitrogen applications in liquid or dry forms are **prohibited** before March 1.

### *Exemptions to Items 1 & 2*

- The application of nitrogen fertilizer for any purpose other than fertilizing spring planted crops.
- The application of nitrogen fertilizer for spring planted small grains such as barley, oats and rye.
- The application of fertilizer that is not considered a “nitrogen fertilizer” as defined in Rule 5 of the District Groundwater Management Rules and Regulations.
- The spreading of manure, sewage and other by-products, conducted in compliance with state laws and regulations.

## Phase II Requirements –

All operators of land within district Management Zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are subject to the requirements of Phase II. Refer to the map on page 3 for management areas. Phase II operators are required to follow all Phase I requirements in addition to the following:

1. **Nitrogen Certification Training**  
Farm operators must attend a nitrogen certification training once every 4 years.

### *Irrigation Scheduling*

Irrigation scheduling equipment is required in at least one field in a Phase II area. The equipment should be installed in the largest field you operate. Examples are:

- Capacitance Probes
- Resistance Blocks
- Other methods approved by the District

2. **Soil Sampling Requirements**

Soil samples are required in years when corn or sorghum will be grown following a non-legume crop and/or when livestock, municipal or industrial waste has been applied within the last 12 months.

A minimum of:

- 1 composite 0-8” sample per field analyzed for organic matter and residual nitrogen, and
- 1 composite 8-24” sample per field analyzed for residual nitrogen is required.

For soil sampling purposes, a field is defined as one where the crop and irrigation practices are the same.

3. **University of Nebraska Lincoln (UNL) Recommended Nitrogen Fertilizer Application Rate**

Prior to applying nitrogen fertilizers, the operator must calculate the recommended application rate based on UNL’s nitrogen fertilizer recommendation equation. The UNL nitrogen recommendation equation takes into account the residual soil nitrogen from your soil analysis and other nitrogen credits.

4. **Reporting Requirement**

Every year, a report is required for all dryland and irrigated fields by April 1. The report steps you through UNL’s Nitrogen Recommendation Equation. A copy of your soil analysis must accompany the report.



## Phase III Requirements –

All operators of land within district Management Zone 5, 6, and 11 are subject to the requirements of Phase III. Phase III operators must follow all Phase I and II requirements, as well as the following.

### 1. *Soil Sampling Requirements*

Soil samples are required in years when corn or sorghum will be grown following a non-legume crop and/or when livestock, municipal or industrial waste have been applied within the last 12 months. A minimum of:

- 1 composite 0-8” sample per **40 acres** or any portion thereof, analyzed for organic matter and residual nitrogen

- 1 composite 8-24” sample per **40 acres** or any portion thereof, analyzed for residual nitrogen is required.

### 2. *Irrigation Water Sampling*

All irrigation wells must be sampled and tested for nitrate once every 3 years. You are free to use any lab you wish, but the NRD offers nitrate testing free of charge.

### 3. *Fall and Winter Application of Anhydrous Ammonia*

All anhydrous ammonia applied between the dates of November 1 and March 1 must be applied with a district approved nitrification inhibitor. Active ingredients include: Nitropyrin, Pronitridine, and Dicyandiamide. A receipt as proof of purchase **must** accompany your annual report. ◆◆◆

*These requirements are according to Rule 5 of the District Ground Water Management Rules and Regulations Chapters 18- 22*

# Time is running out!

## The application deadline for funding through the Nebraska Soil Carbon Project is November 15.

Funding is available for adding acres of no-till, diverse crop rotation, & cover crops. Financial & technical assistance provided.

Visit [upperbigblue.org/soilcarbonproject](http://upperbigblue.org/soilcarbonproject) to get started today!





## Nitrogen Management Certification Training

- Dec. 17 | Polk County Fairgrounds Ag Hall (Osceola) | 3:30 p.m. | Dean Kroll, Advancements in Nitrogen Management
- Jan. 7 | Leadership Center (Aurora) | 9:30 a.m. | Ken Quant, Flow Meters as a Management Tool
- Jan. 21 | Upper Big Blue NRD Office (York) | 9:30 a.m., 3:30 p.m., and 6:30 p.m. | Kyle Hunt, Soil Moisture Management and Soil Health

## Home Reverse Osmosis Funding Available

Concerned about your drinking water? The Upper Big Blue NRD has a program to address drinking water quality concerns in the district. The program will provide up to \$500 per home for a point-of-use reverse osmosis (RO) system on properties where the drinking water quality exceeds 10 PPM of nitrate. Private well users in Nebraska are responsible for maintaining the integrity of their own water supply and should have it tested annually for contaminants—a process that residents of the NRD can do for free.

A new program from the State of Nebraska also provides a tax credit for eligible citizens for the installation of a reverse osmosis system. You can find information about this program as well as the NRD program on our website. ◆◆◆