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226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337  
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601  
E-mail: [kcsr@chadrad.com](mailto:kcsr@chadrad.com)

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**(Neb.)-Number Of New Irrigation Wells Surges In Drought Striken Areas**



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/22/2013 09:41 AM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - A Nebraska agency says the number of new irrigation wells registered in the drought-stricken state last year surged past 1,000 for the first time in seven years.

The Department of Natural Resources reported earlier this week that the 1,105 new wells were the most registered with the state since 2005.

Economists say a surge in corn and soybean prices is one of the reasons and likely is tied to another reason: the drought that left many fields withered and unproductive.

Dave Aiken is an agriculture and water law specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He says if corn were \$2 or \$3 a bushel, "we wouldn't see as many wells, despite the drought."