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**(Regional)-U.S. Drought Levels Off After Two Weeks Of Worsening**

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 12/06/2012 10:21 AM

ST. LOUIS (AP) - A new report shows that the nation's worst drought in decades has leveled off last week after worsening during the two previous weeks

The weekly U.S. Drought Monitor report released Thursday shows more than 62 percent of the continental U.S. remains in some form of drought. One-fifth of the land in the lower 48 states is still in extreme or exceptional drought - the two worst classifications.

All of several Midwest and Plains farming states, including South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma, are experiencing at least some form of drought.

The two previous weekly updates showed overall conditions had worsened after more than a month of showing slight improvements.

Heavy rainfall is expected in coming days in portions of the Great Lakes and Mississippi River region.