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Farmers Hoping for Enough Moisture to Make Wheat Sprout

(KLZA) Planting any crop is an informed leap of faith for farmers, but Nebraska wheat farmers are having that faith tested by drought.

The Lincoln Journal Star reports that farmers who plant now may not have enough field moisture for wheat to sprout. Those who wait for rain risk a killing frost before wheat roots can withstand the cold.

Because of soil types and other factors, most farmers in the state's prime wheat-growing areas in south-central and southwestern Nebraska can't wait for spring rains to opt for crops of corn or soybeans. In alternate years, many farmers plant winter wheat in fields left fallow to boost moisture reserves.

Royce Schaneman, of the Nebraska Wheat Board, says waiting for rain can put a farmer further behind.

Associated Press