



Dave Heineman  
Governor

# State of Nebraska

Department of Agriculture  
Gregory A. Ibach  
Director  
P.O. Box 94947  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4947  
(402) 471-2341  
Fax: (402) 471-6876  
www.nda.nebraska.gov

## NEWS RELEASE For Immediate Release



September 15, 2014  
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Contact: **Christin Kamm**  
**(402) 471-6856**

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### NDA DIRECTOR IBACH NOTES ANTICIPATED LARGE CROP AS FALL HARVEST BEGINS

LINCOLN – Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Greg Ibach is calling attention to recent estimates for a large harvest and encouraging producers and agribusinesses to exercise care as they begin what is generally the busiest time of the year for agriculture.

"We anticipate having a record high soybean harvest this year, as well as one of the best average yields for corn, according to the USDA forecast," Ibach said. "As farmers and agriculture businesses gear up, I urge folks to keep safety at the forefront and try to plan ahead as much as possible to relieve some stress as this busy season gets even busier."

Ibach said favorable rains through much of the season have helped boost yield outlook. Late season moisture allowed producers in some areas to end irrigation early, but also could play into the necessity for producers to utilize more propane to assist them in drying their crops down to the proper moisture content levels. The fall and winter of 2013 saw a sharp price increase in propane as that industry worked on delivery and infrastructure issues. Ibach is hopeful the coming fall and winter won't hold similar problems.

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"The leadership of the Nebraska Energy Office and I continue to stay in contact concerning the availability and costs of propane for our crop and livestock producers and our coops," Ibach said. "From current reports, I am hopeful that Nebraska is in a better position in terms of propane availability than we were last season. However, folks should make sure they are planning ahead."

Ibach also has made it a point to reach out to representatives of both of Nebraska's main railroads regarding concerns about grain movement. The Upper Plains states have had particular difficulty with rail access, as far back as last harvest season. A variety of issues have contributed to problems with train car and locomotive availability and price increases, Ibach said, although indications are that Nebraska is not facing as big of an issue as the Dakotas.

"Officials from both Union Pacific and BNSF Railway told me they have taken steps they believe will ease concerns in Nebraska," Ibach said. "We pledged during our conversations to stay in touch as the harvest season gears up."

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