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Climate Change Poses Problems for Midwest Farmers

(KTNC)--Climate change may bring Nebraska longer growing seasons which could bring increased crop productivity, but the experts say it may also bring more extreme weather events, more risks from pests and disease, which could substantially hurt crop production. One study predicts that without action, climate change will cause crop yields in the Midwest to drop 20-percent by 2050. U-S Ag Secretary Tom Vilsack says the U-S-D-A has recently created several "climate hubs" for research, one of which focuses on the Midwest. Vilsack says many producers are already adapting to the wide weather swing by embracing voluntary programs to cut back on the runoff of manure and farm chemicals.

The recent situation in Ohio renewed debate about restrictions on ag run-off. Toledo residents were warned not to drink city water for three days because of toxins in the water. The toxins came from algae bloom in Lake Erie caused by phosphorus run-off from fertilized fields and livestock operations as well as leaky septic tanks.

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