

<http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=65331>

## Become a Volunteer Rainfall Reporter Through CoCoRaHS

CoCoRaHS (pronounced KO-ko-rozz) is a grassroots volunteer network of backyard weather observers of all ages and backgrounds working together to measure and map precipitation (rain, hail and snow) in their local communities. CoCoRaHS stands for Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow network.

Using low-cost measurement tools, stressing training and education, and utilizing an interactive web site, their aim is to provide the highest quality data for natural resource, education, and research applications. The only requirements to join are enthusiasm for watching and reporting weather conditions and a desire to learn more about how weather can affect and impact our lives. The web page provides the ability for observers to see the observations mapped out in real time as well as providing a wealth of information for our data users.

Precipitation affects agriculture in so many ways. Farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses and commodity inventors all follow weather prediction and national/international rainfall patterns. A few examples include monitoring crop development, crop yield prediction and assessment, diseases, insects, and soil moisture assessments. How much it does and doesn't rain affects commodity prices and also affects investment and marketing strategies. Many who are not involved in agriculture may not realize just how much the prices paid to farmers for many commodities vary daily based on observed and predicted weather conditions both here and abroad. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is looking at CoCoRaHS data regularly to assess crop development, potential drought stress, and possible crop damage and erosion from flooding or drought.

The U.S. Drought Monitor uses CoCoRaHS data in helping chart drought throughout the country. Observer reports (especially those zero reports) provide an important tool for determining where drought is lurking and to what degree it is affecting the agricultural interest in specific counties.

For more information, please click here: [Information about CoCoRaHS](#) or call and speak to someone in your local FSA office to see how you might be impacted. To see who uses CoCoRaHS rainfall observations, click [here](#). If you would like to sign-up as a volunteer observer and become part of their expanding network, please click here: "[Join the CoCoRaHS Network](#)"