“What to Do if It Rains, What to Do if It Doesn’t” will be the center of attention at a producers’ meeting Monday, Jan. 14, 10 a.m. at the Dawson County Extension Office on the fairgrounds in Lexington.

The annual “Ranching for Profitability” meetings will focus on drought. Nebraska experienced one of the worst droughts on record in 2012. With poor range production and high feed costs, the big questions for many beef producers is “what to do if it rains?” and “what to do if it doesn’t rain?” in the upcoming year.

The drought of 2012 not only impacted the forage production last year, but also could weaken plants’ root systems- magnified if pastures were overgrazed. Last year’s drought will impact this year’s production, as weak roots mean less leaf material. Dr. Jerry Volesky, UNL Extension Range and Forage Specialist, will discuss important decision making dates for pastures, what to expect from pastures if precipitation is received or not, and how to manage for healthy pastures during these trying times.

Rainfall will significantly impact what producers feed their cows in 2013. Even with abundant spring precipitation, producers will need to reduce stocking rates and delay turnout into weakened summer pastures. However, if 2013 turns out to be dry again, producers may have to consider other feed options. UNL Extension Beef Specialists, Karla Jenkins or Rick Rasby, will talk about limit feeding cows in confinement and what to plan for.

Other locations are planned across the state. Call the local extension office to preregister for a meal (one week prior).

Meeting dates, locations and times (are local):

Monday, Jan. 14: 5 pm: Broken Bow, Country Club.

Tuesday, Jan. 15: 10 a.m.: Stapleton, Fairbuilding; 5 p.m., Mullen, Bullseye Building. (Private

pesticide training to be held from 3-5 p.m. at the courthouse for those interested.)

Wednesday, Jan. 16: 10 a.m., Valentine, Cedar Canyon Steakhouse

Tuesday, Jan. 22: 10 a.m., Bassett, United Methodist Church; 5 p.m., O'Neill, Holt Co Annex Building.

Thursday, Jan. 31: 5:30 p.m., Kimball, Event Center.

To register, call the local UNL Extension Office. Contacts include: Lexington 308-324-5501, Broken Bow 308-872-6831, Stapleton 308-532-2683, Mullen 308-645-2267, Valentine 402-376-1850, O'Neill 402-336-2760, Ainsworth 402-387-2213, or Kimball 308-235-3122. Registration is $15.