The annual "West Central Cattleman's Day in North Platte will focus on drought.

The West Central Cattlemen's program will be held at the Lincoln County Fairgrounds in North Platte on Tuesday, Jan. 22 starting at 5:30 p.m.

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 are "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 and more weeds.

UNL Extension educators Doug Anderson and Noel Mues will discuss weed and pasture management during and after drought. Robert Tigner, UNL Extension educator will discuss economic implications of herd management decisions during drought. UNL Extension educator Brian Strauch will be discussing leasing cows to someone who has grass.

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. With limited availability of forages, baled cornstalks are one of the more abundant forages we have available. UNL Extension Educator, Randy Saner will discuss feeding cornstalks to cows.

The cost to attend the program is $15 per person or $25 couple. The program is sponsored by Lincoln County Cattlemen's and the Nebraska Cattlemen's.

For more information and to register contact the Lincoln-Logan-McPherson Extension office at 308-532-2683 or 1-800-200-1381. You may register by e-mail at rsaner2@unl.edu.