

New U2U tool helps farmers understand impact of global climate patterns

March 24 2015, by Keith Robinson

The [Useful to Usable climate initiative](#) based at Purdue University has added an online tool enabling farmers and agricultural advisers to better assess how climate patterns in other parts of the world can influence local conditions and corn yields across the Corn Belt.

The Climate Patterns Viewer can help growers make more informed farm management decisions during different phases of the El Niño Southern Oscillation and Arctic Oscillation. It relates [historical events](#) of those phases to the effects of associated precipitation and temperatures over the course of a year.

"By tapping into this historical data, growers and advisers can get a sense of what conditions might be coming during a particular ENSO or AO phase based on past experience," said Melissa Widhalm, project manager of Useful to Usable, or U2U. "The Climate Patterns Viewer is an invaluable planning tool, whether you're deciding what and when to plant, or how to deal with a cooler and shorter [growing season](#)."

Hans Schmitz, Purdue Extension educator and agricultural meteorologist, noted that certain areas of the Corn Belt can be quite a bit drier, wetter, warmer or cooler than average because of the ENSO and AO oscillations.

"The ability to look at the historical effect month-by-month better influences management decisions this growing season," he said.

The tool can help growers and advisers:

- Identify potential periods of above- or below-average temperatures.
- Identify locations where a growing season might be longer or shorter.
- Plan for associated crop choices, seed purchases, irrigation needs, fertilizer application or frost prevention measures.
- Estimate potential yield impacts to assess market price pressures and forward-pricing alternatives.

The Climate Patterns Viewer is part of the U2U suite of online tools created to help farmers and agricultural advisers manage increasingly variable weather and [climate conditions](#) across the Corn Belt. They provide historical climate data that help inform purchasing, marketing and activity planning throughout the growing cycle. Data in all tools are updated regularly, even daily in some cases.

More information: More information about this and other U2U tools is available on the U2U website at agclimate4u.org

Provided by Purdue University

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