

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE  
PRODUCT/SERVICE DESCRIPTION DOCUMENT (PDD)  
TYPE: Official Product  
DATE: January 29, 2003**

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PALMER DROUGHT SEVERITY INDEX

**Part 1 - Mission Connection**

**1. Product/Service Description:**

The Climate Prediction Centers (CPC) and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Joint Agricultural Weather Facility (JAWF) produces the Palmer Drought Severity Index chart. The index indicates long term conditions.

**2. Purpose/Intended Use:**

The index is intended for long-term planning.

**3. Audience:**

The audience is primarily agricultural and water supply managers.

**4. Presentation Format:**

JAWF presents the outlooks in red book graphic over AWIPS. Graphics are also posted on the CPC web site.

**5. Feedback Method:**

E-mail both [Robert.Leffler@noaa.gov](mailto:Robert.Leffler@noaa.gov) and [Barbara.Mayes@noaa.gov](mailto:Barbara.Mayes@noaa.gov).

**Part 2 - Technical**

**1. Format and Science Basis:**

The index depicts prolonged (in months or years) abnormal dryness or wetness; responds slowly; changes little from week to week; and reflects long-term moisture runoff, recharge, and deep percolation, as well as evapotranspiration. JAWF assigns numerical index values for each National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) climate division.

JAWF uses 7 categories:

Index range	Condition for NCDC climate divisional area
-4.0 or below	extreme drought
-3.0 to -3.9	severe drought
-2.0 to -2.9	moderate drought
-1.9 to +1.9	near normal
+2.0 to +2.9	unusually moist
+3.0 to +3.9	very moist
+4.0 or above	extremely moist

The latest Palmer Drought Severity Index is at

[http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/regional\\_monitoring/palmer.gif](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/regional_monitoring/palmer.gif)

**2. Availability:**

JAWF issues this product each Monday at around 12:00 noon Eastern local time. JAWF does not issue updates. They will issue corrections as needed. They are issued on NWS dissemination systems under the following product IDs:

WMO HEADING - PYWS46 KWBC

AWIPS ID - RBG6KA

They are also issued on the CPC web site at the URL listed in section a.

**3. Additional Information:**

- Valid Time: This product is valid for one week after issuance.
- Product Expiration Time: This product expires with the next issuance
- Creation Software: JAWF uses in-house National Center of Atmospheric Research (NCAR) graphics.