http://agweather.mesonet.org/ · Volume 5, Issue 6, September 2010

agweather connection

Goodbye. Hello.

Changes are on the horizon for the *Agweather Connection* newsletter. After this month, the newsletter will change its focus from Agweather to the Mesonet. All of the efforts of the Mesonet will move in this new direction.

"We needed to make our products easier for everyone to access, to understand, and to use on a daily basis," said Phil Browder, Mesonet Electronic Technician and marketing team member. "In short, we needed a makeover."

Instead of highlighting each program and website to its specific audience, the spotlight instead will shine on the entire Mesonet organization. This was achieved by recreating www.mesonet.org. Many positive changes have been included on the new website like prominent links to each Mesonet-sponsored program, and easy-to-access weather information, forecasts and radar.

Although the *Agweather Connection* will transition to the *Mesonet Connection*, you will still be able to find valuable weather and climate information in the newsletter. And, the Agweather website will continue to be a helpful resource for Oklahoma's farmers and ranchers

"Agweather isn't going anywhere and you will see few changes on the website," said Maggie Hoey, Mesonet Extension Assistant and marketing team coordinator. "But, we hope users find the new Mesonet website to be a valuable tool they want to tell others about. A person only has to remember www.mesonet.org, to access any of our websites, including Agweather."

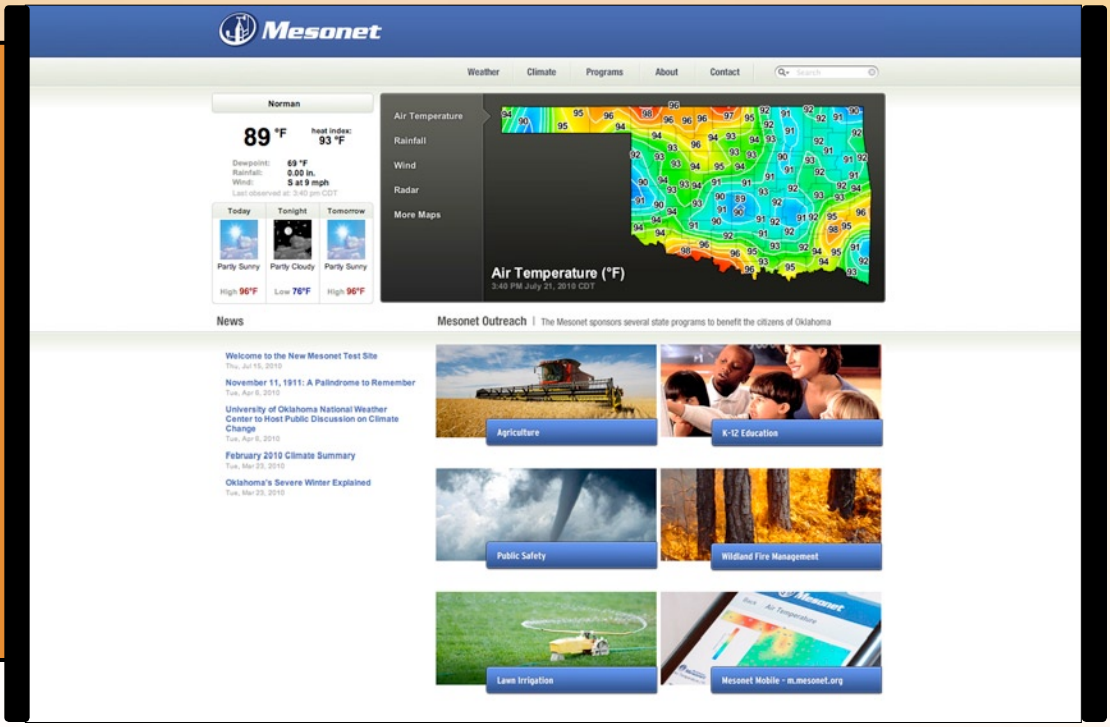
***Included on the new website are the following improvements. More details will be provided in the October issue of* Mesonet Connection.**

- Rainfall maps display accumulated rainfall observed at each Mesonet site, as well as rainfall estimates based on radar.
- Enhanced radar makes zooming and animating the radar easy.
- Prominent links are shown for outreach programs in agriculture, public safety, lawn irrigation, mobile connectivity, wildfire management and K-12 education.
- No plug-in required. The new website runs without any plug-ins, so it is very easy to use.
- The search feature on the new website makes finding specific maps and information much easier.

NEW|IMPROVED

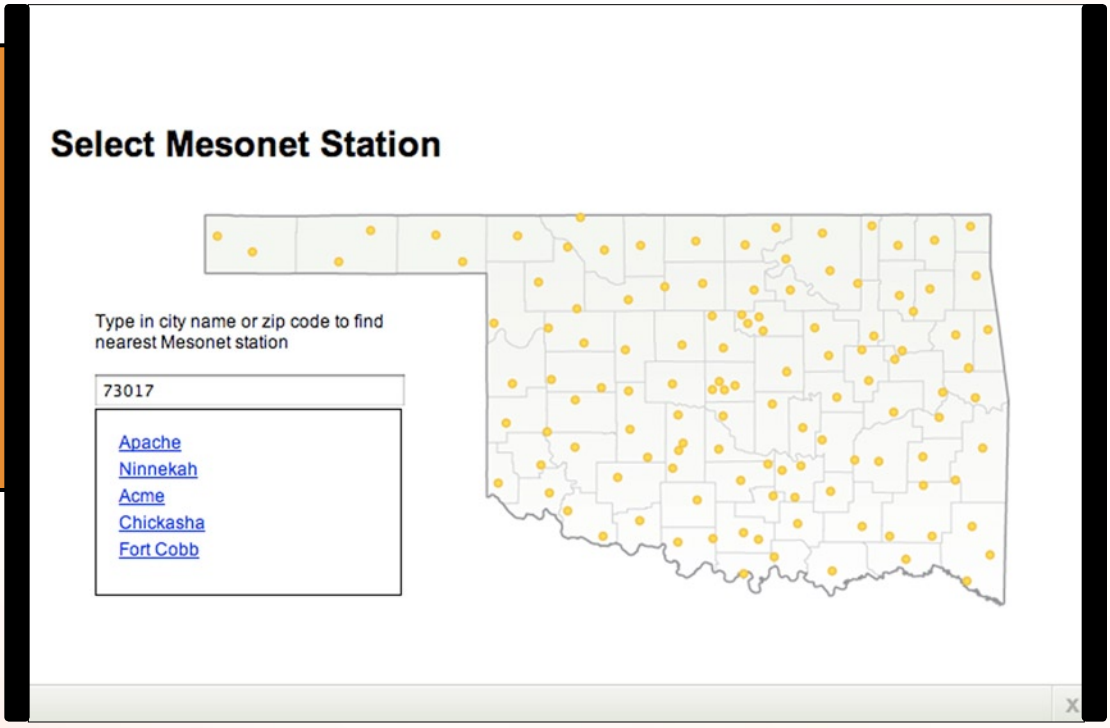
Mesonet programs

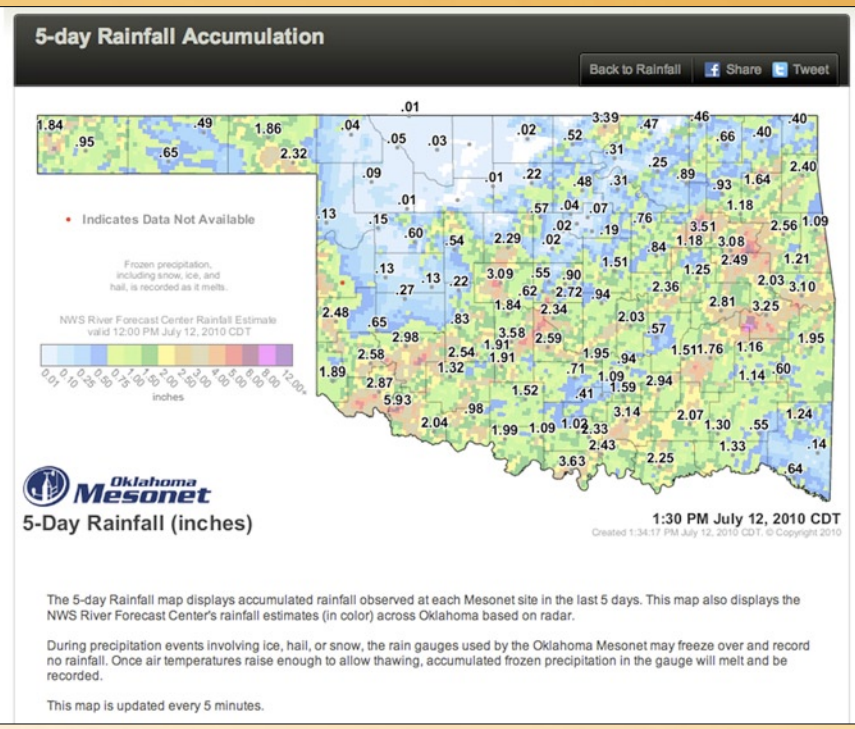
- The new Mesonet website proudly displays links to sites specially designed for agriculture, public safety, lawn irrigation, mobile connectivity, wildland fire management and K-12 education.
- The new Mesonet site will offer you one more way to access Agweather. It also lets you see what Mesonet is doing in other areas.
- Agweather isn't going anywhere. You will still be able to access agweather.mesonet.org, or you can follow the link on the main page of www.mesonet.org



Site locator tool

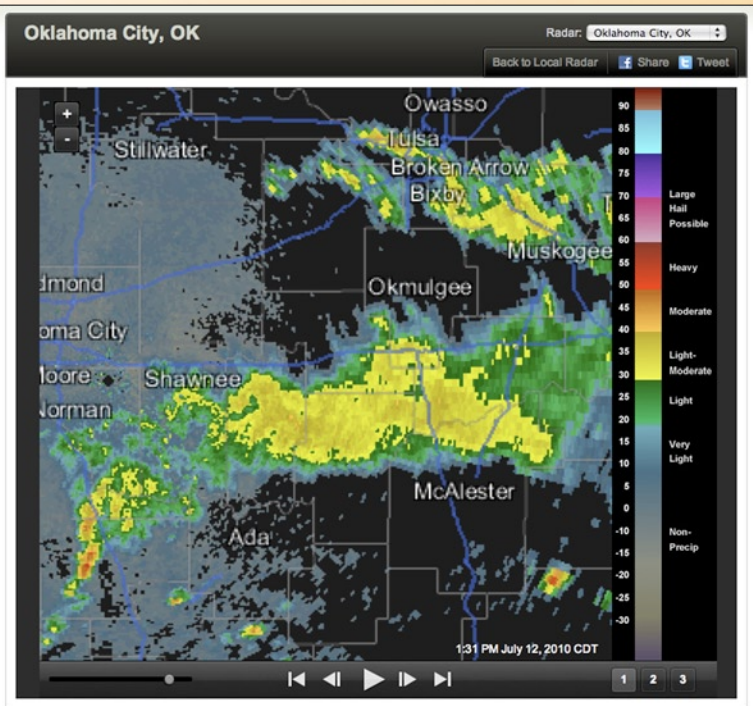
- The new Mesonet website makes it easy to locate your nearest site.
- You can either select from a list, choose a point on the map, enter a city name or enter a zip code.
- The location you choose will be saved and used throughout the site when you are looking at products like forecast and local weather.





Rainfall maps

- The new rainfall maps show two things: rainfall measured by the Oklahoma Mesonet and radar-estimated rainfall by the National Weather Service River Forecast Center.
- By combining these two sets of data, you have a better, more accurate idea of the rainfall in between Mesonet towers.



Enhanced radar

- The new radar makes zooming and animating effortless.
- It also features an enhanced legend, which gives you an idea of the precipitation an area is experiencing. The legend ranges from "non precipitation" to "large hail possible."
- Seven states are covered by the 15 radars that can be found on the new Mesonet website.

WACKY WEATHER

BY GARY MCMANUS, ASSOCIATE STATE CLIMATOLOGIST

Throughout the publication of the *Agweather Connection* newsletter, Oklahoma has experienced some dramatic weather events. Here are a handful of examples:

Tropical Storm Erin, August 19, 2007: The remnants of Tropical Storm Erin unexpectedly intensified during the overnight hours of August 19. In fact, the storm was stronger over Oklahoma than at any time during its entire life cycle. Extensive wind damage occurred west of Oklahoma City, and severe flooding ravaged much of Oklahoma. More than 9 inches of rain were observed in areas near Watonga, Fort Cobb and Okmulgee. Seven flood-related deaths were reported statewide.

I-44 Ice Storm, December 8-10, 2007: A devastating ice storm deposited 1-2 inches of ice along the I-44 corridor in Oklahoma leaving behind nearly $900 million in damage. Widespread damage to trees and power lines led to the largest power outage in Oklahoma history. More than 641,000 electric customers were without power, amounting to over one million people. The worst of the ice storm affected the urban corridor from near Lawton, to Oklahoma City, to Tulsa, and northeast into Missouri. At least 27 deaths were reported statewide, mainly due to hundreds of automobile accidents, although some were due to prolonged cold air exposure or carbon monoxide poisoning.

Christmas Eve Blizzard, December 24, 2009: The winter storm struck on Christmas Eve, pounding the state with sleet, freezing rain, snow and winds gusting to over 60 mph. Oklahoma City recorded 13.5 inches of snow. The snow was heaviest in central and northeastern Oklahoma, along and to either side of the I-44 corridor. The freezing rain that fell in southwestern Oklahoma combined with the strong winds caused about $2 million in damages and left thousands without power during the storm. Preliminary reports indicate at least nine people lost their lives due to the storm.

Tornado Outbreak, May 10, 2010: Long-track supercell thunderstorms spawned at least 41 tornadoes to rank as one of the worst single-day outbreaks since accurate records began in 1950, second only to the 59 tornadoes of May 3, 1999. The tornadoes struck nearly every area of the state, killing two and causing over $500 million in damage.

Central Oklahoma Hailstorm, May 16, 2010: Less than a week after the May 10 tornado outbreak, a supercell thunderstorm formed in northwest Oklahoma and marched southeast through Oklahoma City. The storm dropped an incredible amount of golf ball to softball size hail along the way. The worst of the damage occurred in northwestern Oklahoma City. Damage from this hailstorm was estimated at over $500 million.

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Agweather is a product of the Oklahoma Mesonet, a joint program between OSU and OU