

Aridic (Torric) Moisture Regime

Regime characteristic of arid and semiarid climates that are unsuitable for cultivation without irrigation

Concept and Background Information

The [aridic soil moisture regime](#) is a very dry regime in which not enough water moves through the soil to leach minerals from the profile. Soluble salts, if present in the parent materials or if introduced by dust or other sources, tend to accumulate in some of these soils. Soils that occur in the slightly wetter semiarid regions but have an aridic moisture regime have some restriction to infiltration of precipitation, such as steep slopes or a surface crust. Not included in the aridic soil moisture regime are soils in very cold, very dry polar regions or at high elevations that have anhydrous conditions. The terms “aridic” and “torric” refer to the same soil moisture regime but are used in different categories in Soil Taxonomy.

See the [generalized map](#) of soil moisture regimes in the continental United States.

Generalized Characteristics

- 1) During the growing season:
 - a. The soil is dry more than half of the total days.
 - b. The soil is moist < ~ 90 consecutive days.

See the discussion of soil moisture regimes in Part 1—How to Use This Version of the Keys.



Small-scale farm plots of hay for forage and date palms (green vegetation) in United Arab Emirates. Large dunes are in the background. This area has an aridic soil moisture regime. Growing crops in these dry areas requires access to water for irrigation. Management of salts to avoid salinization is a common concern. (Photo courtesy of John Kelley)

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