

Ustic Moisture Regime (Semiarid Areas)

Regime characteristic of semiarid climates where moisture is limited but available for portions of the growing season

Concept and Background Information

The ustic soil moisture regime is intermediate between the aridic (dry) and udic (moist) soil moisture regimes. Although the overall annual moisture amounts are limited, moisture is generally available during portions of the growing season. Unlike soils with a xeric regime, where they receive moisture mostly in winter, soils with an ustic soil moisture regime receive precipitation mostly in spring and summer or spring and fall. The ustic soil moisture regime is not used for soils with permafrost.

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

Generalized Characteristics

- 1) In areas that have very warm average annual soil temperature (≥ 22 °C) or that have little difference (< 6 °C) between winter and summer soil temperatures:
 - a. The soil is dry for ≥ 90 cumulative days during the year, but
 - b. The soil is moist during the year for ≥ 90 consecutive days or > 180 cumulative days.
- 2) In other areas with cold to warm soil temperatures (< 22 °C):
 - a. The soil is dry for ≥ 90 cumulative days, but
 - b. The soil is moist is for $\geq 50\%$ of the growing season (when soil temperature > 5 °C).
- 3) In other areas where the soil is moist for ≥ 45 consecutive days in winter and early spring, the soil is dry for < 45 consecutive days in summer and early fall.