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Cold Weather Threatens KS Wheat Crop

An arctic blast that brought subzero temperatures and punishing winds across the Kansas plains has raised fears for the already drought-stressed winter wheat crop.

The storm dropped massive amounts of snow in eastern Kansas, but offered little moisture in the parched western counties where the bulk of the wheat is grown.

Experts say without a protective snow cover the crop is especially vulnerable to frigid temperatures that have settled across the state. Western Kansas counties got about an inch of dry, powdery snow -- too little to replenish depleted soil moisture.

Kansas State University wheat specialist Jim Shroyer says the extent of winterkill and wind damage won't be known until spring.

AP