

Climate change could cripple Midwest but genetic technologies could offset damage

Climate change could hammer the Des Moines and Iowa economies in the decades ahead, as spiking temperatures dramatically reduce crop yields, increase energy costs for manufacturers and reduce worker productivity, according to a new report released Friday.

The report's grim assessment for the state, designed to look at the business risks from climate change, is similarly gloomy for other Midwest states and their largest cities, including Chicago, St. Louis, Indianapolis and Minneapolis.

Agriculture will be particularly hurt by climate change, it said, with corn, soybeans and wheat yields slashed as much as 85 percent by the next century in the leading farm states of Iowa, Illinois, Indiana and Missouri. Livestock also is expected to experience reduced productivity and other challenges.

Read: [The full report](#)

The study comes from the Risky Business Project. It was released just a week after the federal government said that 2014 was the warmest on Earth, reinforcing scientific assessments that humans are causing global warming.

Greg Page, chairman of Minneapolis-based Cargill Inc., and one of the business leaders on the Risky Business advisory committee, said Thursday the report is a "wake-up call to begin having a conversation" on the impact of climate change.

But one thing the report doesn't reflect, he said, is changes farmers may make to offset changes to growing conditions — through seed genetics, irrigation and other approaches.

"American farmers have enormous ability to adapt," he said.

Read full, original article: [Study: Climate change could hammer Iowa ag, manufacturing](#)