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The Canadian Agriculture Weather Prognosticator

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North America Trending Too Wet

A little too much precipitation is not just impacting Alberta, but portions of northwestern Saskatchewan, southern Manitoba, southwestern Ontario, southern Quebec and in a large part of key U.S. crop areas.

WORLD WEATHER ISSUES

- Argentina Weather Is Improving After Too Much Rain Late March And Earlier This Month
- Brazil's Late-Planted Second Season Crops Will Need Timely Rain In May To Support Reproduction And The Best Yields
- Australia's Wheat, Barley And Canola Planting Season Begins This Week, But Fieldwork Will Be On Hold Until Greater Rain Falls.
- Western Europe Durum Wheat Areas Are Drying Out. Spring Planting Will Slow Down Until Greater Rain Falls
- China's Soil Is Excessively Wet from The Yangtze River Basin Southward and Favorably Moist In Most Other Areas
- Western Russia Needs To Dry Out

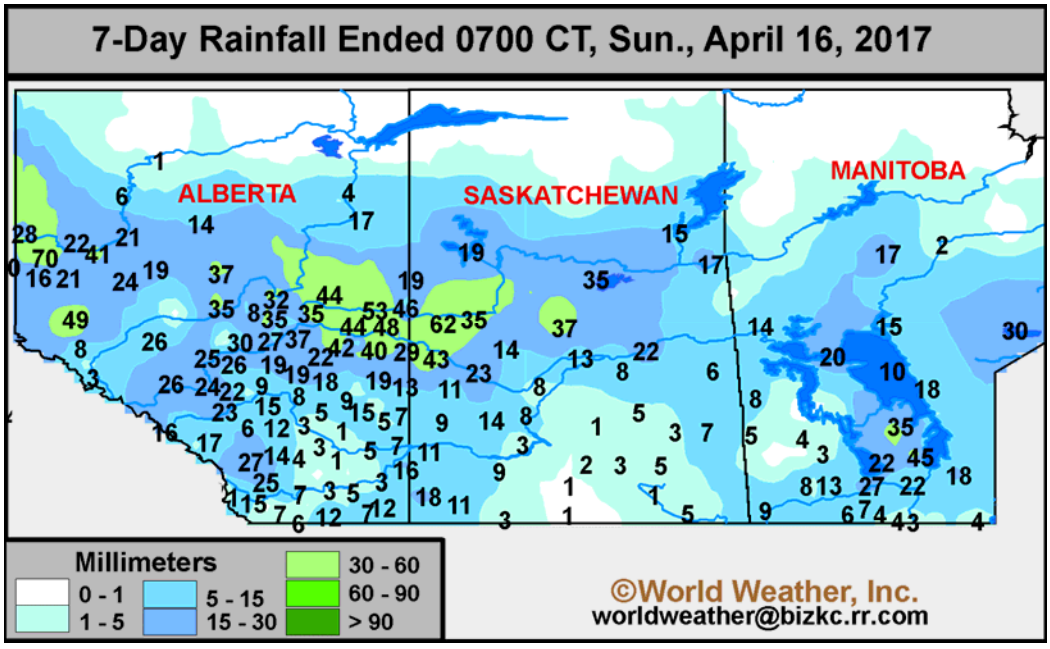
Alberta Precipitation Not Over

Entirely too much precipitation fell in western and northern Alberta during the past week. The precipitation had a negative impact on most of the crop region leaving the ground saturated with expanding areas of standing water. The situation was tenuous prior to last week's storm, but now the situation is a much greater concern.

Worry over southern Manitoba flooding proved to be a little less of a concern thanks to a mostly limited precipitation pattern since the region's significant winter snowfall melted. Surprisingly the problem area in the Prairies is much further west where a weak ridge of high pressure was supposed to evolve this late winter and early spring. The lack of cold air in eastern Canada is to blame for the wetter bias and limited ridge presence in western Canada.

It is very interesting to note that the wetter bias in North America is not just the western Prairies, but across the heart of the United States, as well. The southeastern Prairies have been very fortunate along with the northern U.S. Plains to miss out on the greater precipitation events that have occurred recently. Crop and field conditions have been suitable for some fieldwork in the southern and some central Prairie locations recently, although this past week's western Canada storm did bring some light precipitation to "portions" of the southwest where it had been drier biased previously.

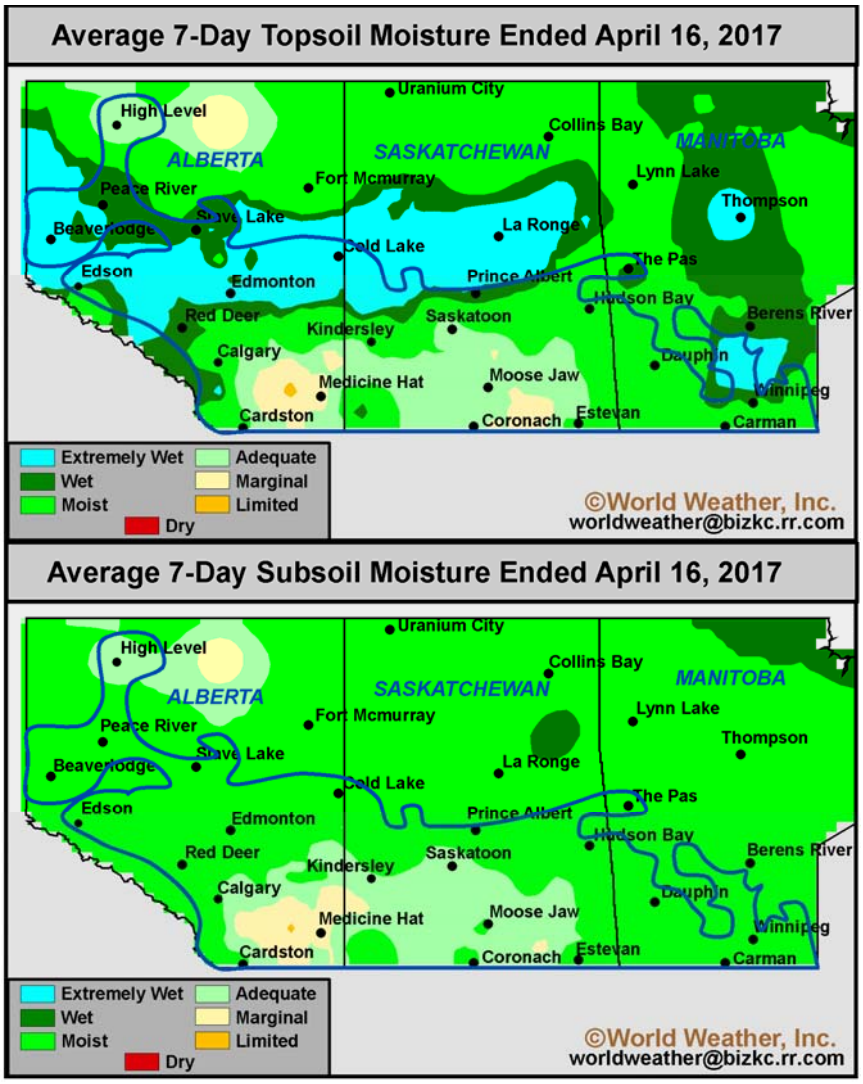
Many of the southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan areas that received rain recently may have welcomed the moisture even though it disrupted fieldwork and the region's recent drying trend. Topsoil moisture



Alberta Precipitation Not Over (continued from page 1)

was and still is running a little short in the southwestern Prairies. The area does not need nor want much precipitation until spring planting is complete. The same desire was common for other Prairie Producers and especially those that could not bring in their 2016 crops before winter struck

The recent storm in western and northern Alberta and northwestern Saskatchewan produced 15 to 35 millimeters of moisture over a large region with local totals over 50. The moisture was a huge disappointment for the region and producers are now looking at the need for a prolonged period of warm and dry weather to adequately firm the soil and promote fieldwork. A larger percentage of the unharvested 2016 crop may now be destroyed because of the recent wet weather and resulting delay to the start of fieldwork. The additional moisture and nearly constant wet bias also raises the potential for a further decline in the quality of unharvested crops.



Much time will now be lost waiting for fields to dry and when planting conditions do finally get good enough to seed there may not be enough time to harvest the old crop and salvage it. A notable drying trend must evolve immediately with well above average temperatures to render hope for getting the old crop harvested and the new one planted while optimal dates for planting are present. It is not an impossible task, but one that will be difficult to achieve right away. The pattern that dominated late March and early April will dominate the remainder of this month and that will include frequent weak weather systems moving from northwest to southeast across the Prairies. Each weather event may have greater significance in western and northern portions of Alberta while southern and eastern parts of the Prairies will receive the least amount of rain. The environment will not be bad for fieldwork in southern and central Saskatchewan and southern Alberta where some of the drier than usual bias that has been prevailing will continue for the longest period of time.

Much of the Prairies weather and success of getting into the fields and completing fieldwork on time this year will have to do with temperatures. Frequent weather systems will impact the Prairies, but many of them will produce light amounts of precipitation. If temperatures can rise far enough above average during the next few weeks then faster drying rates will result between weather systems and the potential for improved field working conditions should evolve relatively well.

Temperatures the remainder of this month will be seasonable. A slight cooler than usual bias is to be expected in western portions of the Prairies while eastern and southern areas may be a little warmer biased.

Southeastern Alberta and the southern portions of Saskatchewan already have the best environment for fieldwork and the tendency will continue in these areas, despite some periodic precipitation. The main reason for the statement is due to temperatures that may be a little warmer biased and because of low soil moisture already present that will help get producers into their fields faster than in other areas.

In the meantime, flood water in southern Manitoba continues to recede, but they, too, need a prolonged period without precipitation and warm temperatures to complete the process.

Mid-April To Mid-May Precipitation Favors Alberta

Changes are expected in May, but we have to get their first. The next few weeks will perpetuate the same pattern of frequent small weather disturbances moving through the Prairies from west northwest to east southeast. These disturbances may not promote large amounts of precipitation, but they will continue to produce frequent bouts of cloudiness and a tendency for temperatures to be a little too mild for quick drying.

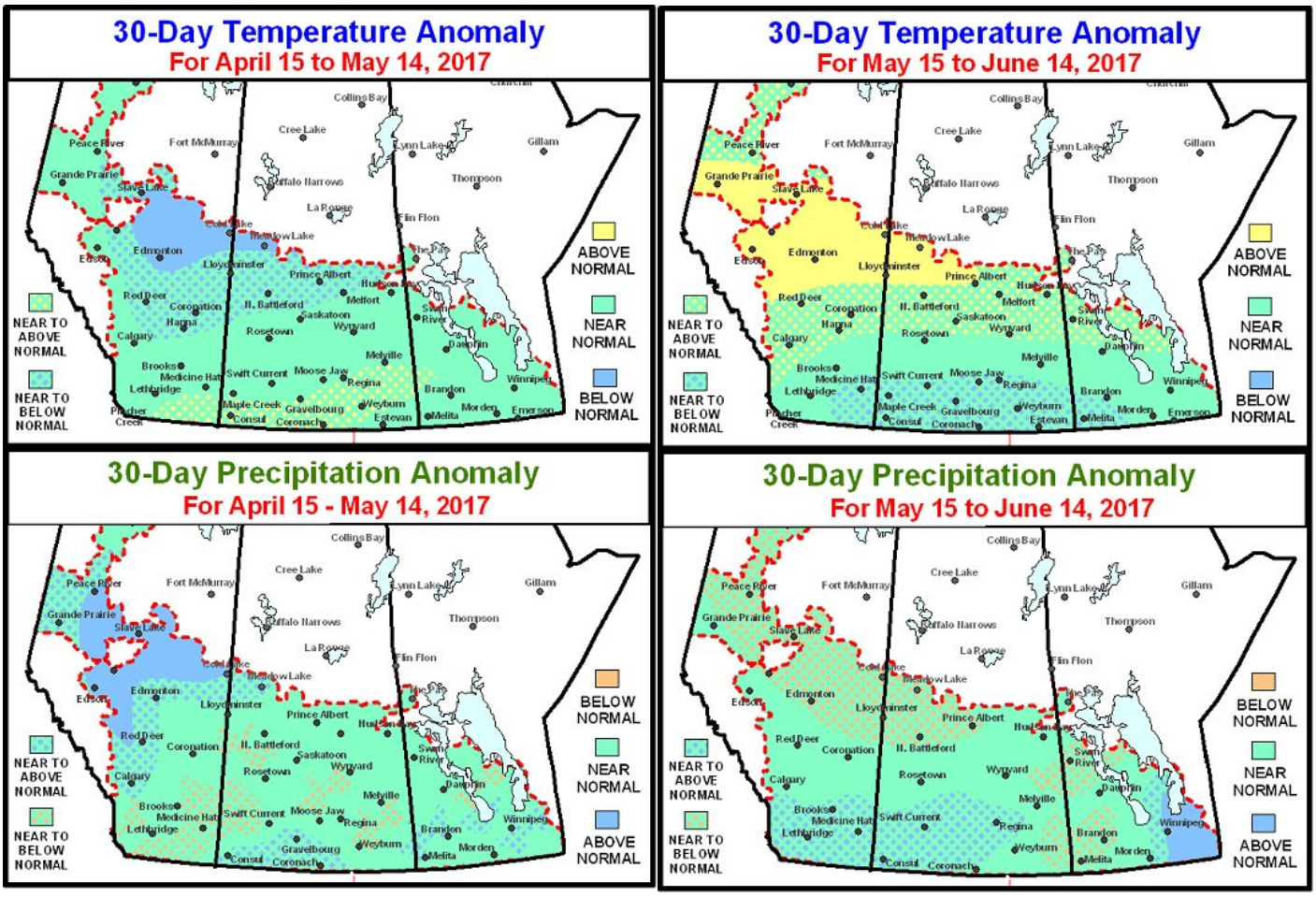
Western Canada needs a better defined ridge of high pressure over it to more significantly subdue precipitation and to help warm the atmosphere. No strong ridge of high pressure is expected during the next two to three weeks and that will leave concern over western Prairies fieldwork potential running high.

Weather pattern changes are expected in North America during May. The change should start promoting more ridge building aloft over the central United States. This will begin occurring in mid– to late-May. During the period of transition there will be potential for a week or two of drier and certainly warmer weather. This will be a very important time for producers, but it is not likely to be a long lasting event. Once the ridge of high pressure has established over the U.S. Plains the frequent precipitation pattern will resume in the Prairies. This time, however, the pattern will support a southwest to northeast flow of air and that will result in rain evolving more often in the southern and central Prairies while less rain occurs over western and northern Alberta.

The change will favor improved field conditions in western and northern Alberta during the May 15 to June 14 period of time. However, the improvement may come a little late and there is still some debate as to how significant the change will be.

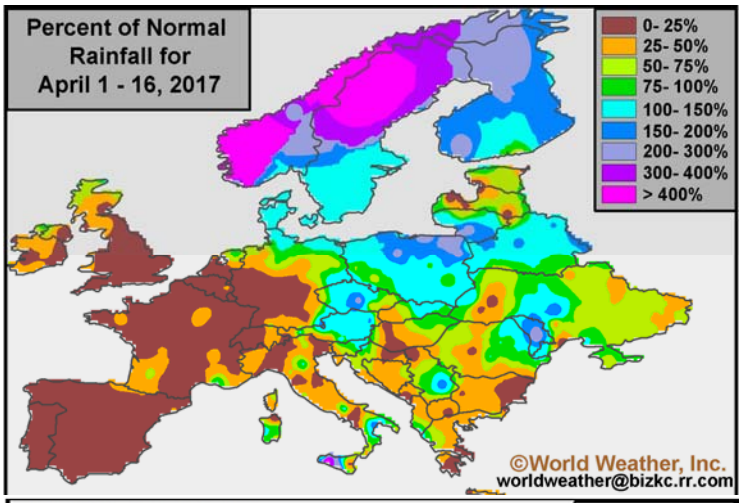
Changing weather in mid-May to early June will lead to some cooler biased conditions in the southern Prairies while the north trends warmer. The wetter bias potential in the south should also help urge producers near and south of Highway One not to delay planting too long this spring because wetter days are forthcoming. Early planted fields in the southern Prairies will get abundant rain late this spring and into the summer resulting in some new concern over wet weather disease and some spraying delays.

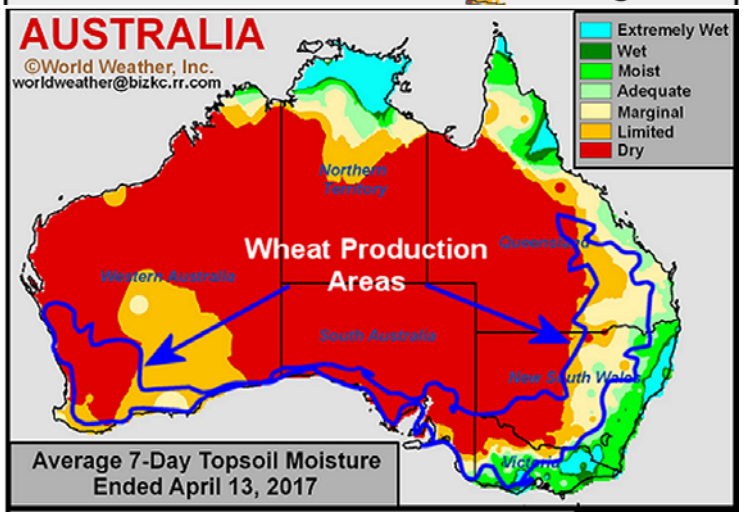
Spring will prove to be good for the southern and central Prairies and one of improving conditions in the southeast and northwest.



Europe And Australia Small Grains At Risk, Too

Rainfall in western Europe during the first half of April was well below average with many areas reporting less than 25% of normal rainfall and others reporting 25-50% or normal. The driest areas are similar to those noted last summer and autumn, including France, western Germany and parts of Italy. Portugal and Spain, as well as the United Kingdom have also been included in the drier bias recently. However, daily air temperatures are still mild to cool enough to minimize evaporation and that has helped to conserve soil moisture.





Much of the dryness potential will be determined by the fate of El Nino that may or may not evolve later this year. El Nino would likely help make much of Europe and western Asia find timely rainfall and have a successful production year. Without the El Nino event, there is a suggested change in the atmosphere that actually shifts the drier biased conditions from western Europe into the western Commonwealth of Independent States and portions of eastern Europe. This eastward shift in the drier biased conditions may be visible over the next few weeks, but for the next week to ten days western Europe is likely to continue trending drier than usual. The transitional period for European weather should occur in May and June and all eyes will be on the region since today's soil moisture is already beginning to ebb below optimum levels and some crop stress is not too far away if the trend lasts much longer and seasonal warming becomes more significant.

In the meantime, Russia's eastern New Lands are still trying to shrug off this year's remaining snow cover. Abundant snow during the winter coupled with plenty of cold air resulted in deep snow cover and now a slow snowmelt season.

The possible delay in spring planting in the eastern Russia New Lands is occurring simultaneously with the problems noted earlier in this prognosticator with the Canadian Prairies Weather.

Europe's problems may straighten out soon, but lower confidence is seen for parts of the Prairies to move into a dry pattern. In addition to these two issues, there is some growing concern that Quebec and parts of Ontario's wheat, corn and soybean country might also trend wetter biased this spring and that might not bode well for any of those crops.

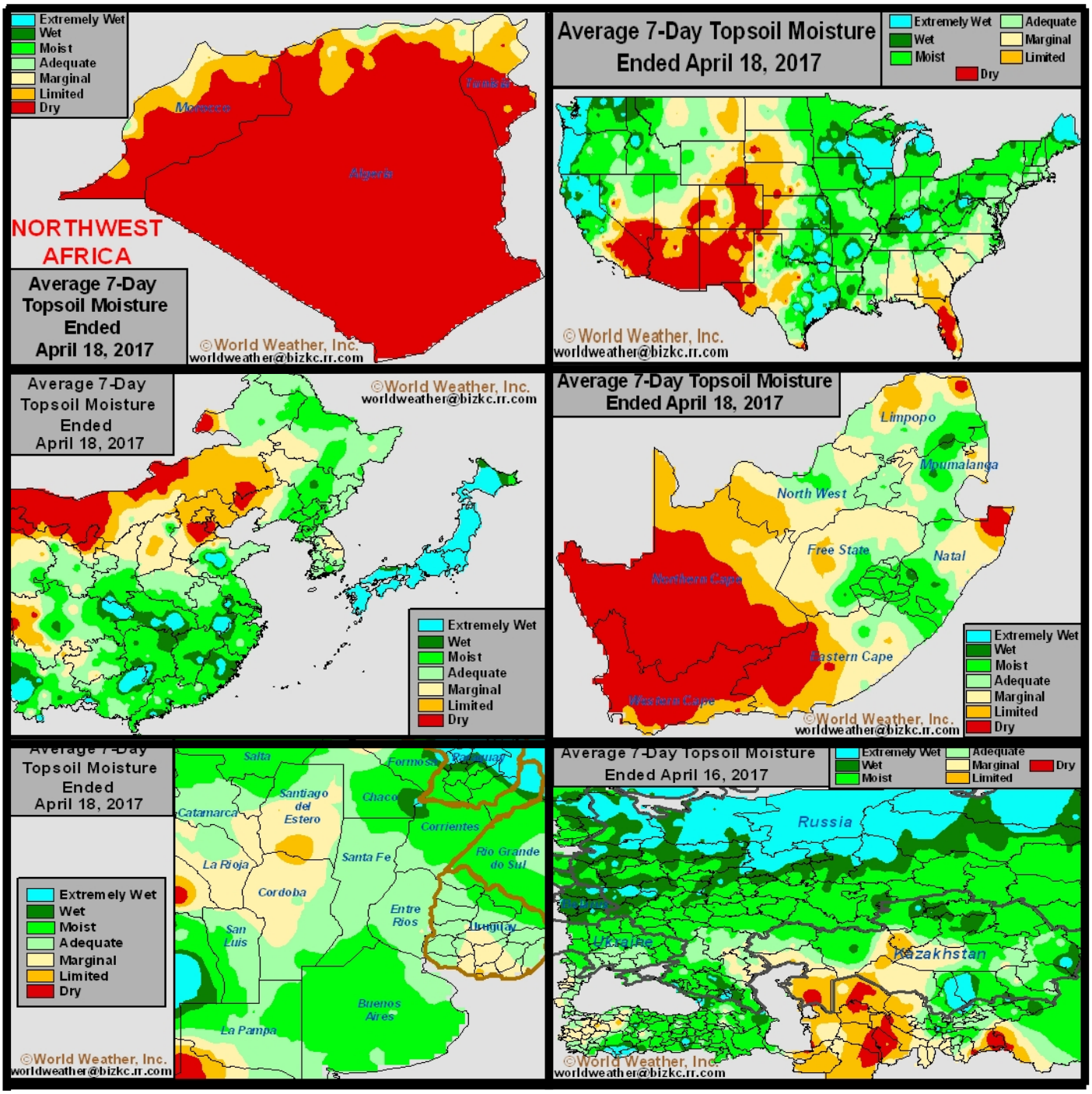
In contrast to these areas of concern in southeastern Canada, most of the U.S. winter crop is in favorable condition, although there is rising concern over the potential for some wet weather disease to spread northward from Texas into the central Plains and Midwest. The weather outlook will promote a warm and moist pattern for a while.

Wheat and other small grains in North Africa, China and India are in mostly good condition with little change likely for a while. There was some concern over southern wheat areas in China becoming too wet, but the situation is improving with warmer temperatures and less rain.

The next area to watch will be Australia since its planting season normally gets under way now and lasts through June. The nation's is expecting a good planting season, but growing talk about El Nino prospects for later this year raises some concern over production potential. El Nino and Australia wheat production do not get along very well. Production cuts usually occur in El Nino years. World Weather, Inc. is not convinced that El Nino will kick in completely and certainly is not convinced that the event will follow tradition of other El Nino events in the past.

The bottom line remains one of interest for small grain production areas around the world. No critical production issues have evolved, but there is plenty of reason to be cognizant of possible production issues later in the year.

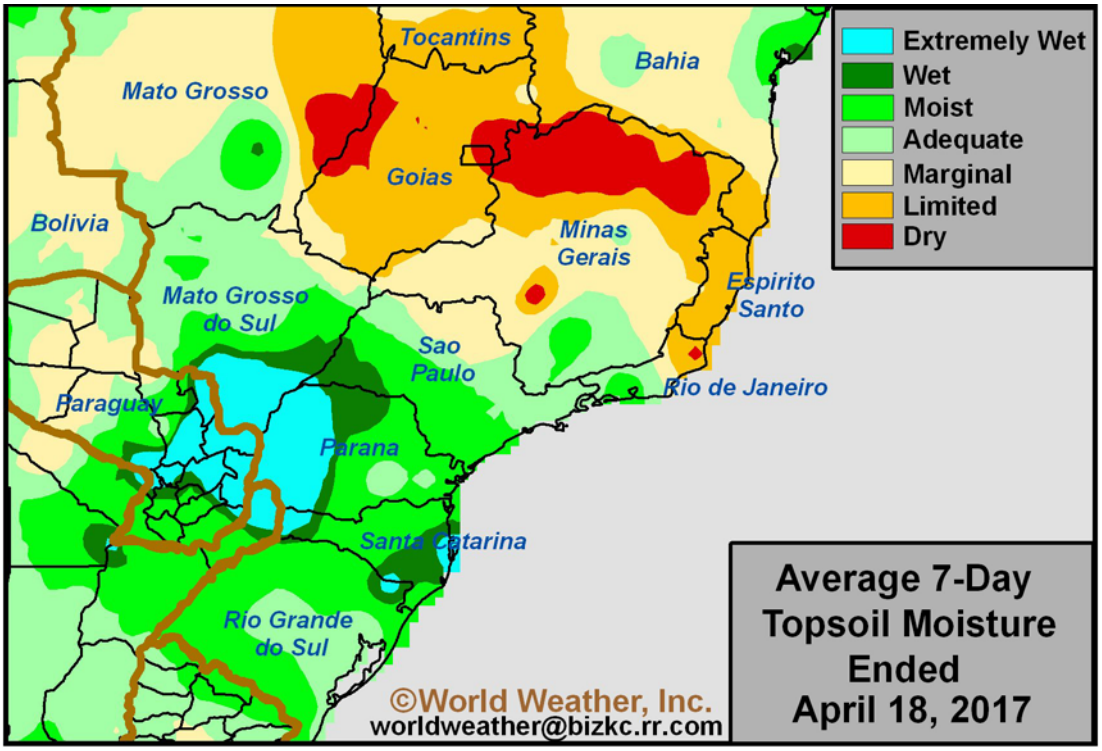
Selected Weather Images From Around The World



Despite much talk about the U.S. Midwest getting too much rain the moisture situation is not unreasonable for this time of year. The frequency of rain is a little too great for aggressive fieldwork and drier conditions are needed. However, it will not take long for the U.S. Midwest to dry out in support of more significant field progress. China's moisture situation remains good and getting better. There is some dryness in Liaoning, Hebei and neighboring areas of Inner Mongolia while moisture elsewhere in China is almost ideal for planting. Temperatures in China are warming more favorably now than a couple of weeks earlier. Argentina soil conditions are improving daily after too much rain earlier this month and in late March. The western CIS is still plenty moist and there will be additional moisture in the lower Volga River Basin and southeastern Ukraine this week to reduce worries over recent drying. South Africa soil conditions are mostly good, but Brazil is beginning to dry out a little too much and greater rain is needed.

Brazil Anticipates Timely Rain For Second Season Crop

Recent warm, sunny days and mild temperatures at night have allowed Brazil soybean, corn, cotton, rice, sugarcane and some citrus and coffee areas to dry down. Soil conditions are now driest in Goias, southern Tocantins, southeastern Mato Grosso and across northern Minas Gerais. Portions of Bahia and Espirito Santo are also still too dry, but this is a time of year in which dryness is often resuming making the moisture deficits appear less threatening.



The most important part of the imagery shown here is the drying tendency that is under way in Mato Grosso, northern Mato Grosso do Sul, Goias and parts of both Minas Gerais and northern Sao Paulo. Many of these areas produce either a late season corn and cotton crop or have some crops that mature later in the year.

The late season crops always run a risk of trending too dry before reproduction concludes in May (for Safrinha) crops. Some of the second season corn and cotton was planted late this year and that will have reproduction occurring in a typically drier time of year. Monsoon rains usually end in April leaving May and June mostly dry and warm. Crops planted late in the summer always have to rely on subsoil moisture to carry on normal crop development during the drier days of May and June. If the soil dries down too soon the potential for yield losses will rise.

The recent trend of weather in Brazil's center west and interior southern crop areas has been for net drying to take place. Rainfall has not countered evaporation very well which is why today's topsoil moisture situation is a little low and running more tenuous for late season crops.

Rain potentials have been rising for the second half of this week as a high pressure ridge aloft breaks down ending an extended period of drier biased conditions. Had the dryness lasted another week to ten days the topsoil would have become very dry leaving crops with a two-week moisture supply at subsoil levels to carry crops through reproduction. Dryness would have evolved in early May stressing crops while reproducing.

Instead, rain expected during the second half of this week and during the weekend will be very well timed in minimizing soil moisture losses and inducing better conditions for summer crop development.

Rain will fall across most of Brazil's summer crop region during the next five days and some of it will be sufficient to saturate the topsoil once again. That leaves the subsoil adequately charged with moisture to carry crops through any dryness that evolves in May.

Reproduction should occur favorably and that will protect Brazil's production potential for second season corn and cotton, as well as late season rice, sugarcane, coffee, cocoa, citrus and other crops.

In the meantime, too much rain may fall in a few interior southern Brazil locations where some local flooding may evolve. Most of the wetter biased weather in Brazil this week is expected to last only a few days bringing back some needed drier weather in the last days of April.

Overall, the situation in Brazil is expected to be mostly very good with sufficient rain this week to moisten the topsoil so that crops will have adequate subsoil moisture to carry on normal development next month.

Both Brazil and Argentina had successful production years this year. Well-timed rainfall and seasonable temperatures produced good yields. With that said, there was some damaging flood events, but good weather in recent weeks has brought back much of the production potential.