

# U.S. Storm Wed.-Thu. Tough On Livestock, Travel

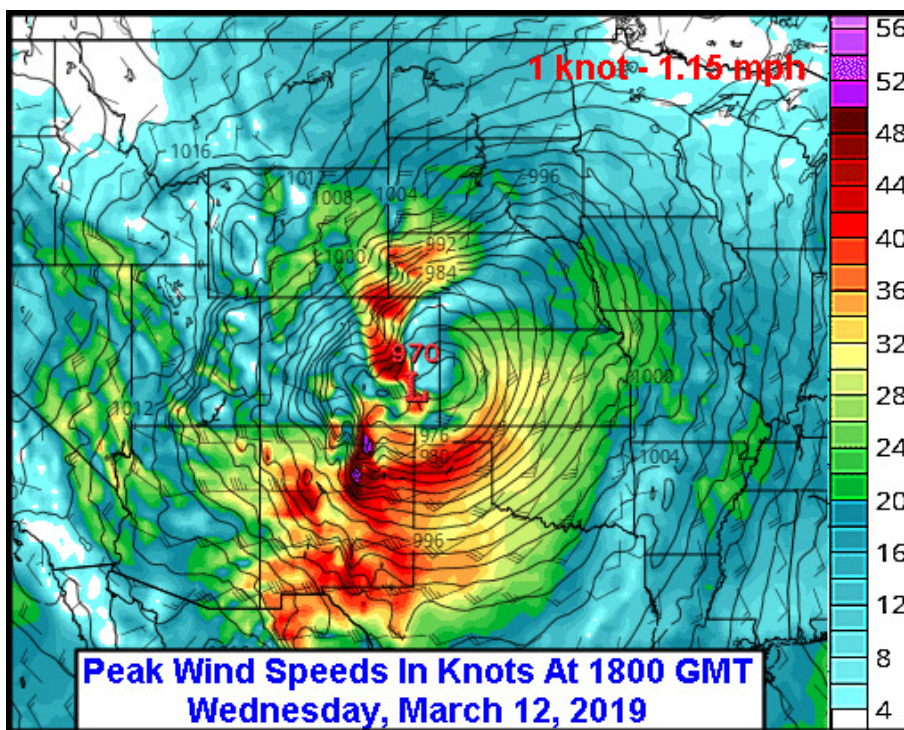
By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, March 12 (World Weather Inc.) – A major late winter storm system promises to produce seriously adverse weather to livestock areas from the U.S. Plains into the upper Midwest tonight and especially Wednesday into Thursday. The storm that many have been talking about all this week will not only have big implications for flooding in the Midwest, but it will also be a serious threat to livestock health. Widespread power outages and transportation issues are also expected across the middle part of the nation.

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A strong trough of low pressure pushing through the southwestern United States and northwestern Mexico this (Tuesday) afternoon was spreading warm air and moisture northward from the Gulf of Mexico through the central and southern Plains to the upper Midwest. Some light rain and drizzle has occurred during much of the day today (Tuesday) and the moisture was “priming the pump” for a substantial precipitation event that will dominate areas from the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountain region to the heart of the Midwest Wednesday and Thursday.

A surface low pressure center will quickly form over Colorado tonight and early Wednesday. As that low pressure center forms it will generate rain and strong thunderstorms from Colorado through west Texas where hail, damaging wind and an



isolated tornado or two may evolve.

The low pressure center will become very intense within a 12-hour period Wednesday which meteorologist will dub “the bomb” because of the rapid fall in air pressure.

The fall in air pressure resulting from the deepening storm will translate into a horrific wind storm in the central Plains Wednesday. High wind speeds will

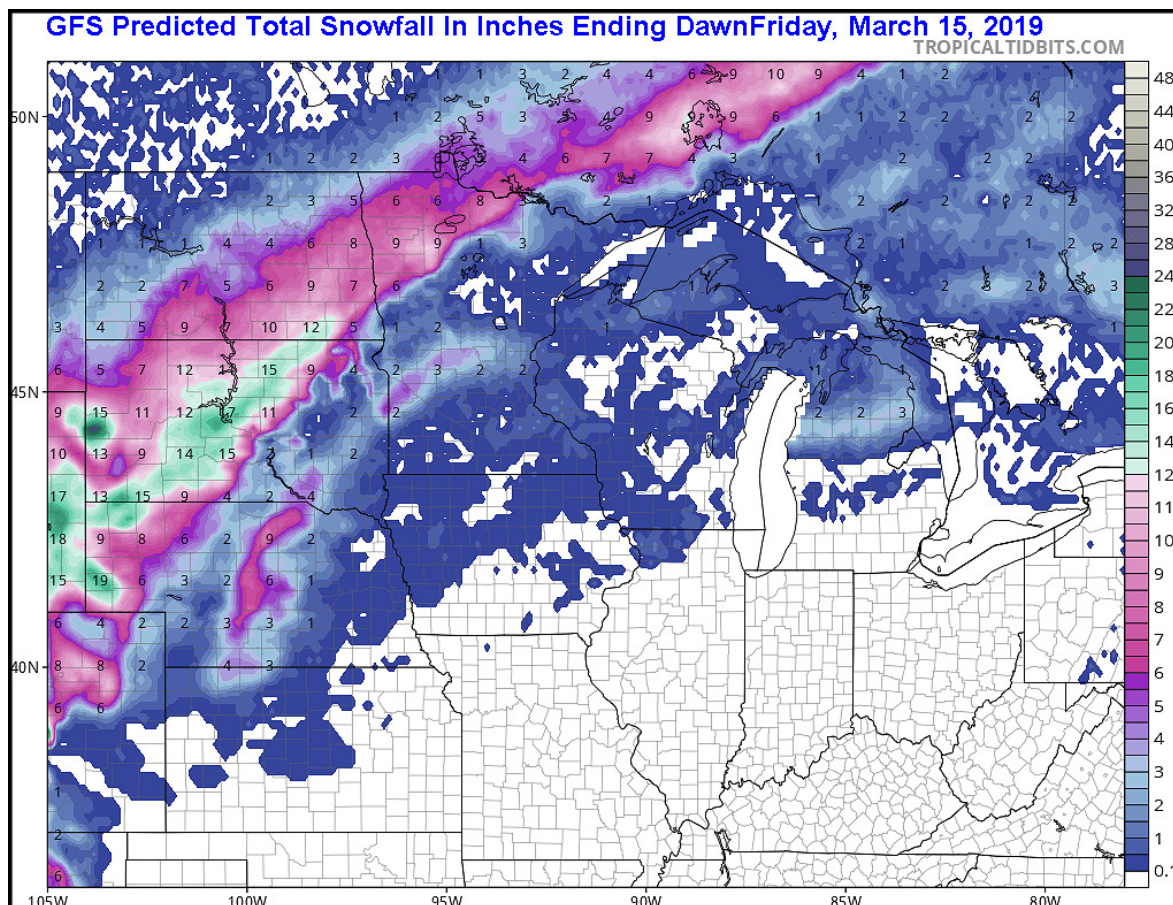
evolve from west Texas to North Dakota during the day with speeds near the center of the windstorm sustained at 25 to 40 mph. Wind gusts will vary from 50 to 70 mph which is likely to hamper travel across the central Plains and will be the first ingredient toward significant livestock stress. The strongest wind will evolve in Colorado and northwestern Texas during the day Wednesday and it will advance to the north Wednesday night into Thursday morning while losing some intensity. The strongest speeds late Wednesday and

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Thursday are expected from western and northern Kansas northward through Nebraska to South Dakota.

The wind will evolve while a cold rain falls across parts of the central Plains and to the northwest of the low pressure center will be heavy, wet snow. The wind driven snow will reduce visibilities to zero making travel virtually impossible across parts of the impacted areas. Livestock will be enduring the wind which can be stressful enough, but when heavy wet snow is added to the wind then conditions become deplorable.

Wet snow will accumulate on animals very quickly and since the snow will be wind-driven it will do so even faster than usual. Within a very short period of time the mere weight of the heavy wet snow on the animals will be a strain and some animals will be tempted to lie down and that will raise the potential that they will not be able to get up again. Such conditions can lead to suffocation as the animals get buried in the snow and continue to get increasingly greater amounts of heavily water-laden snow accumulating on their backs. Animals could die in this kind of environment and ranchers must move now to get herds into a more protected environment.



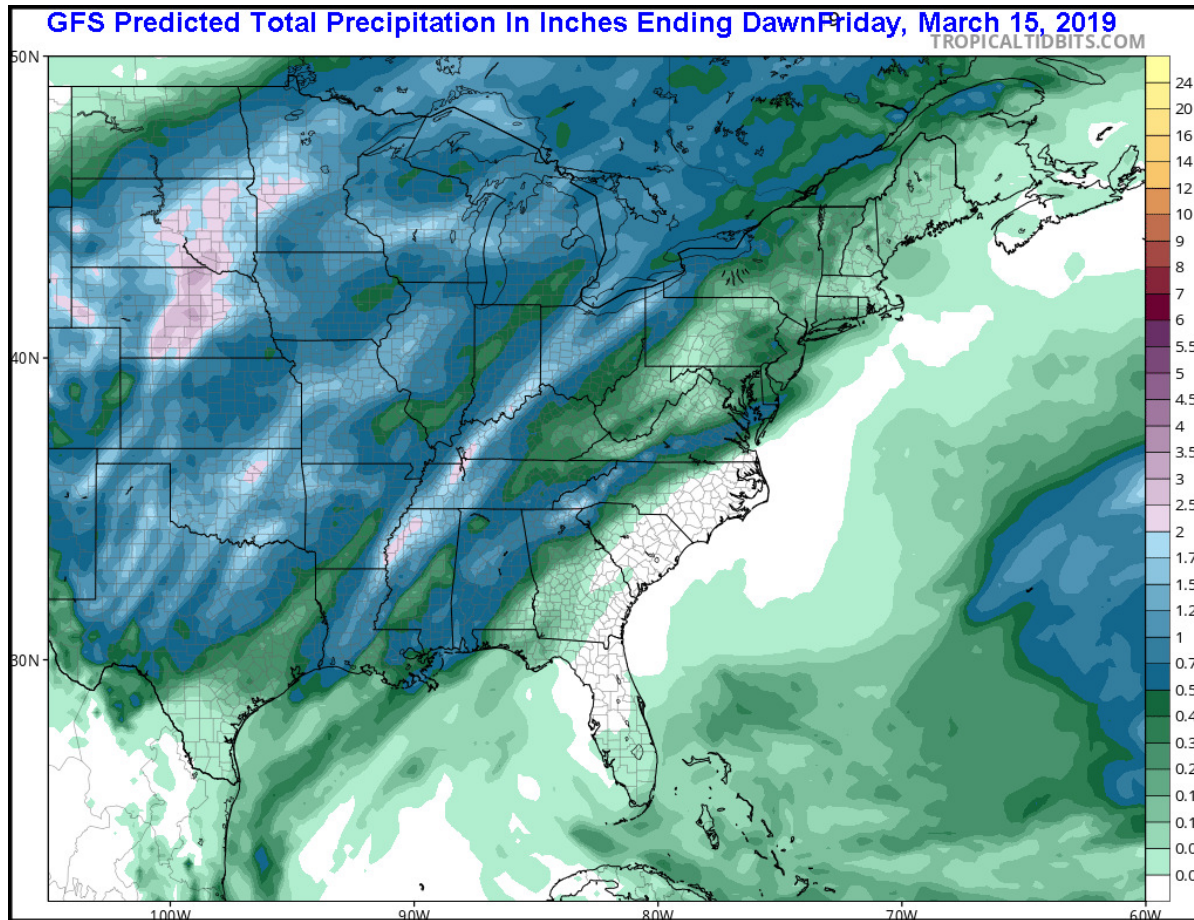
Young livestock are far more vulnerable to the adverse conditions than older animals. Any newborn cattle will not be able to survive into this environment. This is the calving season and to have a major winter storm while young calves are trying to learn their way can be a serious threat to their livelihood.



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Farther to the north and east of the center of low pressure will be some heavy rainfall with a few thunderstorms. The rain will chill down many animals and then the rain will change to snow and get blown around for several hours late Wednesday night and Thursday. Animals subjected to cold rain and then heavy wet snow are often vulnerable to illness which can result in some threat to their livelihood.

Snowfall from northeastern Colorado through western Nebraska and central and western South Dakota will range from 6 to 12 inches with local totals of 12 to 18 inches. Such amounts of snow under then conditions noted above present a serious threat to animal health and some losses to a few herds will be possible.



In the meantime deep snow in the upper Midwest and northeastern Plains coupled with rain and warmer temperatures tonight and Wednesday will induce a slushy mess across parts of eastern South Dakota, Minnesota, eastern Nebraska, Iowa and parts of Wisconsin. Flooding will be possible and that, too, may result in some threat to animal health and travel.

High profile vehicles in the northern and central Plains may have trouble staying on the roadways due to the high wind speeds Wednesday. *The snow will also accumulate so fast that many roads and highways will have to be shut down until after the storm passes. Travel from Colorado to Manitoba Canada and northwestern Minnesota is strongly discouraged for Wednesday into Thursday.*

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The storm will clear out of the central U.S. Thursday and tranquil weather will be back again Friday. This is the last big storm to impact the central United States for at least the next ten days, but it will be considered the “coup de gras” of all the winter storms that have impacted the central United States recently and worry over the impact on livestock, travel and infrastructure will be significant for the next couple of days.

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