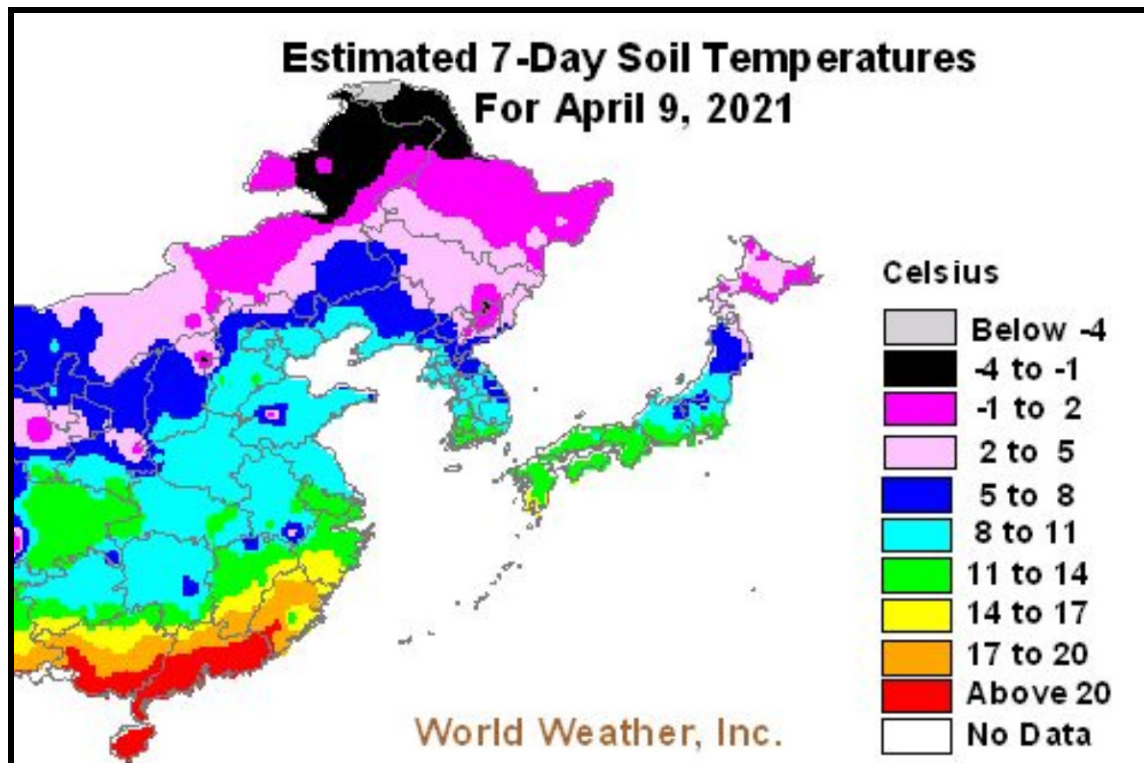


China Crop Development Off, Running; Yangtze Basin Too Wet

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, April 9 (World Weather Inc.) – Soil temperatures during the past two weeks have warmed enough to bring winter rapeseed and wheat out of dormancy in much of east-central and southern China. The environment is generally favorable for aggressive development, although the Yangtze River Basin will see periods of heavy rain over already saturated soil resulting in some flooding. Drier weather is needed to prevent flooding from becoming more serious and to ensure that spring planting and crop development are not hindered by the current wet pattern.



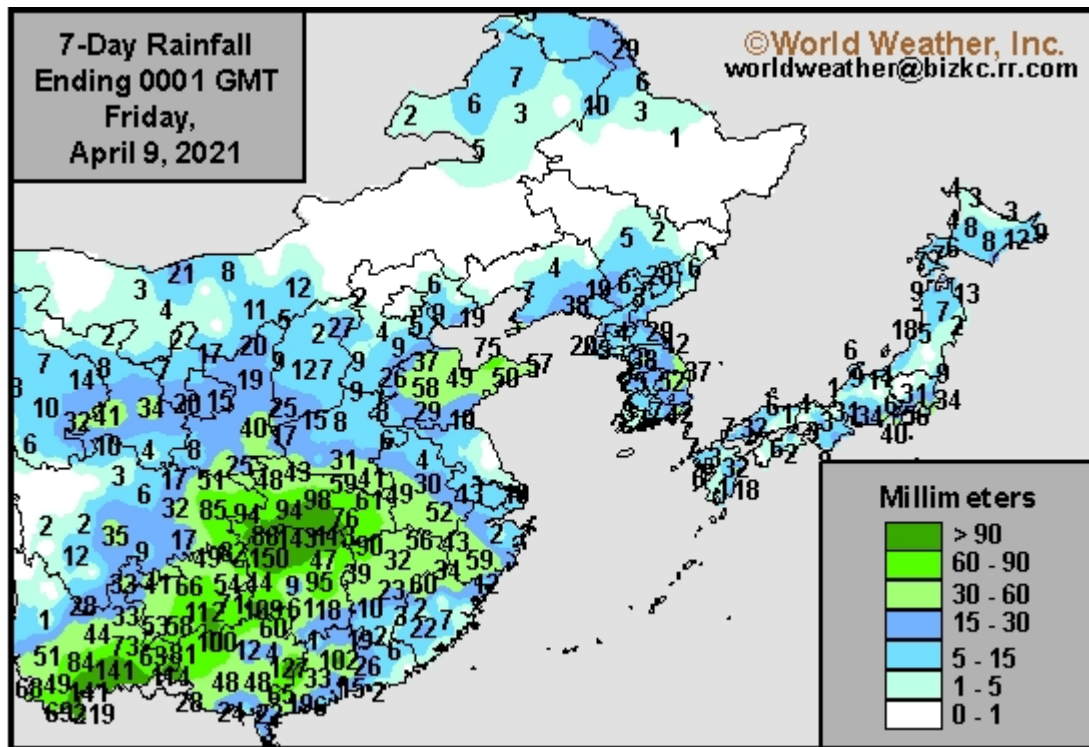
Soil temperatures have risen enough in most of eastern China to bring winter crops out of dormancy except in Inner Mongolia, Shaanxi, Shanxi and a few locations in far northern Hebei. Favorable soil moisture and warmer temperatures are expected to bring on a bout of aggressive early season crop development during the coming two weeks as long as there are no sudden insurgences of cold weather.

Crop development in the Yangtze River Basin has been a little sluggish recently because of frequent rain and milder than usual temperatures. Crop development is occurring in the Yangtze Basin, but there is definite need for drier and warmer conditions to improve crops.

Soil temperatures in far southern China have become quite favorable for rice, corn, sugarcane, citrus and other early season crop development. The only area that continues to struggle with ongoing inclement conditions is western and northern Yunnan which has stayed unusually dry much longer than usual hurting early crop development and delaying some planting.

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The moisture abundance mentioned above in southern China has been a festering problem and it has become a little more significant in this past week because of greater rainfall and cooler than usual temperatures. Rainfall in eastern Sichuan, central and southern Hubei, portions of Hunan and areas from Guizhou and parts of Guangxi to eastern Yunnan reported 2.00 to more than 5.00 inches during the week with a couple of extremes near 6.00 inches in northwestern Hunan and one location in southeastern Yunnan reporting 8.62 inches. Flooding occurred in parts of this region, but the much of the greater rain was spread out over multiple days limiting the extent of flooding. Crops other than rice that are produced in the region were not suspected of performing very well in such an environment. Some of the southern rapeseed crop has been standing in excessive moisture for an extended period of time and that has probably hindered some of the crop development.

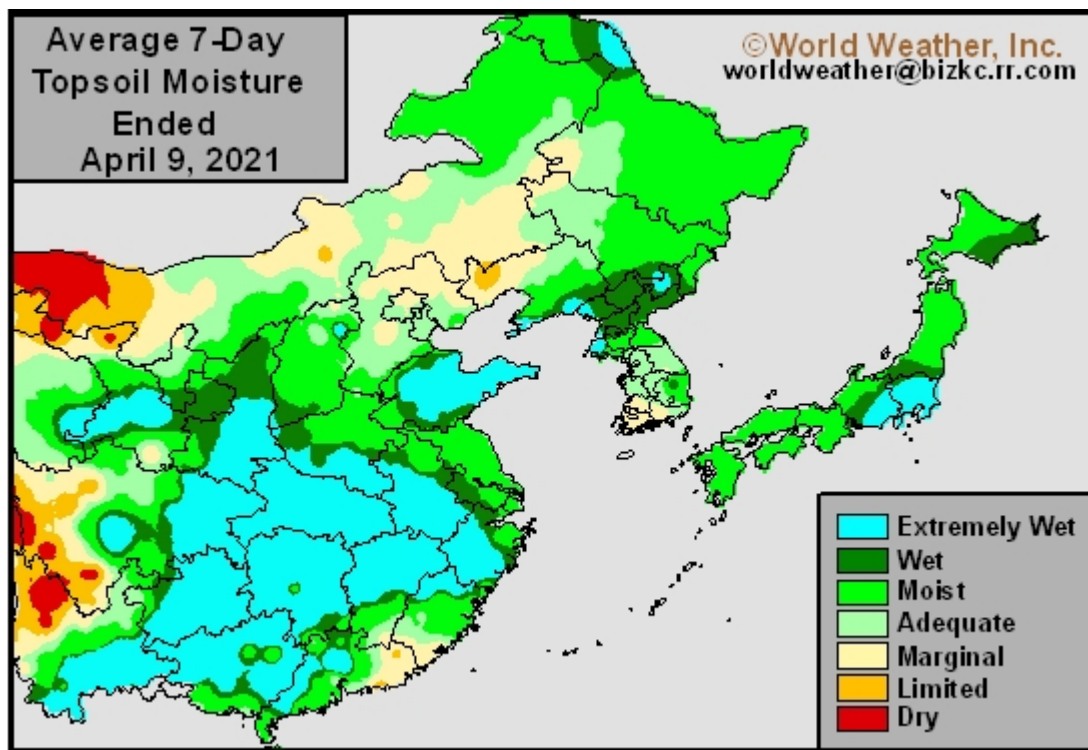


In contrast, rainfall over the past week was minimal in southern Jiangxi, much of Fujian and immediate neighboring areas where evaporation rates outpaced the precipitation. Net drying also occurred in eastern parts of Inner Mongolia and much of Heilongjiang, Jilin, northern Liaoning and northeastern Hebei. Drying in the northeast was not much of an issue because average daily temperatures were still low enough to minimize moisture losses through evaporation. Most other areas in eastern China received 0.15 to 0.80 inch of moisture with parts of Shandong, northern Hubei and southeastern Shaanxi reporting 1.00 to 2.28 inches.

Winter wheat conditions in the North China Plain are generally favorable due to adequate soil moisture and warm temperatures that have been prevailing. The region reported above to well above normal precipitation over the winter and that has helped support a good outlook for the crop this year.

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Drier biased conditions are slated for much of the North China Plain, central Yellow River Basin and northern Hebei through the end of next week. Light rain will still be scattered across these areas today into Monday before drier weather evolves later next week. Moisture totals by next Tuesday morning will range from 0.10 to 0.75 inch with local amounts over 1.00 inch in southern Henan and northern sections of Anhui and Jiangsu. Soil moisture will remain at adequate levels despite the lack of significant rainfall. The environment will remain favorable for winter wheat development. Early season planting of the summer crops will also advance swiftly between rain events.



Winter rapeseed prospects in the Yangtze River Basin are generally favorable as well, but there is a definite need for drier weather and southern parts of the region will receive additional rain of significance in this coming week. Flood potentials are high and additional rainfall could start to damage crops or impact development. Flooding is not likely to reach the proportions of last year and damage, if any should be localized.

Rain will often evolve in the Yangtze River Basin during the coming week. The first round of it will occur through the end of the weekend with additional rain expected in most locations at the beginning and middle of next week. Guizhou, northern Hunan, southern Hubei, and eastern Sichuan will receive some of the most significant rain ranging from 3.00 to 6.00 inches and local amounts of 8.00 inches or more by next Friday morning. Rain totals elsewhere will range from 1.00 to 3.00 inches and local amounts up to 4.00 inches.

The ground will remain excessively wet across the Yangtze River Basin by the end of next week. Flooding will likely occur at times in Guizhou and neighboring locations starting this weekend. Minor crop and structural damage will be possible in the wettest locations. Recently planted crops may need to be reseeded in the wettest fields as well. A drier and warmer weather pattern must evolve soon to protect the integrity of this year's crop.

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Yunnan was previously struggling with dryness in March and early this month, though recent rainfall helped replenish soil moisture to more favorable levels in the southeast half of the province. There are still areas in the northwest that remain dry and would benefit from more rain. Other areas in the southernmost provinces have had plenty of moisture to support early season planting and establishment in recent weeks.

A good mix of rain and sunshine will persist for the southernmost provinces through the end of next week. Erratic rainfall will initially be restricted to portions of Yunnan and Guangxi through Sunday before more widespread rain evolves next week. Moisture totals by next Friday morning will range from 0.75 to 3.00 inches and locally greater amounts in northern Yunnan and Guangxi. Areas near and along the Guangdong and Fujian coastlines will also receive little to no rain. The moisture profile will remain at favorable levels in most locations. Establishment and growth of the rice, sugarcane and corn will advance with few concerns.

Soil temperatures remain too cold to support early season rice, corn, and soybean planting in Northeast China. Planting will likely get off to a good start late this month and in May once seasonal warming occurs. The region will see a mix of light precipitation and sunshine through the end of next week that will keep soil moisture rated adequately.

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