

U.S. Planting Conditions Nearly Ideal, But For How Long?

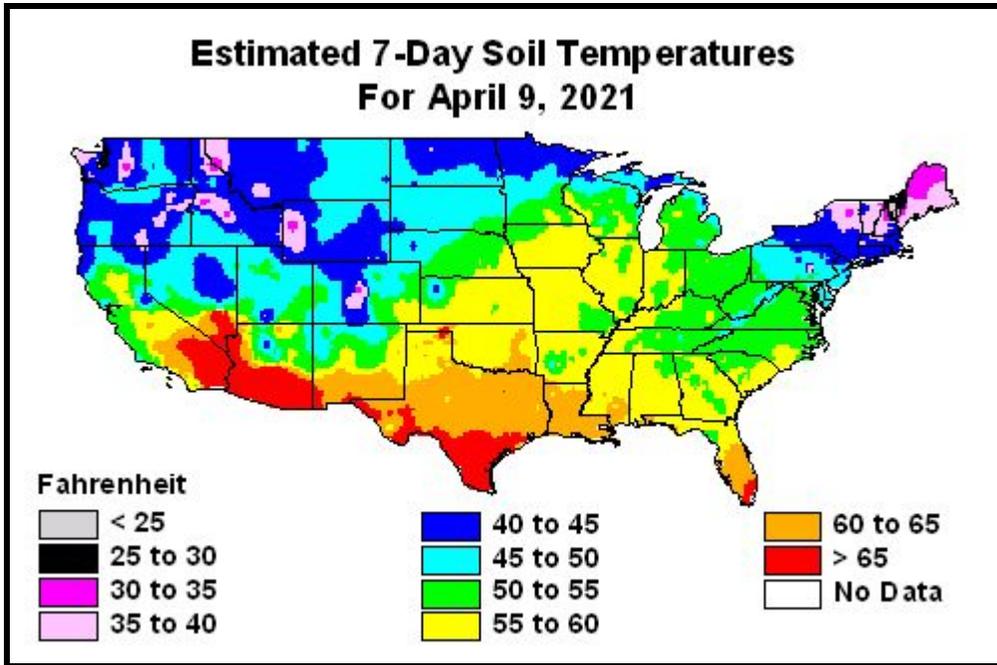
By Andrew Owen and Drew Lerner

Kansas City, April 9 (World Weather Inc.) – [This week's slow moving upper Midwest storm system not only brought improved soil moisture to the eastern most Dakotas, Minnesota and Wisconsin, but to other areas in the western Corn Belt, as well. The storm system managed to pump some warmer air into the eastern Midwest where that in combination with restricted precipitation led to net drying and a welcome boost in soil temperatures. That may have been enough to push some farmers into their lower Midwest fields to begin planting corn.](#) Winter wheat was likely stimulated into a little faster development rate as well. Now that soil conditions have become more favorable for planting the question being asked today is “how long will this last?” Cooling is expected next week and precipitation will become lighter and more sporadic for a while.

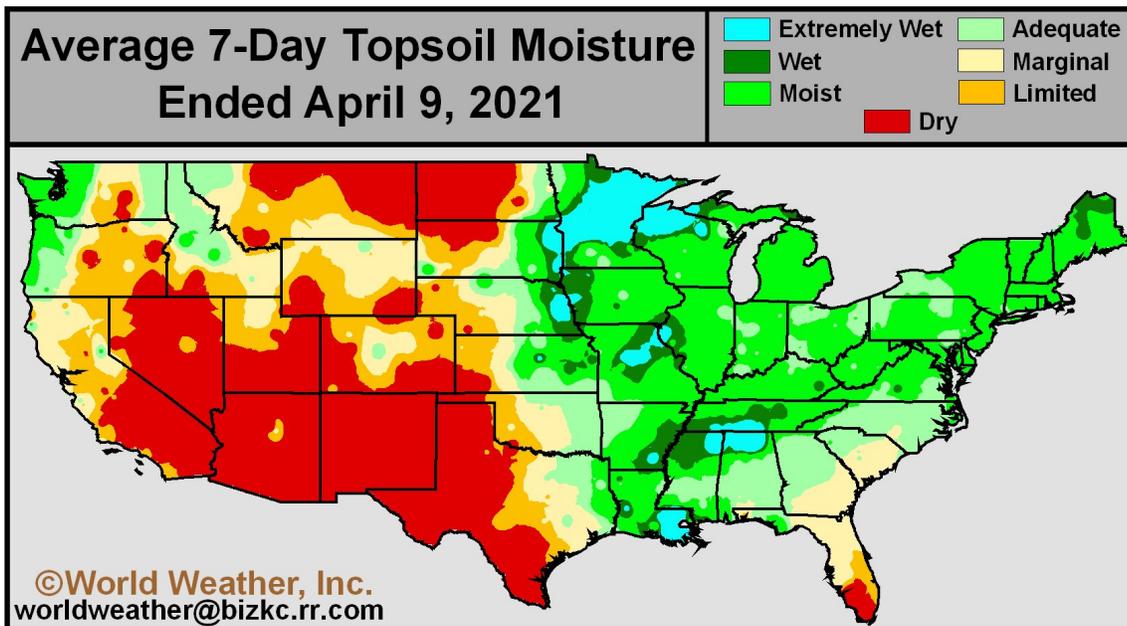


[Rain was reported in most of the Midwest and Delta during the past week with some erratic rain in the central Plains. The southeastern states, however, dried out favoring more aggressive fieldwork and faster winter and spring crop development.](#) In contrast, rainfall of 1.00 to 3.00 inches fell from eastern South Dakota and a part of far eastern Nebraska through western, central and northeastern Minnesota. Rain amounts of 0.50 to nearly 2.00 inches occurred in other areas from eastern Kansas and Missouri to Wisconsin, although many areas in central and northeastern Iowa to bordering areas of southeastern Minnesota and southwestern Wisconsin reported less than 0.50 inch. Much of the eastern Midwest precipitation was also light with many areas getting a few hundredths of an inch to 0.50 inch. Rain in the Delta was a little more varied with some areas getting 1.00 to 2.00 inches while others received less than 0.75 inch.

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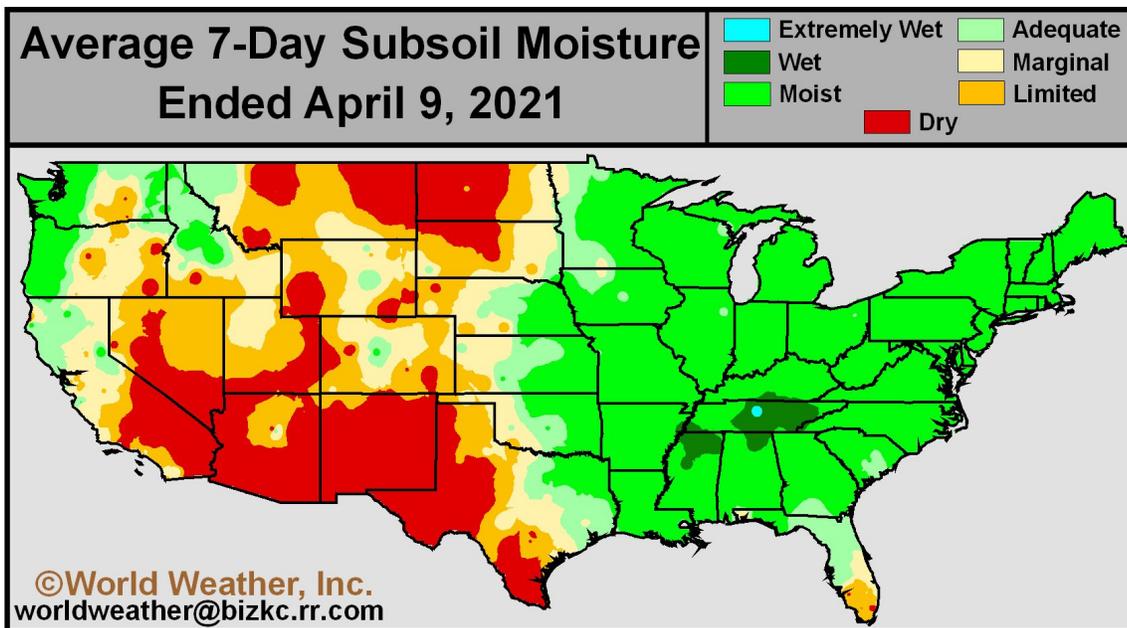
Soil conditions as of this morning were rated quite favorably across most of the key U.S. crop areas from the eastern fringes of the Great Plains through most of the Midwest and Delta to the interior southeastern states. A few areas in the northwestern Corn Belt have temporarily become a little too wet, but the moisture boost in the region was badly needed after recent drying especially in the eastern Dakotas and Minnesota. The Delta is also a little too wet and has been struggling with dryness longer than most other U.S. crop areas.



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Net drying that occurred in the eastern Midwest this past week was most welcome especially since the drier conditions came with warmer temperatures as well. That combination allowed several farmers into their fields for some early season farming activity including some corn planting in the warmer areas of the south. Corn and other early season crop development likely advanced most significantly in the southeastern states where topsoil conditions firmed to the marginally adequate to slightly moist range which supports unlimited field access. The slowest field progress was suspected in the Delta.

Rain in the upper Midwest and northwestern Corn Belt this week would have delayed fieldwork if it was late April or May, but the planting activity at this time of year is mostly for oats and that likely advanced well before this week's rain evolved. Now that precipitation has fallen in the upper Midwest, the itch to plant corn, sugarbeets and other crops will become much greater in next wave of warming that is expected in the last ten days of this month. Until then, a cooling trend is expected.



As reported earlier today, most of the central and eastern U.S. will trend cooler over the next week to ten days. The cooling trend will come and reduce soil temperatures and frequent bouts of frost and freeze conditions are expected in the central and northern Plains during the weekend and next week. Some of that cold will eventually move through the Midwest, but probably not in a significant manner until closer to mid-month and beyond. However, temperatures in the eastern Midwest will not be as warm in this coming week as there in the past week and that will reduce soil temperatures for a while.

The colder weather in the Plains will not induce any permanent harm to winter crops, despite the fact that freezes will occur as far south as the northwestern Texas Panhandle Saturday and again next week.

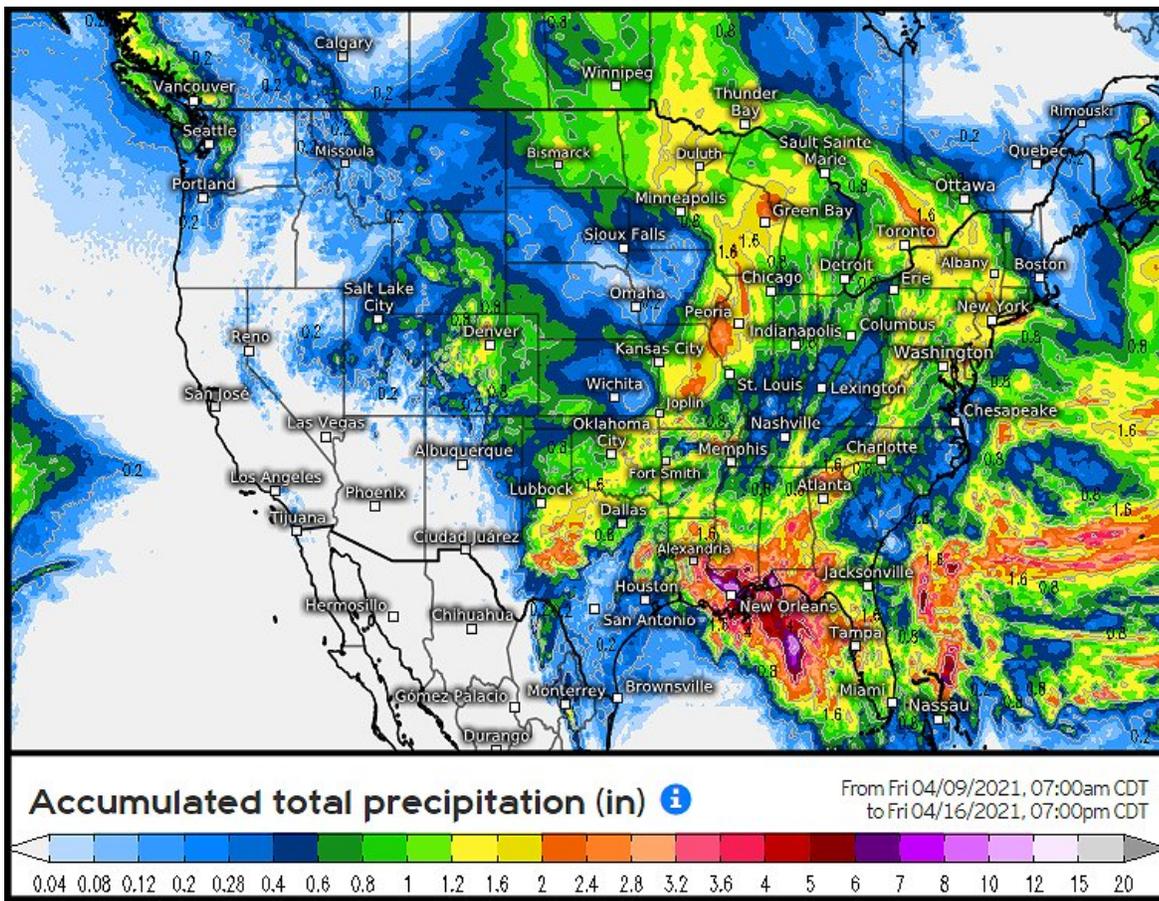
The Midwest will see a mix of erratic rainfall and sunshine through the end of next ten days. Two disturbances will initially promote scattered shower activity today and this weekend. Another disturbance ahead of a frontal boundary will also promote erratic

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precipitation from the northern Plains into the upper Midwest Sunday into Tuesday. A few showers will also generate light precipitation toward the middle and latter part of next week; though, a large section of crop country will be dry. Moisture totals by next Friday morning will range from 0.50 to 2.00 inches with local amounts over 3.00 inches from Missouri and western Illinois into southern Wisconsin and eastern Iowa. Other areas in Iowa and immediate neighboring areas in the western Corn Belt will only receive 0.10 to 0.50 inch of rain.

Rain in the **Delta** during the coming week will vary from 0.75 to 2.00 inches with a few areas in the south to receive 2.00 to more than 5.00 inches. Most of the greatest rain will be in Louisiana, southern Mississippi, southern Alabama and northwestern Florida this weekend. Rain in the lower eastern Midwest and remaining southeastern states will vary from 0.50 to 1.50 inches. No area will be completely dry, but parts of the Ohio River Basin, eastern Georgia, South Carolina and eastern North Carolina will experience net drying.

The moisture profile will generally remain favorable across the Midwest by the end of next week. However, cooler weather will keep soil temperatures from increasing much and some areas will experience a little net cooling. The Upper Midwest into the western Corn Belt will see the greatest net decline in soil temperatures. Early season planting and establishment will likely be slowed due to the cold weather. There is potential for cooler weather to persist April 17- 20 with it spreading more deeply into the eastern Midwest. The cool down might slow seed germination and emergence.



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Northern Georgia into the Carolinas will gradually dry down through the end of next week. Many areas may become a little too dry for ideal establishment and growth; though, no significant dryness issue is expected. Early-season planting and general fieldwork will advance swiftly around the few periods of light rain that are expected. Alabama and southern Georgia will see soil moisture increase significantly during the next few days causing a disruption in planting and general fieldwork, but only for a little while before conditions improve again next week.

The **Delta** will see a good mix of rain and sunshine during the coming week. A disturbance will generate scattered showers and thunderstorms later today and early Saturday before drier weather evolves later this weekend and early next week. Periods of light and erratic rain will occur later next week. Moisture totals by next Friday morning will range from 0.75 to 3.00 inches and locally more, but the greatest rain will be over on Saturday. Planting may be sluggish during the next few days due to this near term rain event; however, planting and establishment conditions will gradually improve later in the forecast period.

The **southwestern North Dakota into Montana** will see limited precipitation during the coming week. The precipitation that does fall will generally be too light to counter evaporation or impact long-term soil conditions. Snow and rain will occur in northern and eastern parts of North Dakota, northern Minnesota and the eastern Canada Prairies late this weekend and early next week which should help improve topsoil moisture for future planting of peas, lentils wheat, oats, barley and early canola later this month and in May. Follow up precipitation will be imperative in. There is potential for some needed moisture to fall periodically in the northwestern Plains and southwestern parts of Canada's Prairies after April 20 and on into May.

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