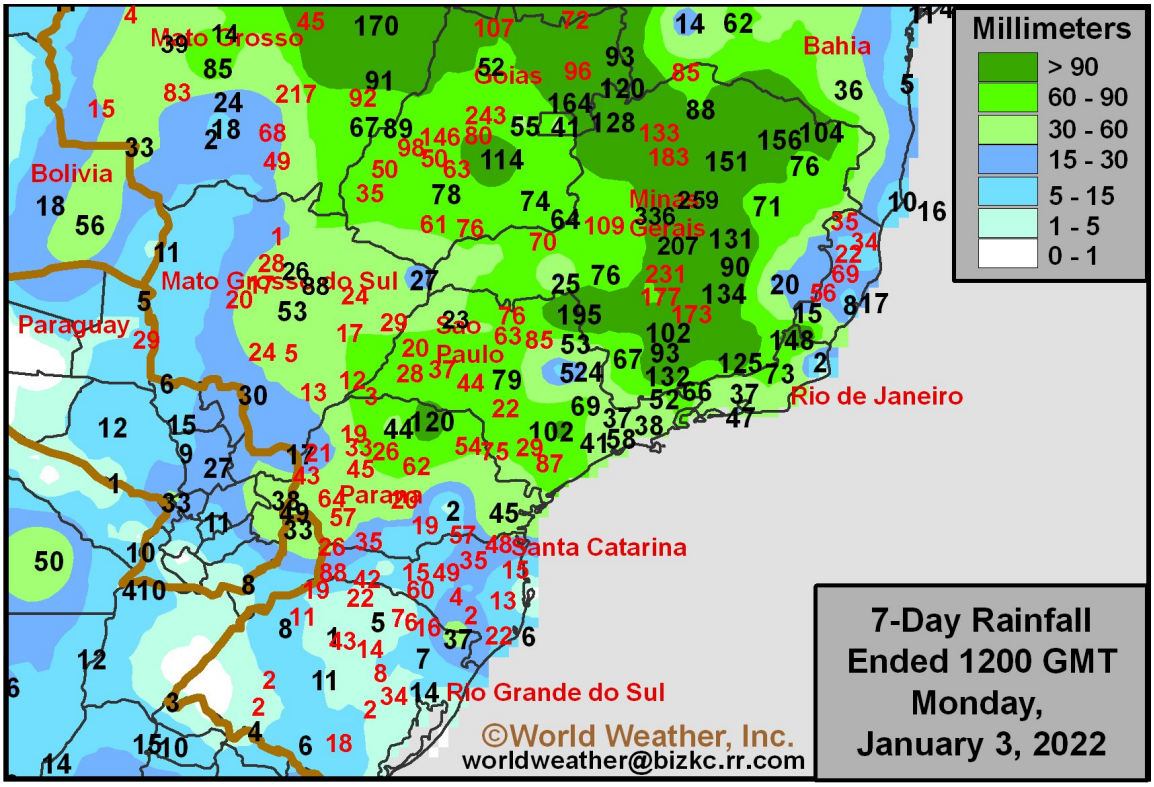
Brazil Weather Contrasts Greatly; Crop Impact Still Low

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, January 3 (World Weather Inc.) – ***Brazil's weather continued to contrast sharply between southwestern and northeastern crop areas during the past week. Weather conditions did not allow much expansion of dryness out of the far southwest, but there was an expansion of excessive soil moisture and a greater level of concern over some of the wetter areas in northern Brazil.*** Despite the concern much of Brazil's crops have not yet fallen off a production yield cliff and the nation can still produce large crops, despite recent yield losses, but weather in the next few weeks will be extremely important.

Rain was reported in much of Brazil during the past seven days; however, amounts from far western Mato Grosso through western and some central Mato Grosso do Sul locations into Paraguay and Rio Grande Sul were not enough to counter evaporation. A brief bout of significant rain in western Parana last week brought in a little better topsoil moisture, but the subsoil is still quite dry. The nation's driest areas remain from western Parana into northwestern Rio Grande do Sul and all of Paraguay, including far western Mato Grosso do Sul. ***Rio Grande do Sul experienced some of the greatest expansion in moisture stress during the week while Paraguay continues to be the most seriously impacted grain, oilseed and cotton production area so far this production year.***



Rain that fell briefly in western Parana early this past week induced a brief improvement in topsoil moisture, but crop stress has already been returning. Rain that fell in other drier-biased areas from Rio Grande do Sul to Paraguay and far western Mato Grosso do Sul was not enough to counter evaporation and dryness remains a serious concern. As

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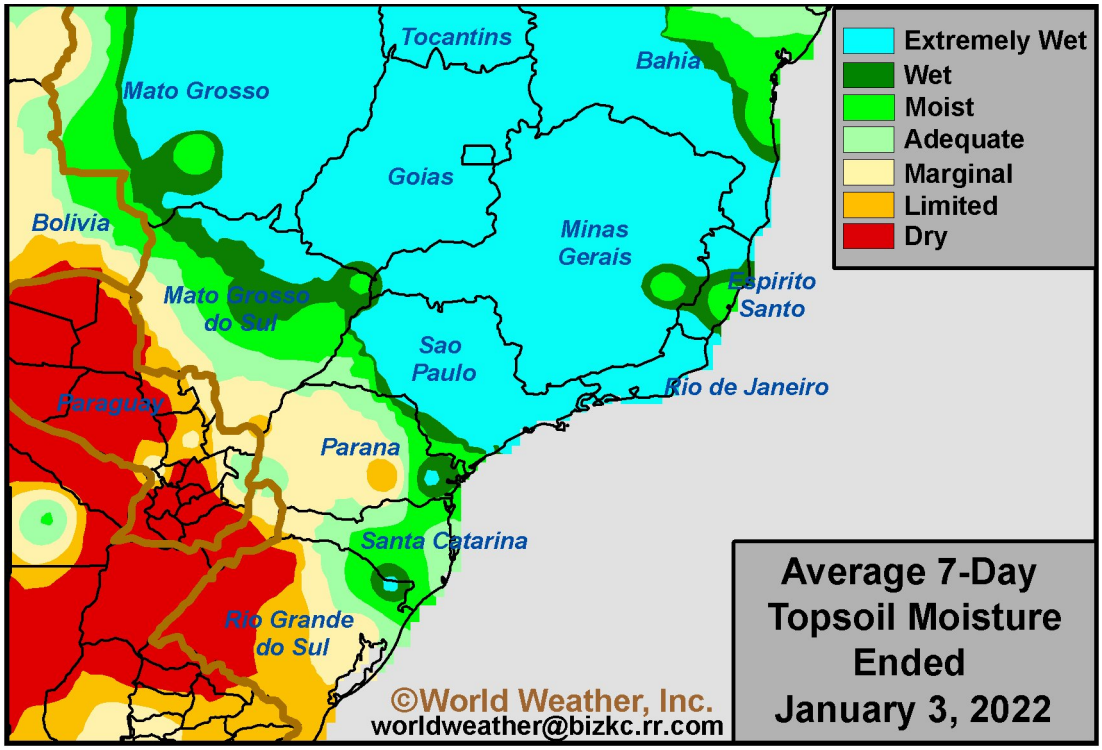
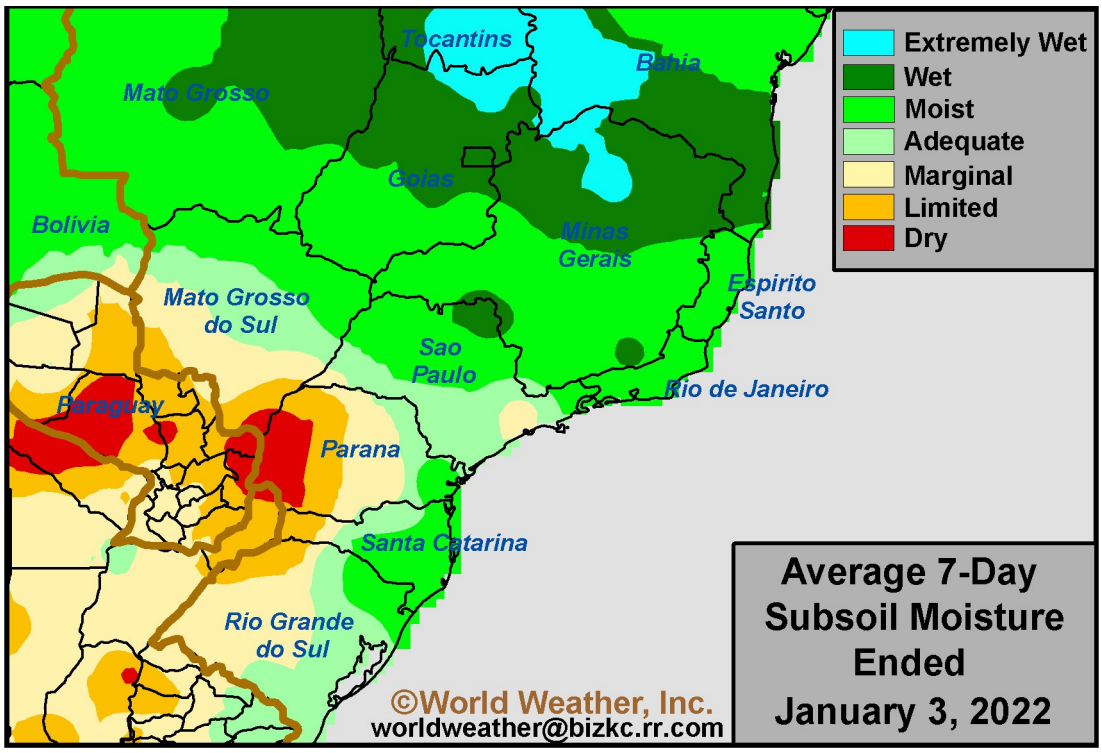
noted in last week's update on Brazil, Rio Grande do Sul and Paraguay will have the toughest time getting out of the dry bias because the greater rainfall expected in the coming week to ten days will be from Parana to Mato Grosso do Sul and northeastward. For most of those areas that will get rain in the coming ten days, the amounts near the Paraguay and Argentina borders will continue lightest and most limited making the elimination of dryness deep into the ground in those areas very difficult to achieve. ***Rio Grande do Sul and Paraguay may get some relief, but their moisture stress will be quick to return when drier weather evolves again late next week.***



Despite rain in western Parana briefly last week, the state is still hurting for moisture especially in its corn, soybean, sugarcane and coffee production areas. Enough rain fell from northern Parana and Sao Paulo to eastern Mato Grosso do Sul to raise topsoil moisture and provide crops in the region with a temporary bout of improved growing conditions. ***Now that a new round of rain is about to begin the improvements from last week may be perpetuated for full season corn and late planted soybeans as well as sugarcane and coffee.***

Rain is advertised to fall across most of Brazil and Paraguay during the coming week to ten days. The precipitation will occur as scattered, daily, showers and thunderstorms. Such an environment should provide a very good opportunity for some relief to dryness in the southwest, although a full restoration to normal soil moisture is not likely in the driest areas. A ridge of high pressure expected to develop in northern Argentina during mid-month will squelch southern Brazil and Paraguay rainfall and allow temperatures to turn warmer once again reversing the improving moisture trend. The longevity of the high pressure ridge and its intensity will have much to say about the future of late season crops in southern Brazil and Paraguay, as well as that of Argentina. Until then, early-planted soybeans will get a late season moisture boost that will be good for a few crops, but it may slow plant

maturation and harvest progress for other areas. ***None of the rain in southern Brazil is expected to be persistent or heavy enough to cause a threat to harvesting of early season crops outside of some field working delay.***



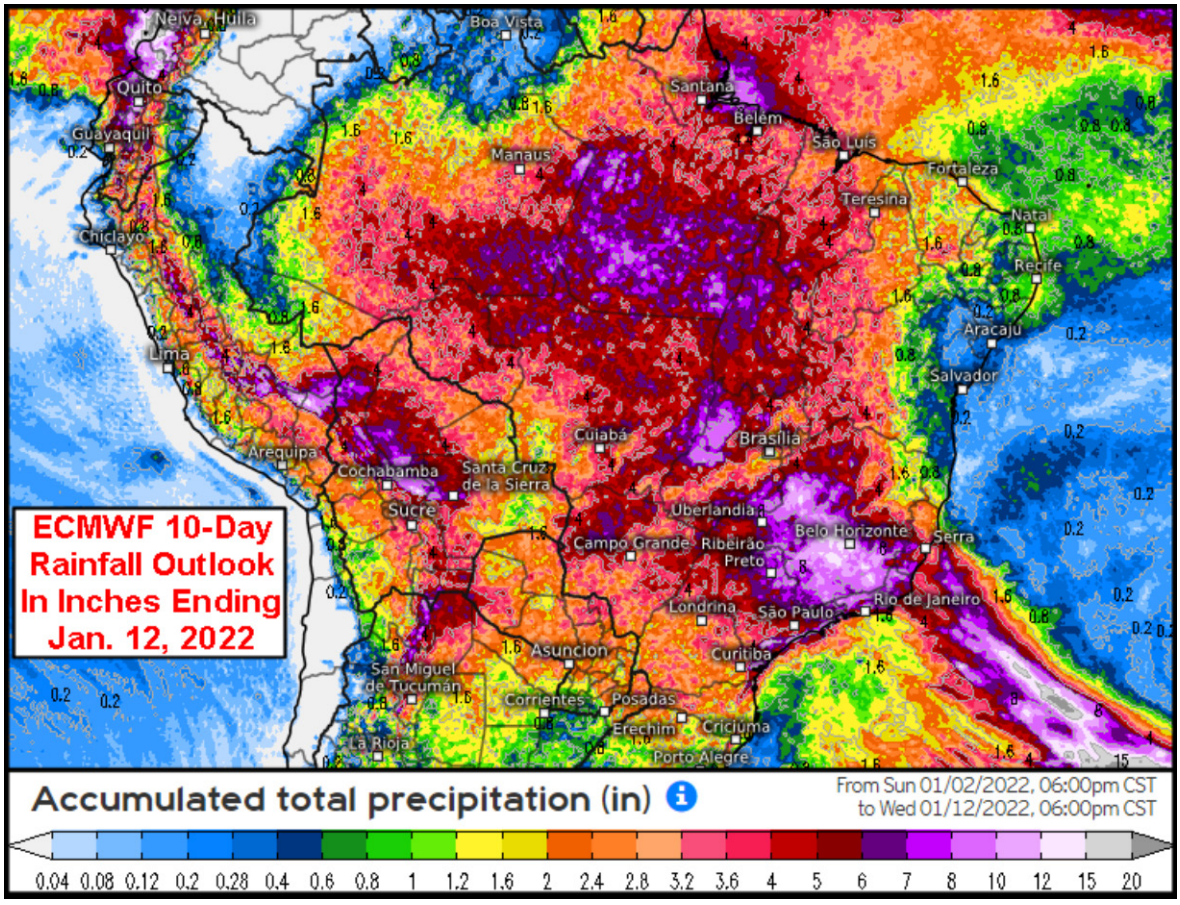
NORTHERN BRAZIL

There is a building concern over excessive moisture in eastern Mato Grosso, Tocantins, western Bahia, northern Goias and Minas Gerais. These areas have been saturated with moisture over the past couple of weeks and the weekly volumes of rain have been rising. During the seven-day period ending today rain totals from eastern Mato Grosso and Tocantins to Minas Gerais varied from 2.75 to a little more than 8.00 inches; however, there were local totals that reached 13.23 inches in central Minas Gerais. ***That same area may see some of the greatest rainfall again during this coming week.***

Model rainfall forecasts for northern parts of center south and northeastern Brazil for the coming week to ten days are impressive for Tocantins, northern Goias, western Bahia and especially Minas Gerais. A few areas will receive six to 12.00 inches of additional rain during the ten day period ending Jan. 12. That will fall over an already fully saturated soil column. There is no place for that predicted rain to go. It will runoff into rivers and streams eventually, but many fields may be inundated with excessive moisture resulting in serious soil erosion and a loss of plant life in some areas.

The areas most likely to experience the greatest rainfall and flooding during the coming week are not considered to be Brazil's most important soybean or corn production region, although crops are produced in the region and will be facing some damage if drier weather does not evolve soon. Drying is needed most seriously today from Mato Grosso to Sao Paulo and Parana where the majority of early soybeans are planted and where

harvesting should advance first. Most of these early planted soybean areas are not excessively wet, but rain expected in the next ten days will slow crop maturation and harvest progress. With that said, Brazil farmers are famous for harvesting their crops in the rain and mud and will not likely be seriously deterred without persistent all day rainfall from one day to the next. Harvesting might be slower than desired, but it should proceed even if they have to put the harvested beans in dryers. They will want to get their early soybean crops harvested and Safrinha cotton and corn planted while the environment is good.



In the meantime, rain in southern Brazil and Paraguay will bring relief to weeks of limited rainfall. Crop improvements are expected, although a little too late for early season corn. The moisture will be good for soybeans and any Safrinha crops that are expected to be planted as the harvest advances. La Nina is expected to slowly weaken over the next few weeks, but its presence will maintain some lighter than usual rainfall in Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and southern Brazil. However, there may be enough rain in this coming week to ten days to offer at least temporary improvements to crops and field conditions so that late season crops can improve.

Overall, dryness relief in the south will be a welcome change that will benefit late season crops, but it will cause some early season soybean maturation and harvest delay. Rain in center south and northeastern Brazil is expected to become a little excessive in this coming week to ten days resulting in some flooding and higher level of concern over possible soybean conditions. Coffee, citrus and sugarcane areas will “weather” the situation relatively well, but drier conditions will be needed later this month to avoid a production

and crop quality threat. All indicators suggest the coming rain will be well timed for the planting of Safrinha crops which should advance swiftly when drier weather resumes and soybeans are successfully harvested.
