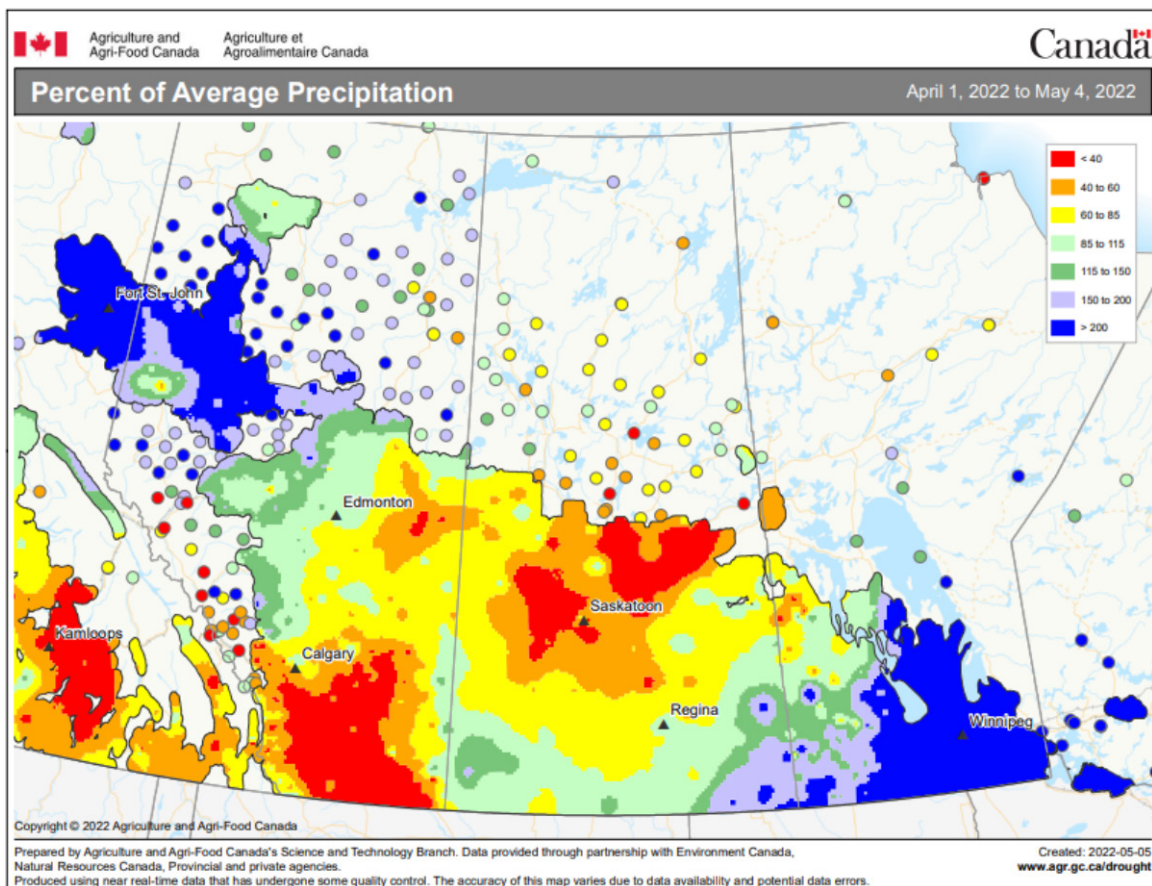


Canadian Prairies Planting Prospects Remain Poor

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, May 6 (World Weather Inc.) – Early-season planting has gotten off to a sluggish start in much of the Canadian Prairies. Manitoba was impacted by several snowstorms in April that limited fieldwork. These areas remain too wet for any significant planting. Many areas in eastern Saskatchewan have also been too wet to put much of the crop in the ground. In the meantime, many areas in southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan are too dry for ideal planting and establishment conditions. Going forward through the end of next week, precipitation and cooler weather will continue to limit aggressive planting for a large portion of the Prairies. The precipitation will also help chip away at some of the dryness in southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan, but much more precipitation will be needed to restore soil moisture to normal.

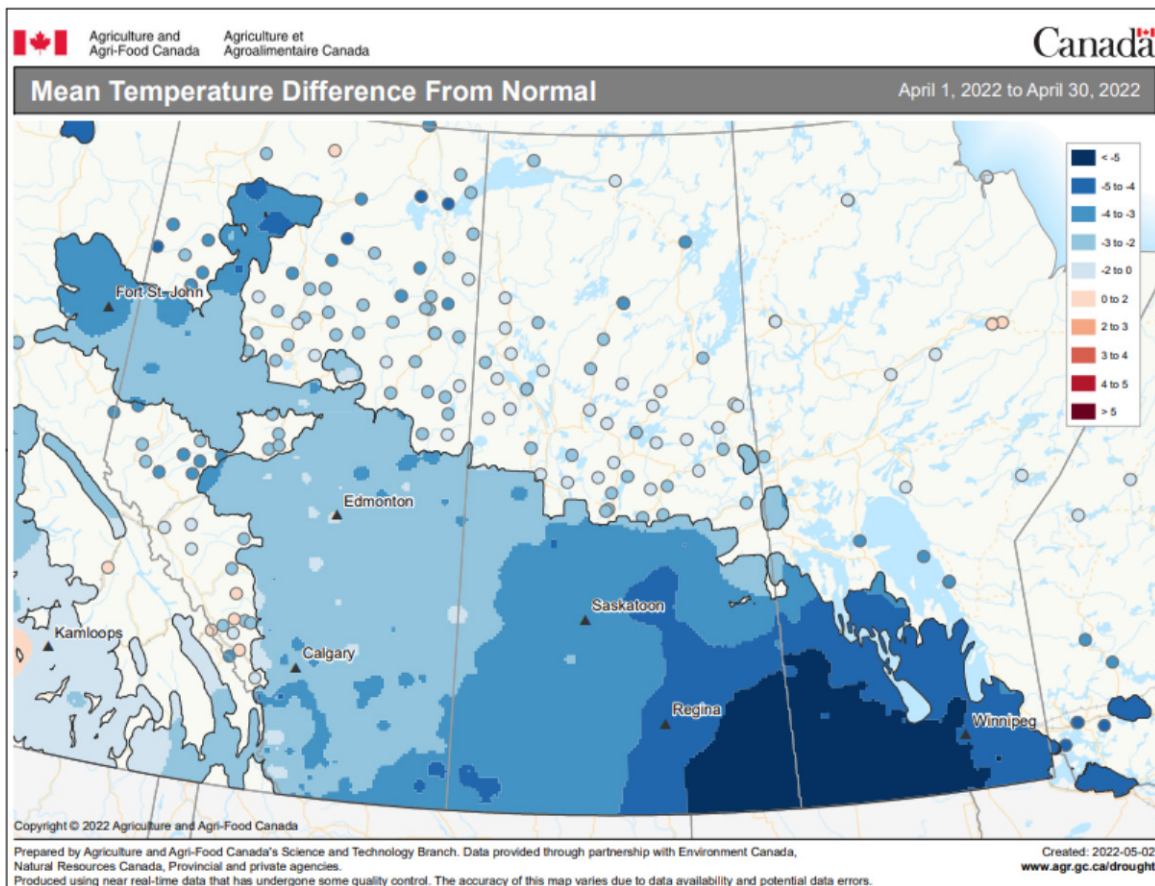
Precipitation has varied significantly across the Prairies since the beginning of April. Much of Manitoba (outside the northwest corner), extreme southeastern Saskatchewan and northwestern Alberta have been wetter or much wetter than normal. These areas received 115% to over 200% of normal precipitation from April 1 – May 4. Other areas in southern Saskatchewan, east-central Saskatchewan, and portions of central, west-central, and north-central Alberta received near normal precipitation. The remaining production areas were drier or much drier than normal with many areas in southern Alberta and portions of central and northern Saskatchewan receiving less than 40% of normal precipitation.



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The Prairies were also colder or much colder than normal in April. Manitoba and the eastern half of Saskatchewan generally saw temperatures trend 4 to nearly 10 degrees below normal for the month. Alberta and western Saskatchewan were also several degrees cooler than normal.

A large portion of Manitoba and northwestern Alberta are excessively wet due to the above normal precipitation since the beginning of April and melting snow. Flooding was noted in several fields and standing water was suspected in many production areas. The Red River in southern Manitoba also remains in flood. Eastern Saskatchewan and much of central, west-central, and north-central Alberta have mostly adequate moisture. Soil moisture elsewhere is marginally adequate to short with pockets that remain critically dry in southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan.

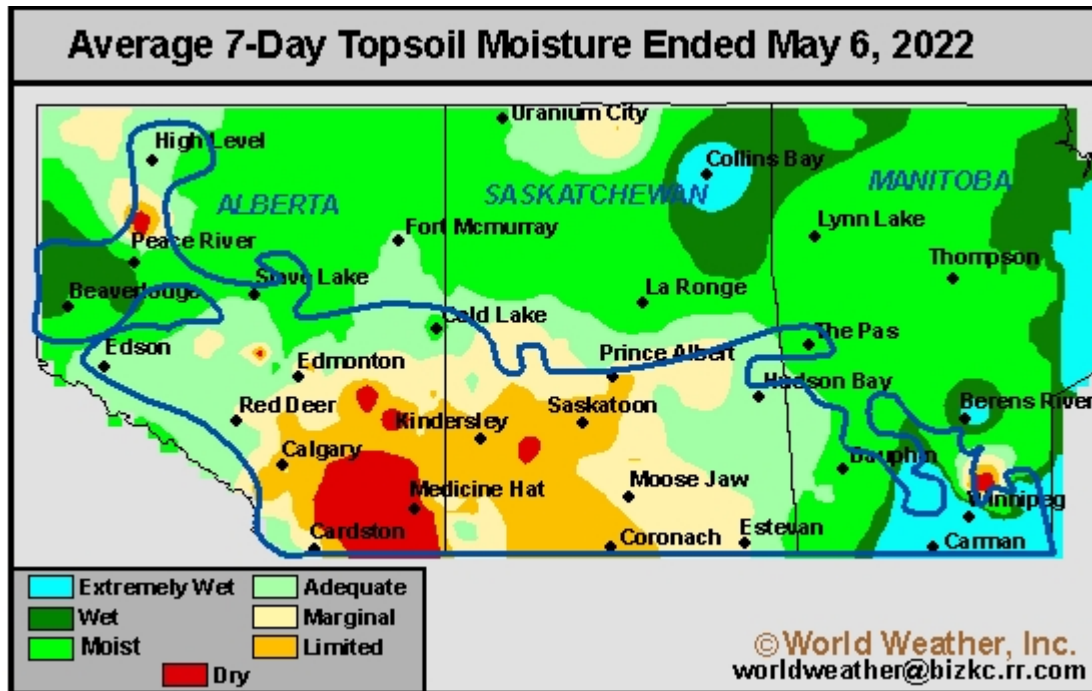


The adverse conditions so far this spring have severely limited fieldwork in much of the Prairies. As of May 2, Saskatchewan only had 1% of the overall crops planted, down from 5% for the five-year average and 8% for the ten-year average. Producers in Manitoba have likely not been able to put any crop in the ground. Southern and portions of central Alberta have likely been able to plant some crops, though the ground is too dry for ideal establishment. Little to no planting was suspected in much of northern Alberta.

The main need for the Prairies in the coming weeks will be for drier and warmer weather. The ground needs to firm to support more aggressive planting and general fieldwork. With planting normally continuing into June, there is still plenty of time to get

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the crops in the ground. In the meantime, the drier areas in Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan will need to see timely rain mixed in with good planting weather to support not only good establishment, but better development prospects later this spring and summer.



WEATHER OUTLOOK

An active weather pattern is slated for the Prairies through the end of next week. A strong low-pressure trough will gradually advance over western North America through early next week. A series of disturbances advancing ahead of the trough will often generate precipitation for the Prairies through Monday. Northwestern Alberta will generally receive the most precipitation through Tuesday morning with totals ranging from 1.00 to 4.00 inches and locally more. These areas will also see snow fall at times with accumulations ranging from 1 to 6 inches and locally more. Manitoba, portions of east-central and southeastern Saskatchewan, and several areas in west-central and southwestern Alberta will also receive 0.75 to 2.00 inches of moisture with locally greater amounts during this time. Several areas in west-central and southwestern Alberta will also see a dusting to 4 or 5 inches of snow fall during this time. The remaining production areas will receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of moisture. After a brief period of drier weather Tuesday, another disturbance will bring erratic rainfall to much of the Prairies Wednesday into next Friday. A few showers and isolated thunderstorms could generate significant rainfall in portions of Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

The trough of low-pressure will also bring colder air to Alberta and western Saskatchewan in the coming days. Daytime highs will often only be in the 40s and 50s through at least Tuesday before slightly warmer weather evolves later next week. Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan will otherwise warm to the 50s and 60s with pockets in the 70s most often through the end of next week. Nighttime lows will be in the 30s and 40s most

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days with portions of Alberta still cooling near or below freezing on a frequent basis through early next week.

Additional precipitation combined with some cooler weather will continue to limit aggressive planting for much of the Prairies through the end of next week. Central and portions of eastern Alberta into west-central, northwestern, and north-central Saskatchewan will see some of the driest conditions during this time that may allow some planting. Most other areas will be too wet, too cool, or a combination of both for producers to get into the fields aggressively. The need for drier and warmer weather will increase later this month.

In the meantime, the driest areas in southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan will receive enough precipitation through the end of next week to chip away at some of the dryness. However, the rain and snow will be too light to completely fix the moisture deficits. Early-season establishment conditions may improve marginally, most notably in southwestern Alberta. Significant precipitation will still be needed later this spring and summer to support ideal long-term crop prospects.

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