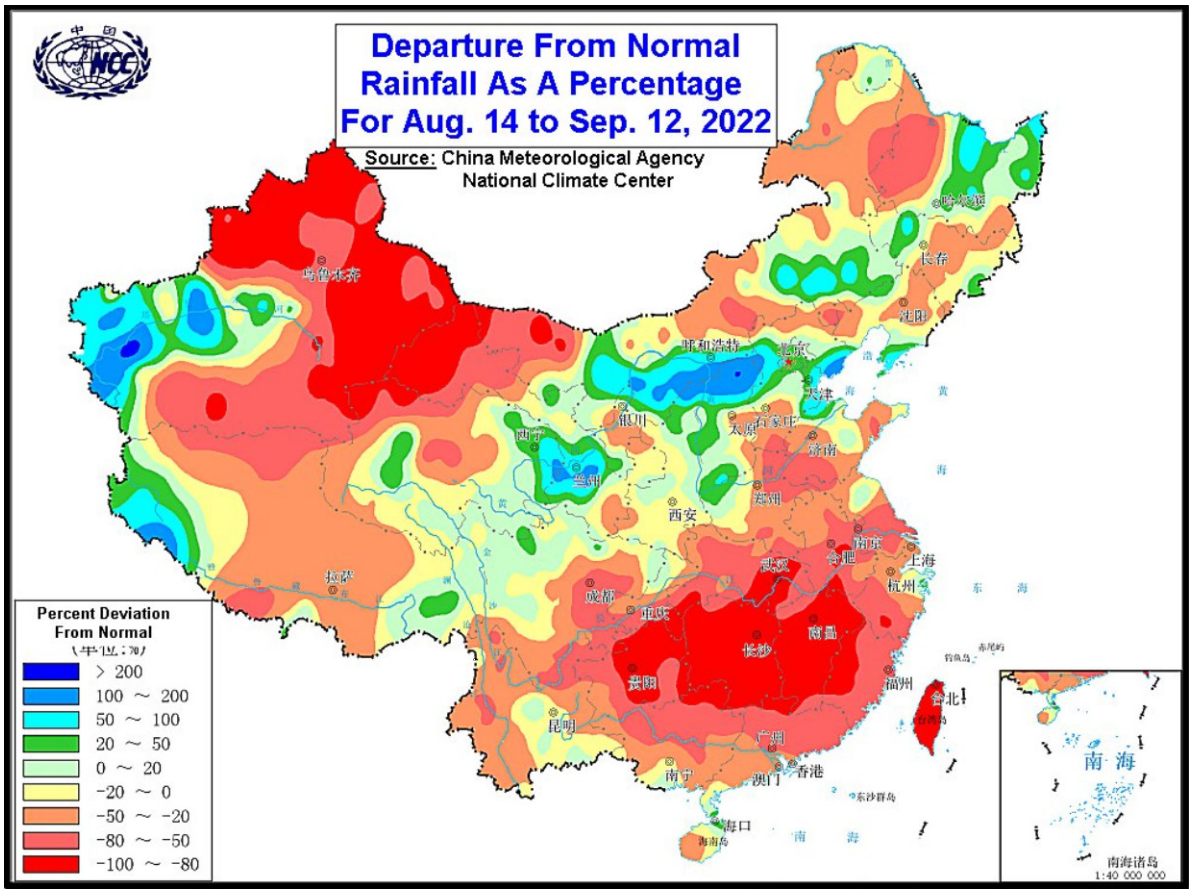
Typhoon Will Not Break China's Drought; Coastal Flood Likely

By Andrew Owen and Drew Lerner

Kansas City, September 13 (World Weather Inc.) – ***Drought in China's Yangtze River Basin has not changed much over the past week and very little change should occur for at least the next ten days. Typhoon Muifa will impact eastern coastal areas of the nation during the balance of this week and sufficient rain and strong wind will occur to induce some damage to crops and property from northeastern Zhejiang to eastern Shandong and Jiangsu.*** Liaoning and southern Jilin will also be impacted by the storm to a lesser degree of significance. Favorable weather is expected elsewhere in the nation.



Dryness in China's northern and easternmost Yangtze River Basin was partially eased earlier this month when rain fell during the first weekend of the month. However, the heart of the basin was not impacted and some of those crop areas have been dealing with extremely dry conditions for the past two and a half months. The most recent 30 days has produced well below normal rainfall in the Yangtze River Basin and in many surrounding areas. There has also been some persistent dryness in northern and eastern parts of Xinjiang and Gansu. Some welcome drying has evolved recently in the northeastern parts of the nation easing a long summer of frequent rainfall.

Most of the drought in China's Yangtze River Basin has damaged rice in areas where irrigation is not available. Some other grain and oilseed crops have also been

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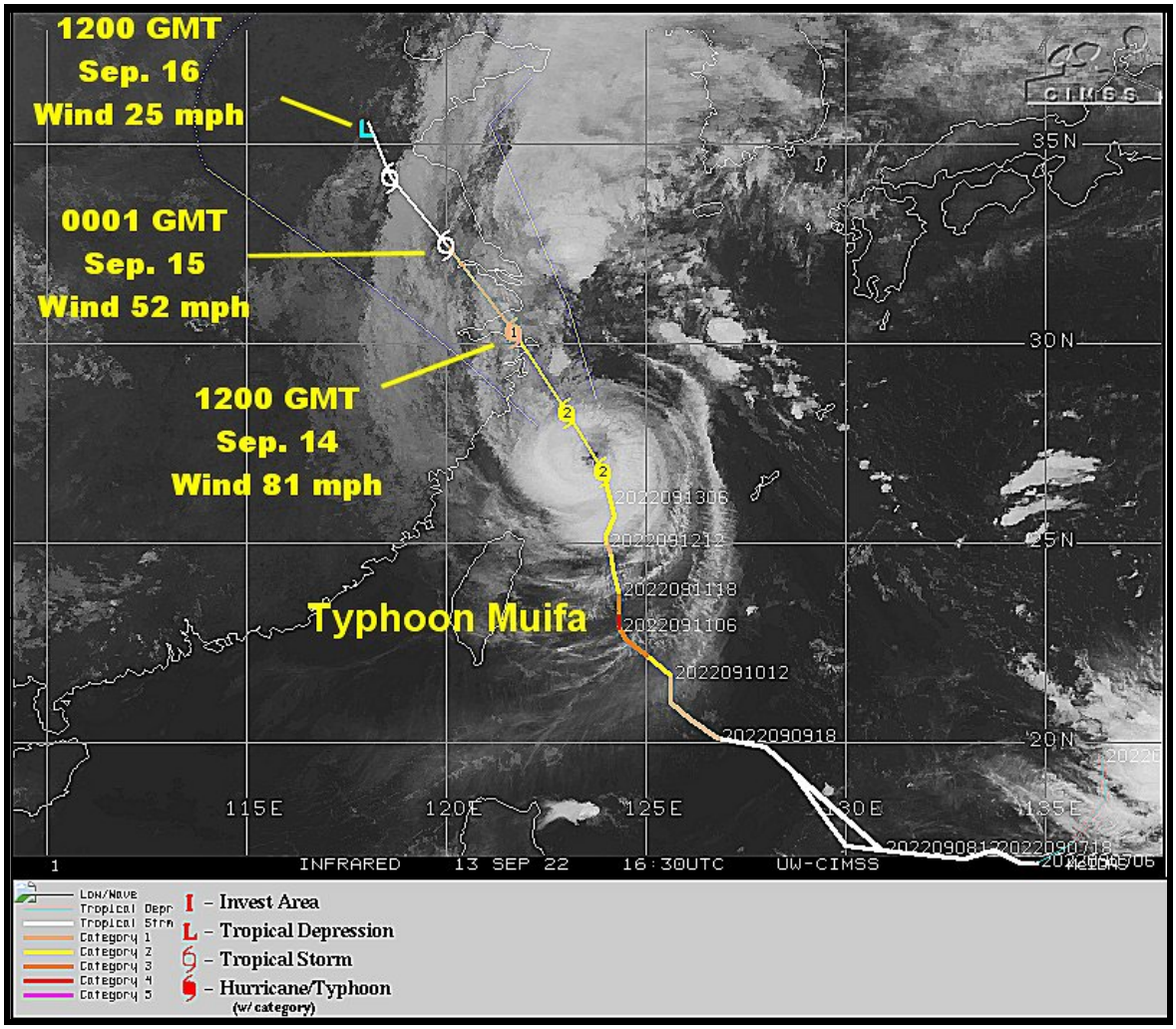
impacted, although the bulk of corn, soybeans and groundnuts are produced farther to the north where dryness is not quite as significant.



Typhoon Muifa had been a beacon of light for possible relief to China's drought, but the storm's path never turned far enough to the west to bring significant moisture to the drought stricken region. The storm will move through the east-central coastal provinces of Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Shandong with some indirect impact on eastern Henan, Anhui and northeastern Jiangxi. ***The most threatening weather is expected to occur mostly along the coast from northeastern Zhejiang through Jiangsu, including the Shanghai region and all of the ports nearby.***

At 1800 GMT today, the center of the typhoon was located 209 miles northeast of Taipei, Taiwan and 277 miles south southeast of Shanghai moving north northwesterly and producing peak wind speeds of 105 mph. Typhoon Muifa will weaken as it approaches the northeast tip of Zhejiang and the Shanghai area. Peak wind speeds were expected to be down to about 80 mph when the storm moves across northeastern Zhejiang around 0900 GMT Wednesday. The storm center will pass to the immediate southwest of Shanghai around 1500 GMT Wednesday and it may still be a weak typhoon at that time.

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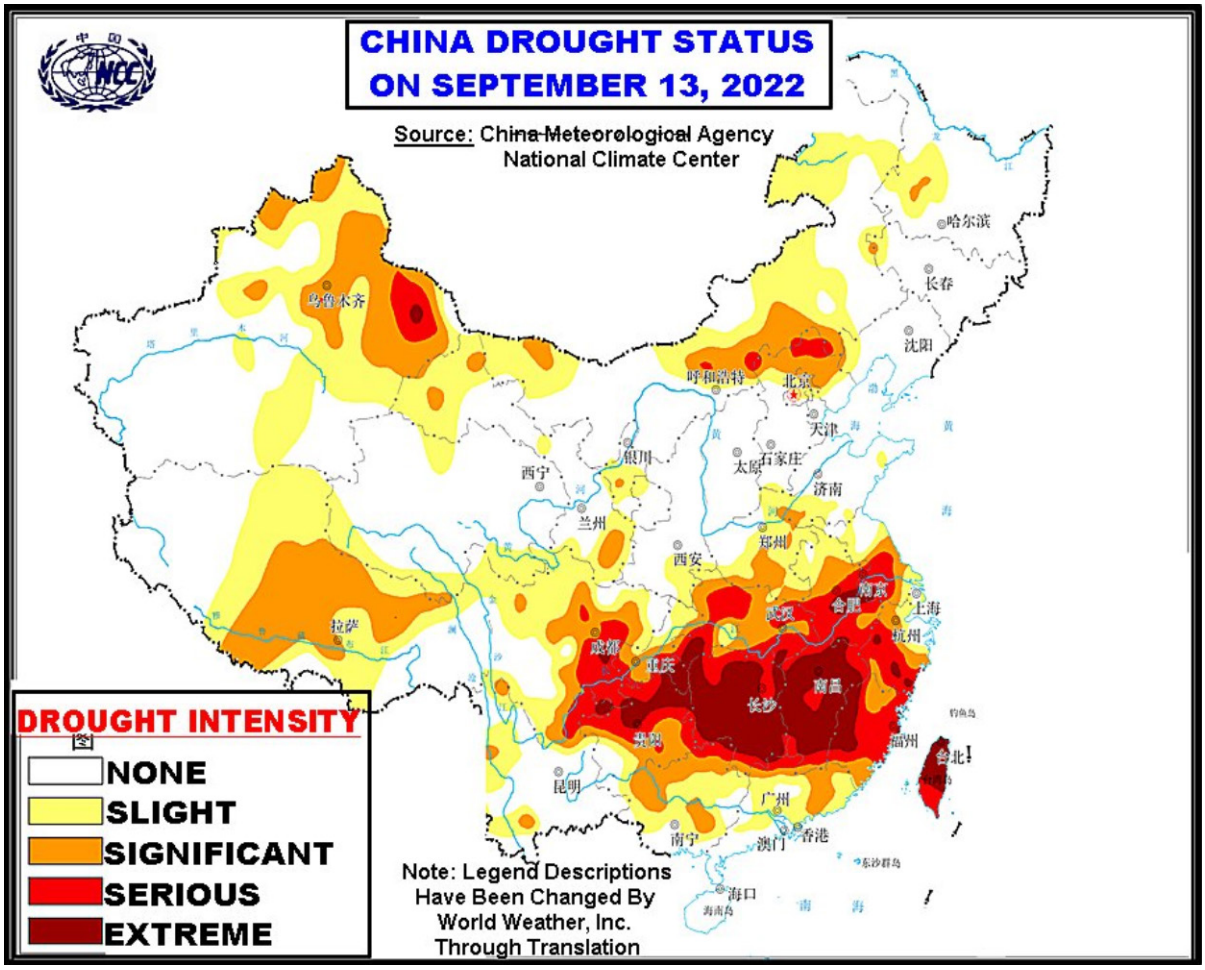
Muifa will produce heavy rain, strong wind speeds and some flooding from northeastern Zhejiang through most of Jiangsu to eastern Shandong raising the potential for some crop and property damage. Rainfall will vary from 3.00 to 7.00 inches along most of the storm's path, but there will likely be some areas near Shanghai that will end up with 8.00 to nearly 16.00 inches of rain. ***Serious damage to ports in the mouth of the Yangtze River is not very likely, but there will be some damage. Port activity should already be curtailed tonight and Wednesday with activity slow to resume on Thursday. Some power outages and damage to homes and businesses are expected as well as to some crops.***

Damage to rice, corn, soybeans, groundnuts and cotton is possible, although the areas most impacted will be close to the coast where there is more urban sprawl than agriculture. Crops in Anhui, western Shandong, eastern Henan and western Jiangsu will be much less threatened by the storm than areas nearer to the coast.

The storm will move north into Shandong and dissipate late this week, but remnant moisture from the storm will then impact southern Liaoning and southern Jilin where a little more flooding is possible.



In the meantime, Typhoon Muifa's path and movement will offer no relief to drought in the Yangtze River Basin. The storm will actually reinforce the dry bias there by sucking the moisture out of the atmosphere in that part of eastern China reinforcing the

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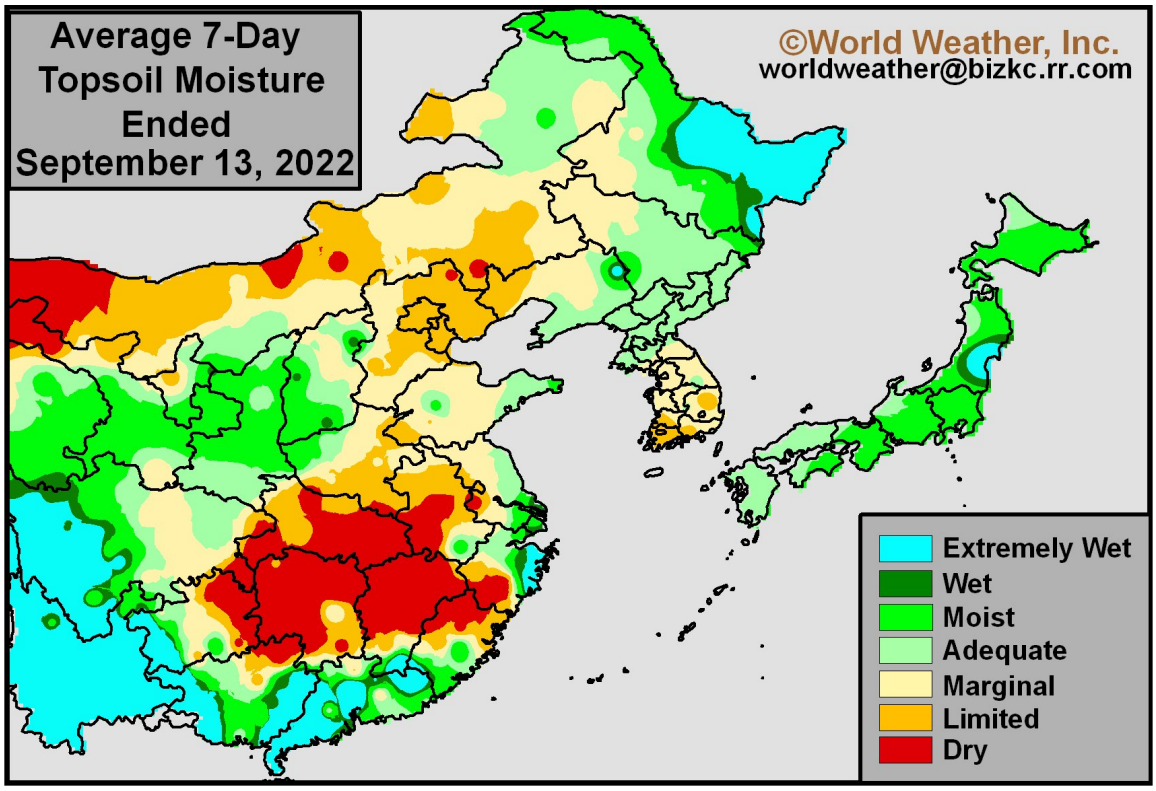
dry bias. Net drying is also expected in the Yellow River Basin and interior parts of northeastern China.

Drying in the northeastern provinces and North China Plain (away from the coast) will be welcome and good for summer crop maturation and harvesting. Dryness in the Yangtze River Basin will be much less welcome and more detrimental to main season rice and other crops produced in the region.

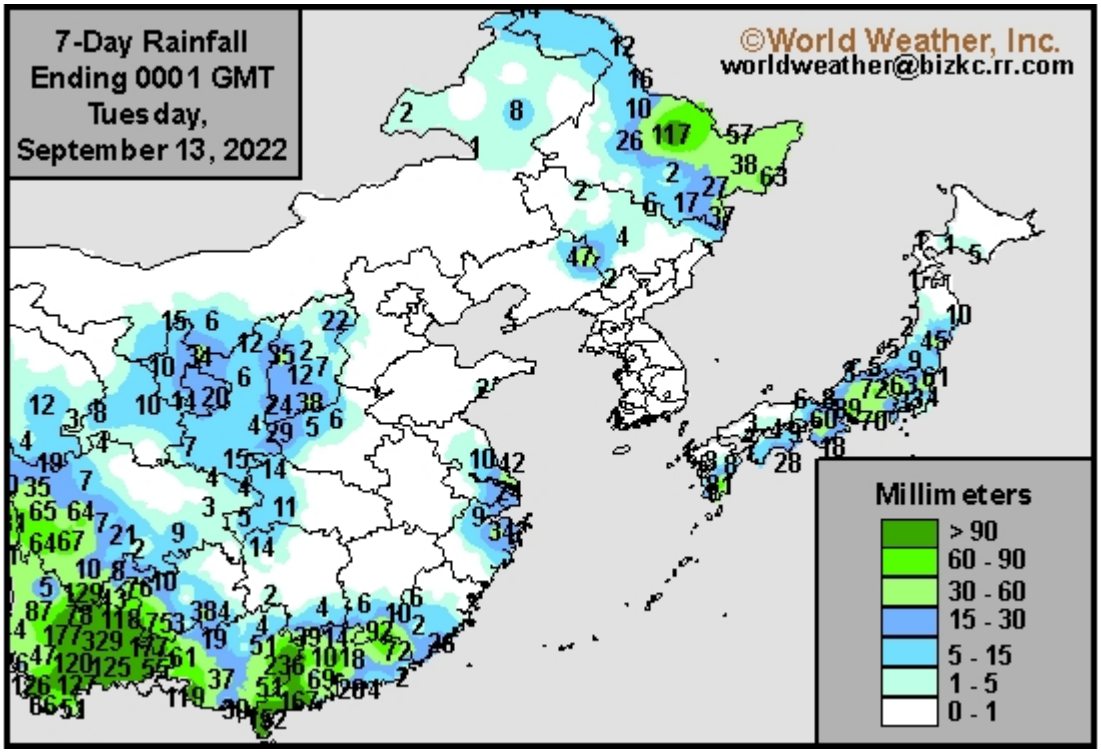


The Yangtze River Basin is certainly the driest area in eastern Asia and the impact on crops has been great wherever irrigation water is not available, but drying has been occurring farther to the north as well. Much of the North China Plain is reporting short to very short topsoil moisture, but subsoil moisture is still rated adequately.

The adequate subsoil moisture situation in northeastern China, the North China Plain and Yellow River Basin is ideal for late summer crop development while the drying topsoil is good for early summer crop maturation and harvest progress. Planting of winter wheat will begin soon, as well and this environment should prove to be favorable for that process as long as some timely rain comes along in the next few weeks to induce germination and plant emergence.

Weather conditions during the past week were quite dry across many areas in eastern China. However, Yunnan reported several waves of rain during the past week resulting in moisture totals through dawn today varying from 3.42 to 6.97 inches with a local amount of 12.95 inches. Eastern Guangxi and western Guangdong reported 1.54 to 9.29 inches of rain. Other areas in Guangdong and Guangxi into southern Fujian, southern fringes of Jiangxi, western and southern Guizhou, and portions of southern and western Sichuan received 0.35 to 3.98 inches of rain. Shaanxi, Shanxi, western sections of Hubei and Henan, pockets in northwestern Hunan, and portions of northern Zhejiang and southern Jiangsu received 0.24

to 1.65 inches of moisture. Central and southern Heilongjiang received 0.39 to 2.48 inches of rain with a local amount of 4.61 inches in central Heilongjiang. One location in eastern Liaoning received 1.85 inches of moisture while pockets in Jilin, northeastern Inner Mongolia, and northern Heilongjiang received 0.16 to 0.63 inch of rain. Little to no rain was noted elsewhere.



Rainfall in southern China was beneficial for the second-season rice and sugarcane. However, many areas are too wet for ideal maturation and harvest conditions and are in need of drier weather in the near future.

RAINFALL OUTLOOK

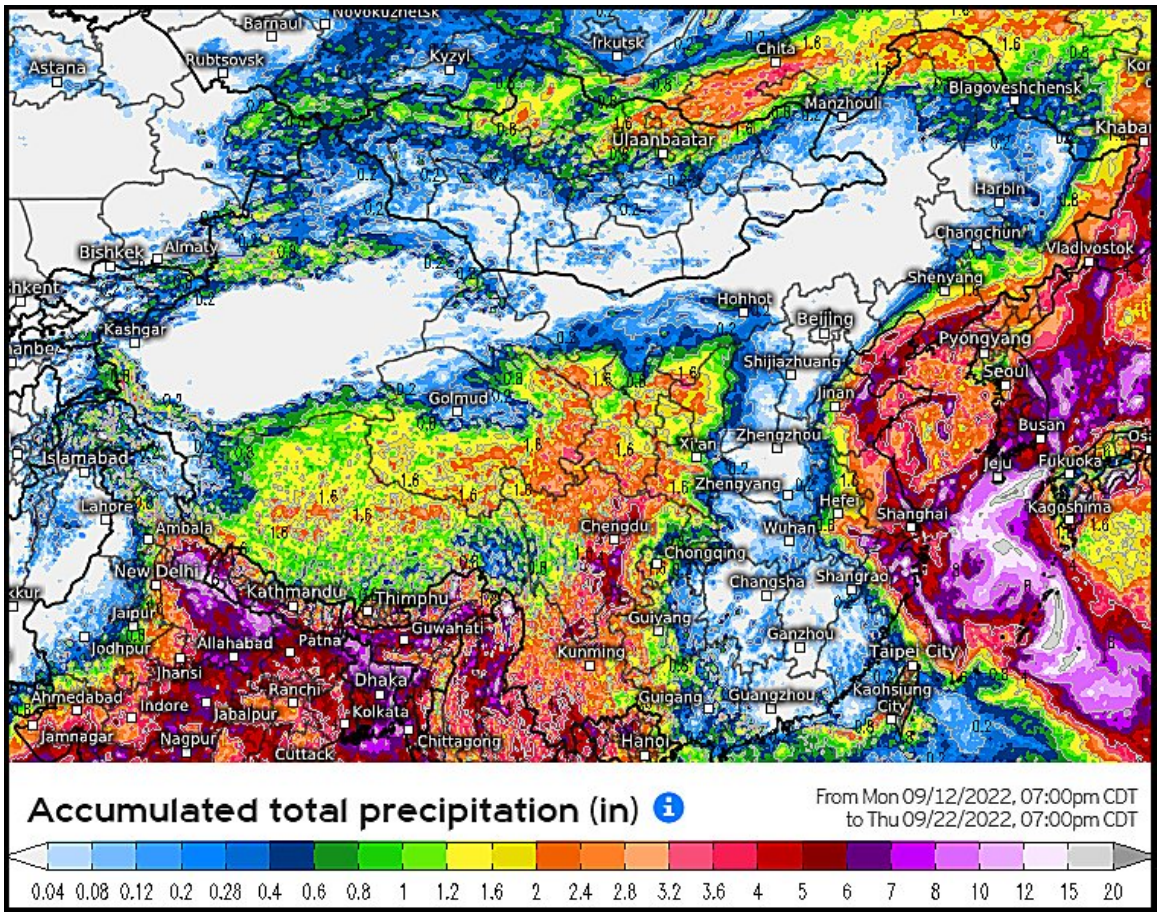
Typhoon Muifa will bring significant rain to much of the region from northeastern Zhejiang into Jiangsu and the eastern two-thirds of Shandong. Liaoning and southern Jilin will also receive rain as the disturbance reaches Shandong and starts to dissipate. Northeastern Zhejiang into eastern fringes of Jiangsu and eastern Shandong will receive 4.00 to 8.00 inches of rain with local amounts ranging from 12.00 to 16.00 inches from the disturbance. Other areas will receive 1.50 to 5.00 inches of rain with local amounts of 8.00 inches or more in Zhejiang, central Jiangsu, and central Shandong. Flooding will be the greatest concern for east-central China, though portions of Zhejiang and southern Jiangsu will also see typhoon force wind speeds as Typhoon Muifa initially makes landfall. Damage to infrastructure and the crops produced in these areas is expected. However, overall losses should be small as the heaviest impacted areas are just outside some of the major production areas. The rain will otherwise help improve the moisture profile that will be needed for the

winter rapeseed and wheat. Maturation and harvesting of summer crops will otherwise stall or be seriously slowed by the storm.

ELSEWHERE IN CHINA

Yunnan and Sichuan into much of the central Yellow River Basin and neighboring areas will see a mix of rain and sunshine during the coming week. Moisture totals by next Tuesday morning will range from 0.50 to 3.00 inches with locally greater amounts in Yunnan and Sichuan. The rain will be beneficial for crops that are still developing, but will slow maturation and harvesting of the more advanced crops.

The remaining production areas in China will be drier biased during the coming week. The lack of rain and warm weather will continue to promote a good environment for maturation and harvesting. Drought will persist in the central Yangtze River Basin and portions of southeastern China, where late-season development conditions will remain poor. Other areas will dry down as well, but should have enough moisture in the subsoil to maintain a good environment for any crops that are not yet completely finished with development. Some of the drying in China's Yangtze River Basin will last for 10 days.



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