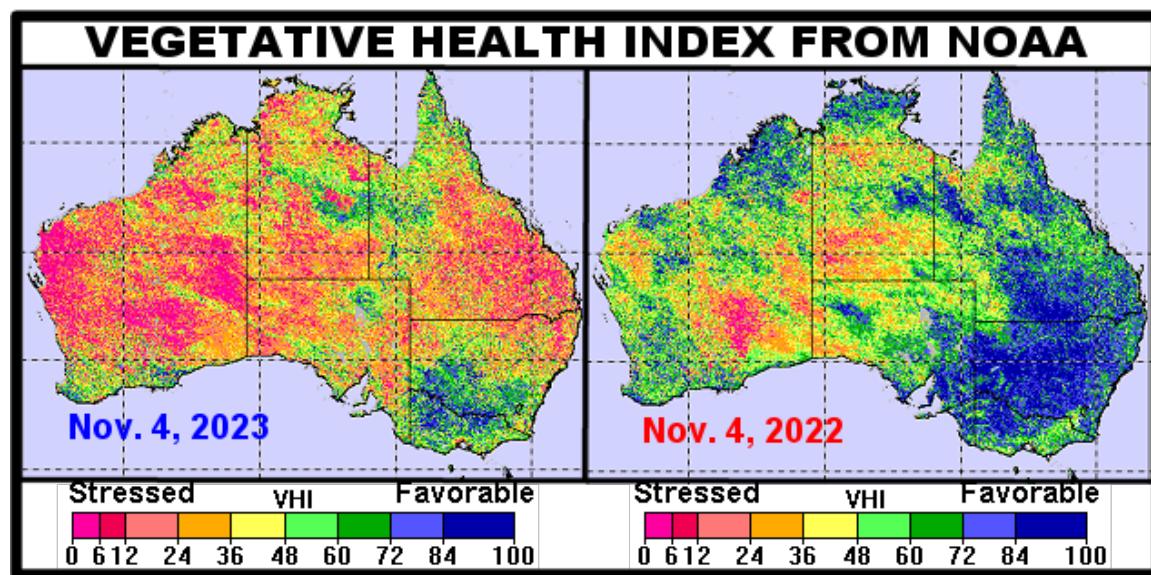


Australia Rain Too Light To Fix Ongoing Moisture Deficits

By Andrew Owen

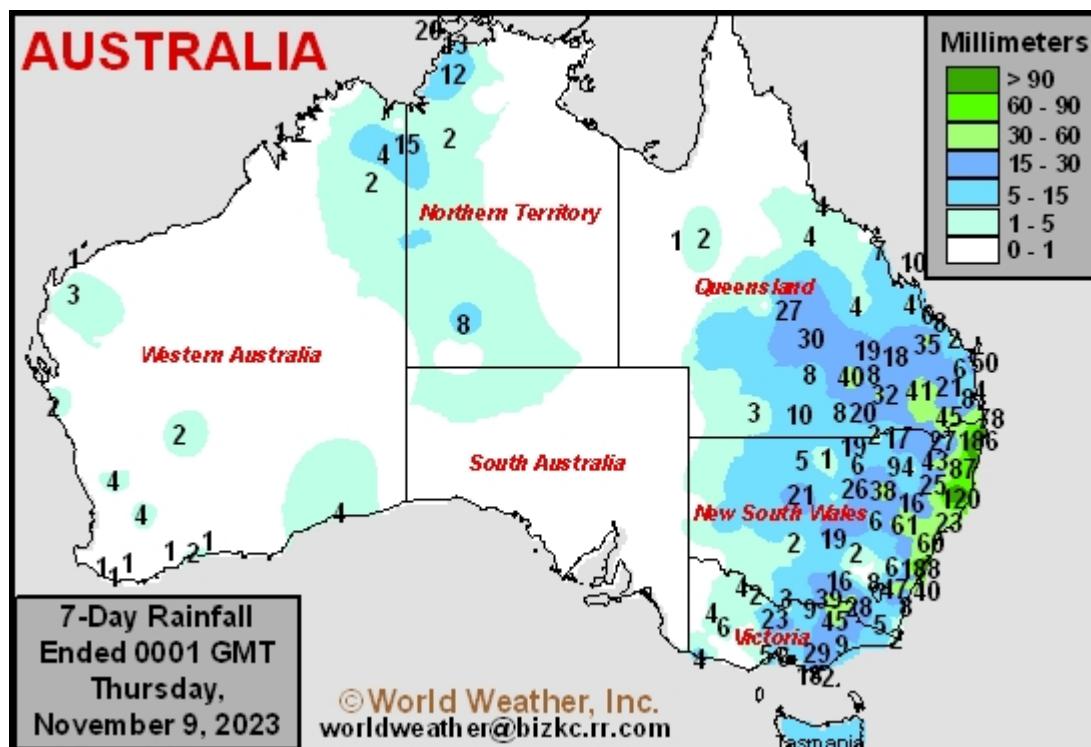
Kansas City, November 9 (World Weather Inc.) – Many areas in eastern Australia received much-needed rain during the past week. The rain was most welcome to dryland cotton, sorghum, peanut and a host of other grain and oilseed crops as well as sugarcane. The region has been chronically dry hurting winter crop production and limiting the planting of spring and summer crops in unirrigated areas. Even though the moisture was all welcome, much more was needed to induce a serious change in dryland summer crop production potential. In the meantime, the moisture came too late for winter wheat, barley and canola which are either harvested or being harvested except in southern New South Wales, Victoria and southeastern South Australia where crops are filling and maturing. Western Australia received minimal rain and will not get much rain keeping downward pressure on late developing crops in the south. Victoria crops remain in very good shape.

Early November satellite imagery showing the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Vegetative Health Index clearly illustrates what six months of dry weather can do to crops. The imagery shows a huge contrast in vegetative conditions in Queensland, northern New South Wales, South Australia and portions of Western Australia between this year and last year. Vegetative Health Indices suggested most of the areas noted above to be notably stressed this year compared to last year. Last year's weather was dominated by La Nina which tends to produce frequent bouts of rain usually resulting in huge production of wheat, barley, corn, sorghum, cotton and other crops and that certainly was the case. However, this year's persistent dryness and recent warm to hot temperatures have induced dryness and cut production of most unirrigated crops. Livestock areas in Queensland and northern New South Wales are hurting for moisture and are likely to be faced with a hay and Alfalfa shortage later this growing season without greater rain soon.



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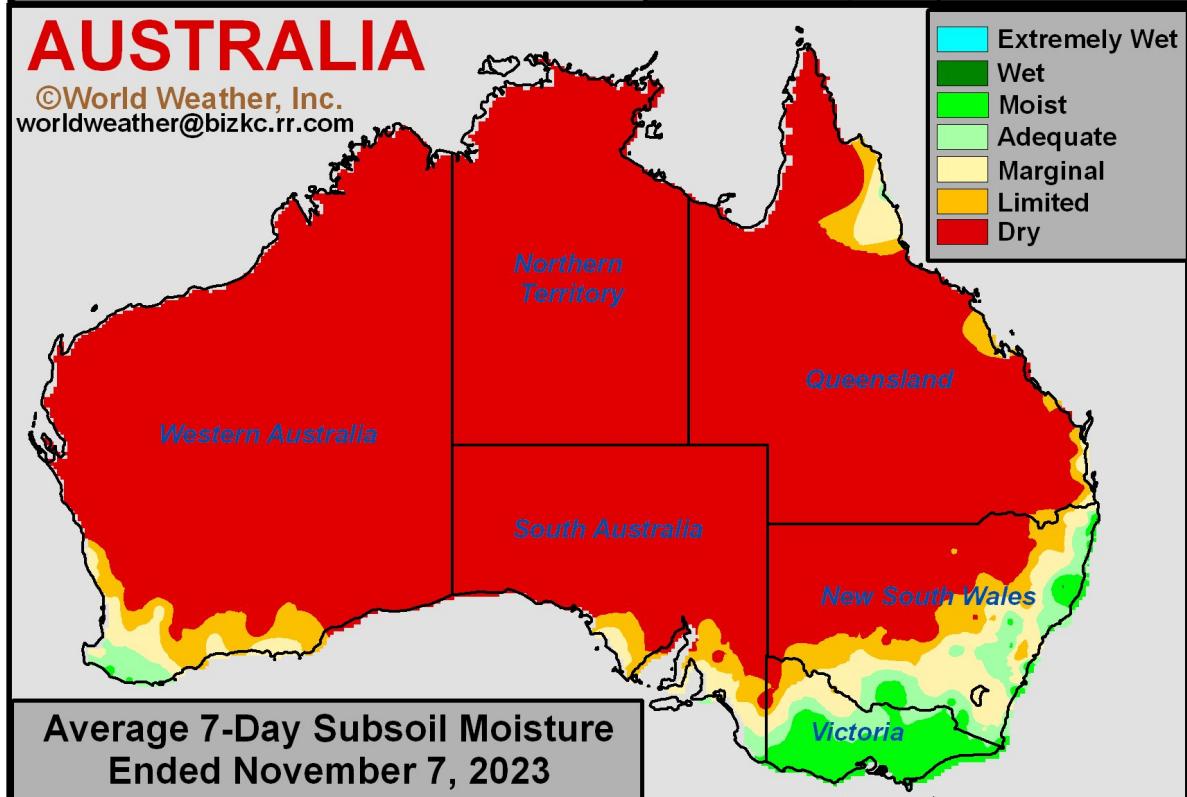
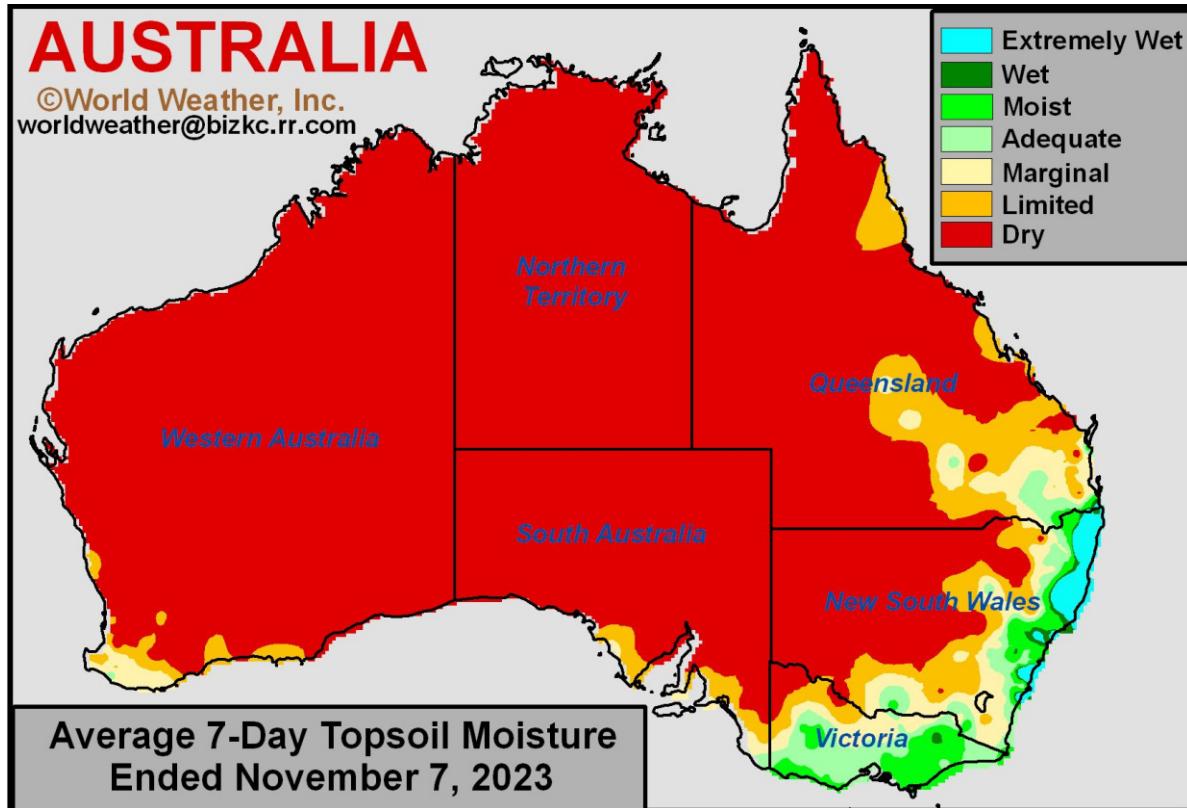
The greatest rainfall for the 7-day period ending dawn today (Thursday) occurred in southeastern Queensland, northeastern New South Wales and some central Victoria locations where 0.12 to 1.61 inches resulted with greater amounts near and along the New South Wales coast. Western Victoria received up to 0.24 inch of rain while pockets in Western Australia received up to 0.16 inch of moisture. South Australia and the remaining locations in Western Australia were otherwise dry. Temperatures were warm with highest readings generally reaching the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit. Pockets in southeastern Australia also only saw highest readings reach the 70s.



Victoria continues to have adequate to marginally adequate soil moisture despite a lack of significant rain during the past week and winter crops are developing quite favorably. The pockets in New South Wales and Queensland that received the greatest amount of rain during the past week also saw topsoil moisture increase; however, most production areas outside Victoria have short to critically short soil moisture.

Rainfall during the past week was too late to impact winter wheat, barley, and canola yields in eastern Australia. Overall production in Australia is still expected to be well below the previous three years that benefitted from ample moisture associated with La Niña. El Niño and a positive-phased Indian Ocean Dipole helped promote one of the driest October's since 2002. September was also one of the driest on record outside Victoria. While conditions were less than favorable for late-season development, production is still expected to trend near normal this season. The main production areas received enough rain earlier in the growing season to limit losses stemming from the drier weather in September and October. Maturation and harvesting likely advanced swiftly around the periods of rain in eastern Australia. Western Australia and South Australia saw more favorable conditions for the harvest in recent days.

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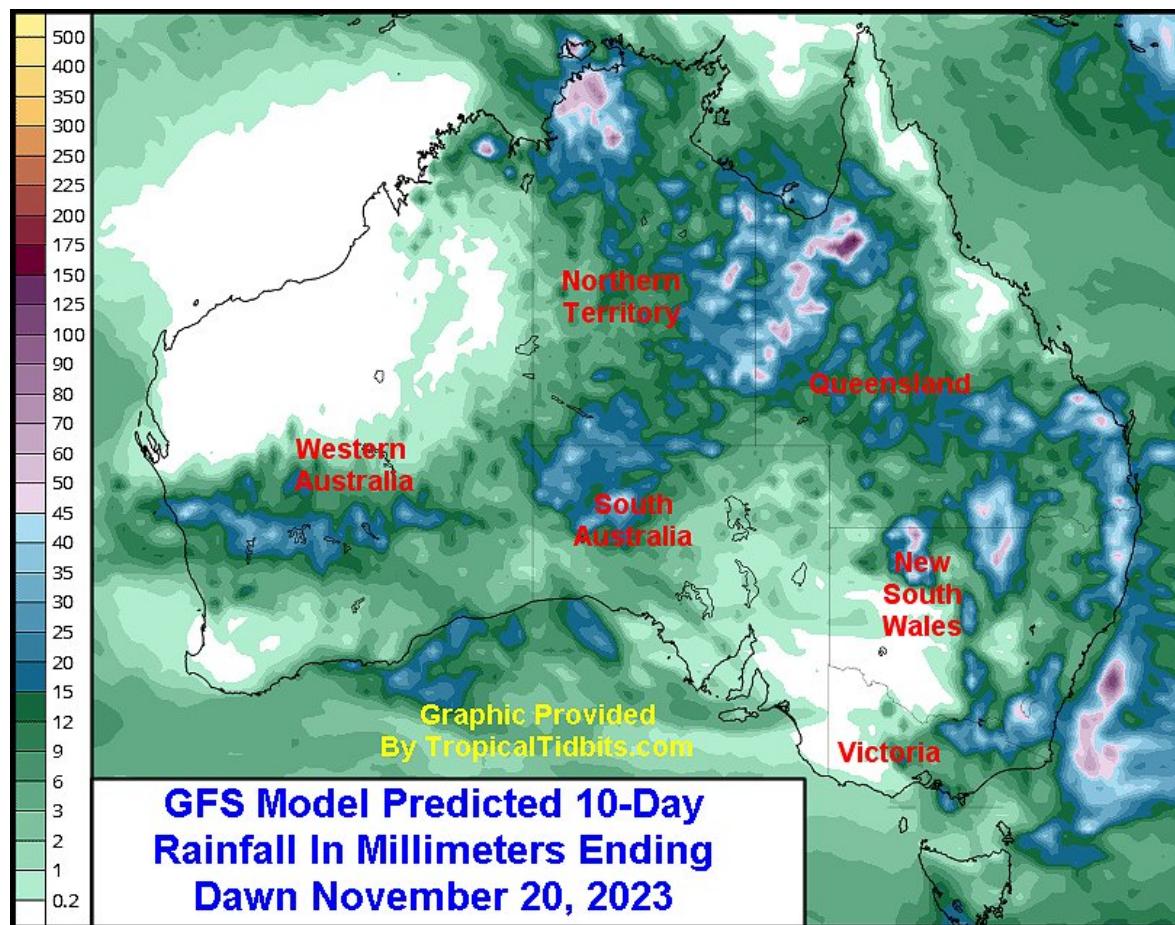


Spotty rainfall during the past week was welcome for the sorghum, sunseed, cotton, corn, soybeans, and other coarse grains and oilseeds in New South Wales, Queensland, and

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Victoria. Establishment conditions may have improved marginally in areas that received the greatest amount of rain. However, much more precipitation is needed to fix the moisture deficits and support good long-term crop conditions. With El Nino expected to persist for much of the growing season, concerns for dryness will likely persist across eastern Australia. Production potentials will remain below normal this season due to the threat for drier than normal weather.

WEATHER OUTLOOK



Australia's main production areas will have a few opportunities for spotty rainfall during the coming week, though most locations will trend drier than normal. Scattered shower activity will initially evolve in portions of eastern Australia today and Friday. Another disturbance will bring erratic rainfall to portions of Western Australia late Friday and this weekend. This disturbance will gradually make its way into eastern Australia next week and will promote some erratic rainfall. Eastern New South Wales will receive 0.25 to 1.50 inches of rain with local amounts over 2.00 inches by next Thursday morning. Queensland, central New South Wales, central Victoria, and portions of Western Australia outside the southwest corner will receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of rain with local amounts over 1.00 inch in Western Australia. The remaining locations in Victoria, New South Wales, and southwestern Australia, along with South Australia, will receive little to no rain. Eastern

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Australia will again have a few opportunities for erratic rainfall November 17 – 23. South Australia and Western Australia will remain drier biased, though brief periods of light rain cannot be completely ruled out.

The lack of abundant rainfall and ongoing warm weather will promote a good environment for winter crop maturation and harvesting in much of Australia during the next few weeks. The periods of rain will not be enough to significantly slow the harvest. Showers in the unirrigated summer crop areas will be welcome, but they will be too sporadic and light most days to seriously change crop or soil conditions. Greater rain will be needed for better support of dryland summer crops.

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