

China Rapeseed Area To Get Needed Rain

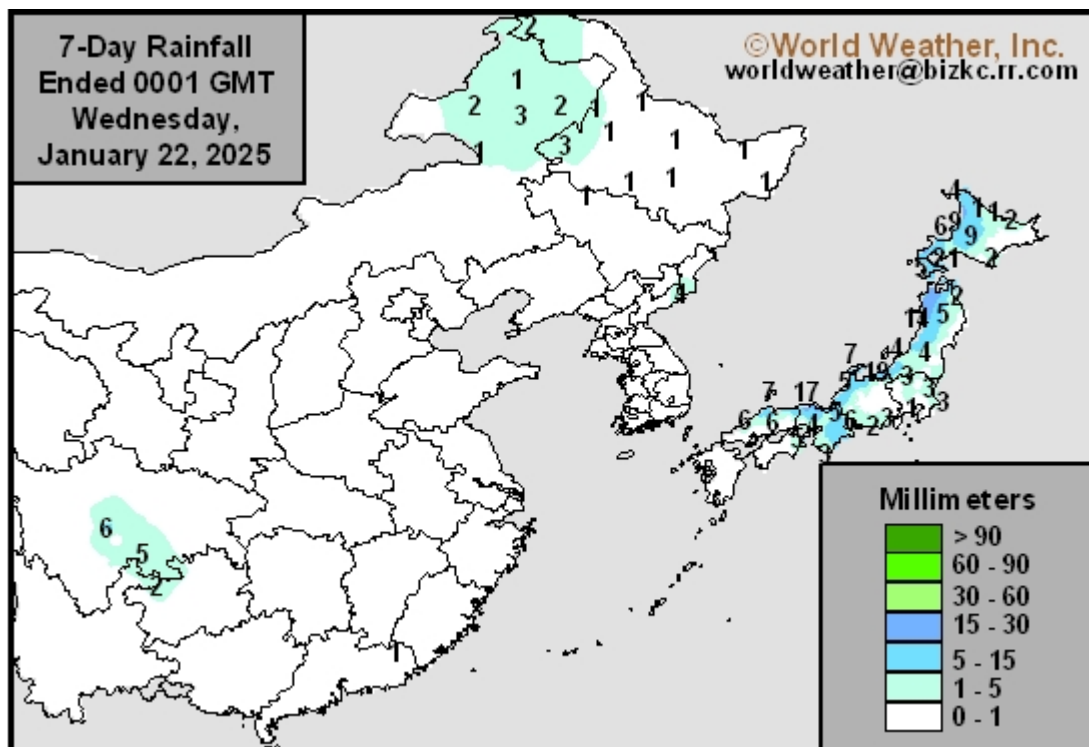
By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, January 22 (World Weather Inc.) – The main crop production areas in eastern China were mostly dry again during the past week as they have been frequently this autumn and winter. *The lack of precipitation and periods of warmer-than-normal weather continued to dry the soil, primarily near and south of the Yangtze River. The need for rain remains high in order to support early-season rice planting in March and early season rapeseed development in the Yangtze River Basin in both February and March.*

Precipitation is set to return this weekend and especially next week with some rain continuing into the first full week of February. Soil moisture will slowly increase and the environment for winter rapeseed and early-season planting will improve; however, some of the driest areas in southern China will need additional rain to completely fix moisture deficits.

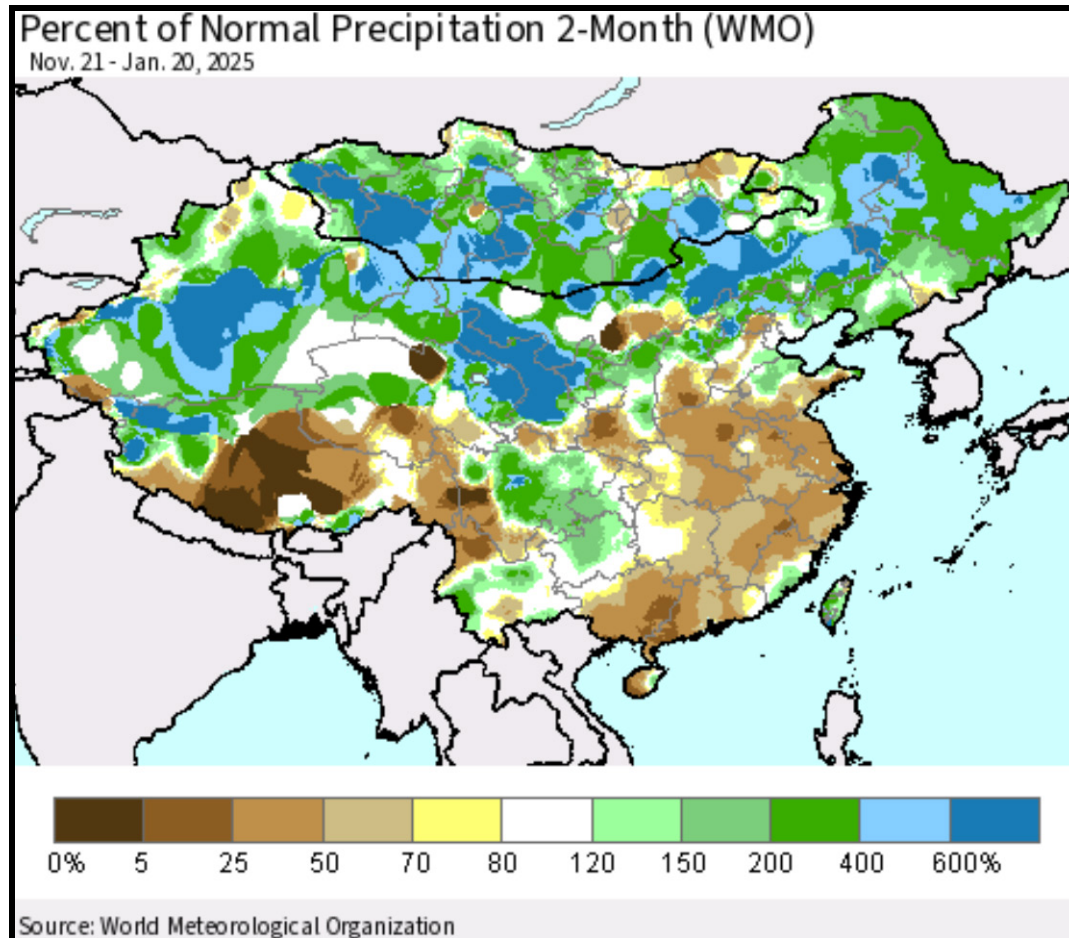
A few pockets in Sichuan, Heilongjiang, and northeastern Inner Mongolia received upwards of 0.24 inch of moisture for the seven-day period ending this morning. However, a large section of China's main production areas were dry.

Temperatures were often above normal during the past week with highest readings south of the Yangtze River generally in the 60s and 70s Fahrenheit. Areas near and immediately north of the River saw highest temperatures in the 50s and 60s while northern sections of the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin into central Inner Mongolia, Liaoning, and Jilin saw highest readings in the 30s and 40s. Other locations in Northeast China did not warm above freezing.



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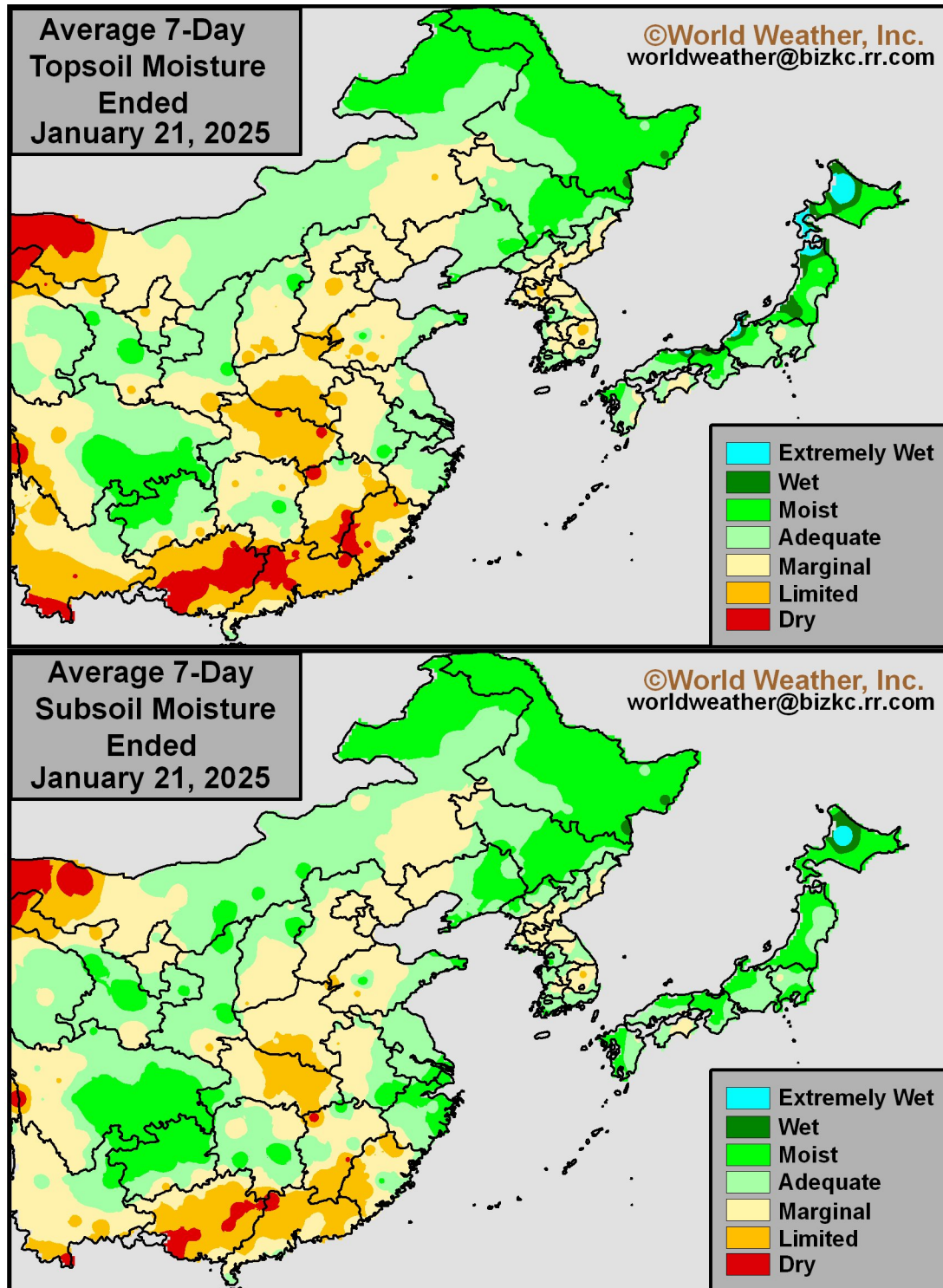
A large section of southern China (outside portions of Yunnan, Sichuan and Guizhou), the North China Plain and southern sections of Shaanxi and Shanxi were drier or much drier than normal during the past two months. Precipitation ranged 25-75% of normal for the 60-day period ending January 20 with drier pockets. Northern China and the remaining locations in the Yangtze River Basin and Yunnan received near to above normal precipitation.



Several areas near and south of the Yangtze River remain in a drought or are abnormally dry due to the continued lack of precipitation and periods of warmer than normal weather in recent weeks. The North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin into northern China still have adequate or marginally adequate soil moisture, though several locations in the North China Plain are starting to dry down as well.

Early-season planting of rice and corn usually begins later in February March in portions of southern China. Planting conditions today remain less than favorable due to the lack of moisture, though there is still time for rain to improve the situation. Several of the winter rapeseed areas in the Yangtze River Basin are also in need of moisture to support more aggressive growth early this spring. Winter wheat prospects in the North China Plain and neighboring locations remain relatively favorable. All of eastern China's crop areas would benefit from a good shot of precipitation later this winter or early spring.

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WEATHER OUTLOOK

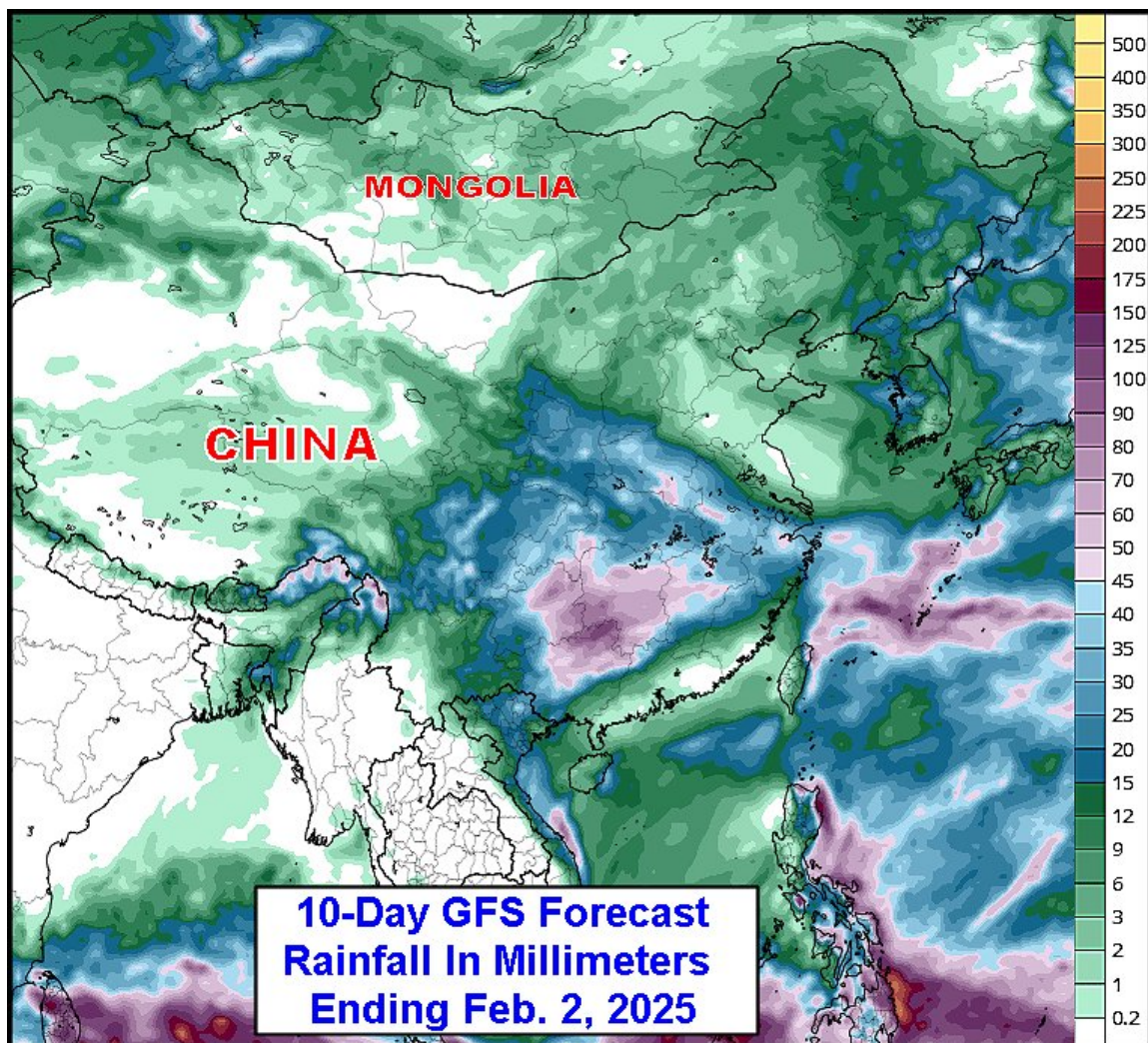
China will have several opportunities for precipitation through the middle of next week. Light shower activity will begin today before a frontal boundary generates more widespread precipitation Thursday into Saturday. Light rain will linger in southern China

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Sunday and Monday. Scattered showers may then return near and south of the Yangtze River Tuesday. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 0.50 to 2.00 inches in the Yangtze River Basin, Shaanxi, southern Shanxi, Henan, northern Anhui, Yunnan, and neighboring locations. Other locations will receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of moisture with local amounts of 1.00 inch or more in Heilongjiang. Several areas in Hebei, Shandong, Guangdong, southern Fujian, and neighboring locations will also miss out on much of the precipitation. Areas near and south of the Yangtze River will again have several opportunities for precipitation January 30 – February 5. The main production areas farther north will only have a few opportunities for light precipitation.

Northeast China will generally see precipitation fall as snow through the middle of next week. Accumulations will range from a dusting to 5 or 6 inches with local amounts of 10 inches or more in Heilongjiang and Jilin. A few locations in Shaanxi, Shanxi, and central Inner Mongolia will also see a dusting to 3 inches of snow accumulate.

The boost in precipitation near and south of the Yangtze River during the next two weeks will gradually improve the moisture profile. Several locations in southern China will not receive enough rain to completely fix the moisture deficits and additional precipitation would be welcome. Winter rapeseed prospects and early-season planting prospects will improve. Winter wheat prospects will remain relatively good as well.



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