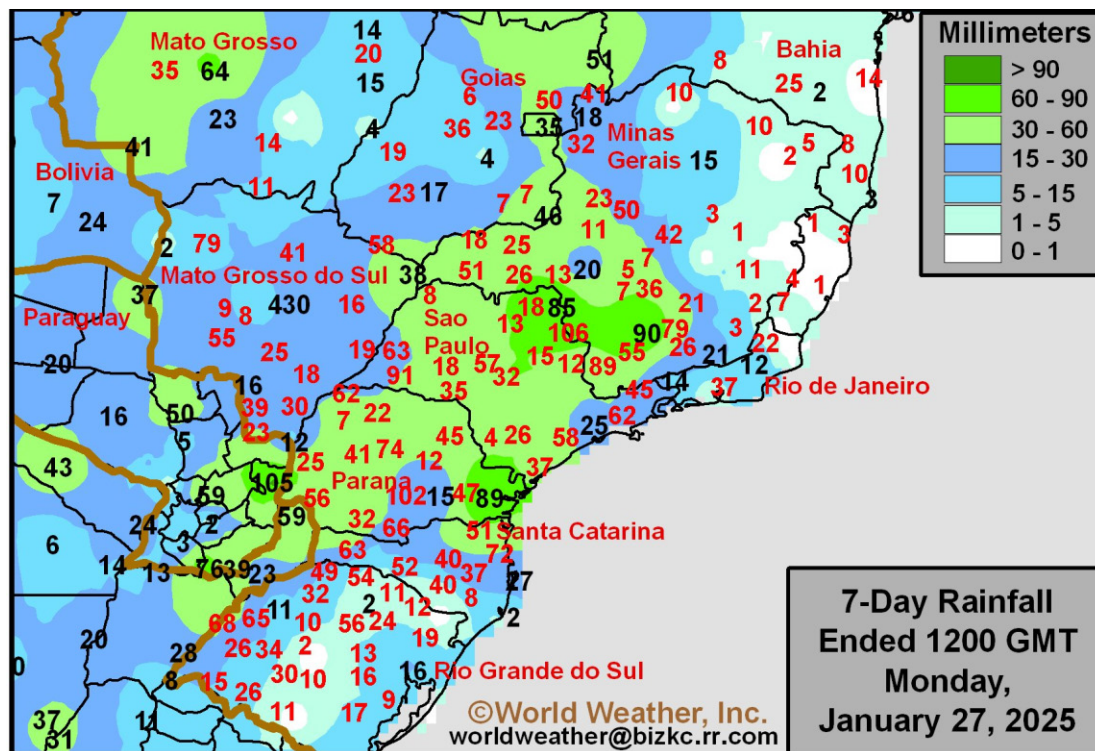


Returning Brazil Rain Intensity To Reverse Improving Trend

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, January 27 (World Weather Inc.) – Brazil's soybeans, first-season corn, and other crops received enough rain during the past week to maintain aggressive growth. Production is expected to be high this season due to the rain and an expansion of soybean planted acreage compared to recent years. The main concern for the crop is sluggish harvesting for the earliest planted crops. Waves of rain slowed the maturation and early harvest earlier this month, but for about five days in the past week conditions did improve in center west and perhaps the next set of statistical harvest data may reveal a little more progress. Rain will resume later this week into early next week causing a setback in the drying trend and raising more concern about field progress. The greatest rain in the coming week is slated for Minas Gerais, Goias and neighboring areas, including some Mato Grosso production areas. Early-season harvesting of soybeans and the planting of both Safrinha cotton and corn will be slowed once again. There is some potential for better conditions near mid-month.

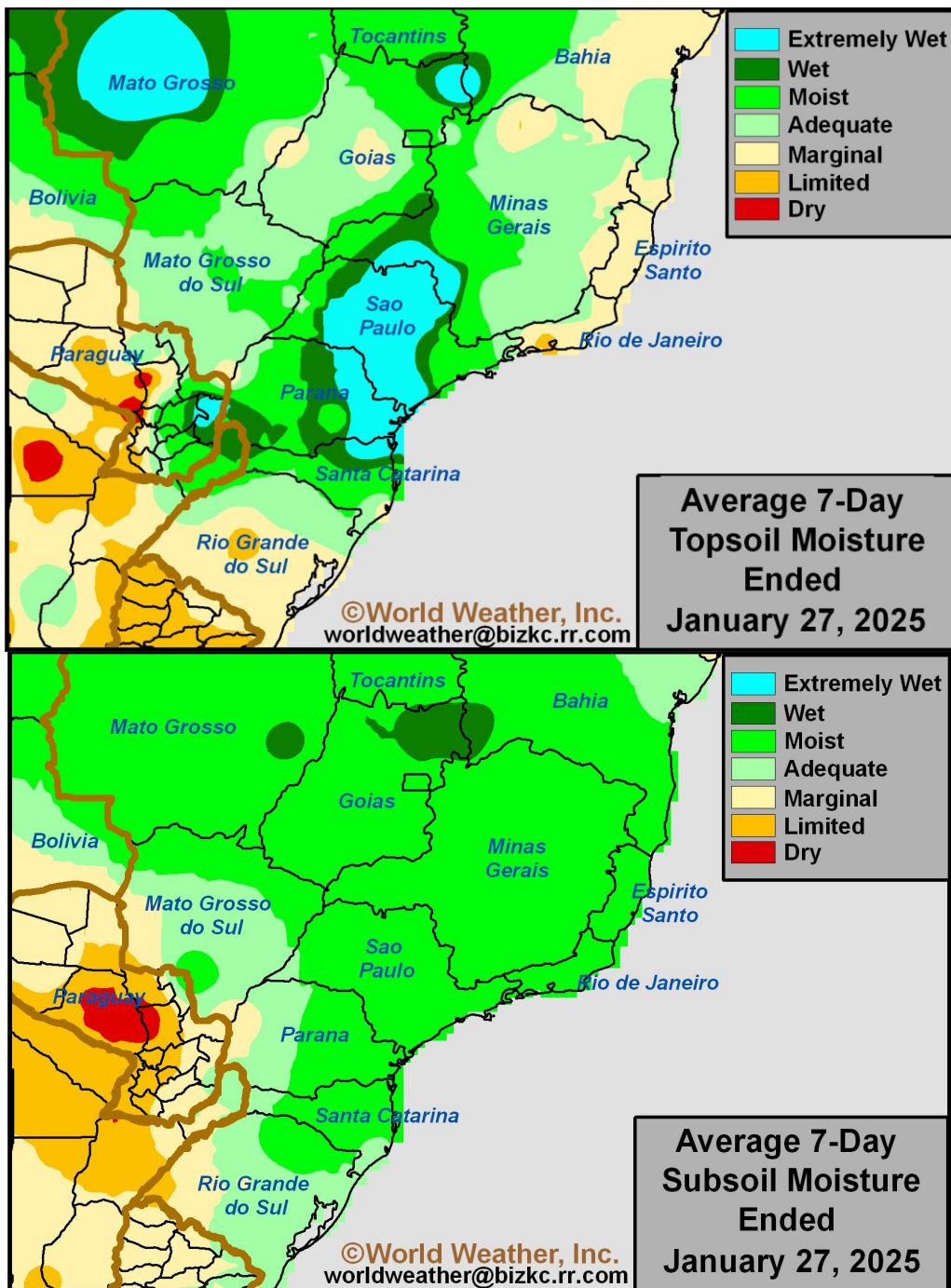
The main production areas in Brazil received frequent rain during the past week although many areas in center west reported lighter and more sporadic rainfall. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.43 to 2.50 inches in a large section of crop country. Pockets in Sao Paulo, southern Minas Gerais, Parana, and northwestern Mato Grosso do Sul received up to 4.17 inches of rain. In contrast, pockets in southern Bahia, eastern and northern Minas Gerais, and Espirito Santo only received 0.12 to 0.43 inch of moisture.



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Temperatures during the past week averaged near normal with highest readings in the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit. Lowest temperatures were in the 60s and lower 70s with pockets in southern Brazil cooling to the 50s.

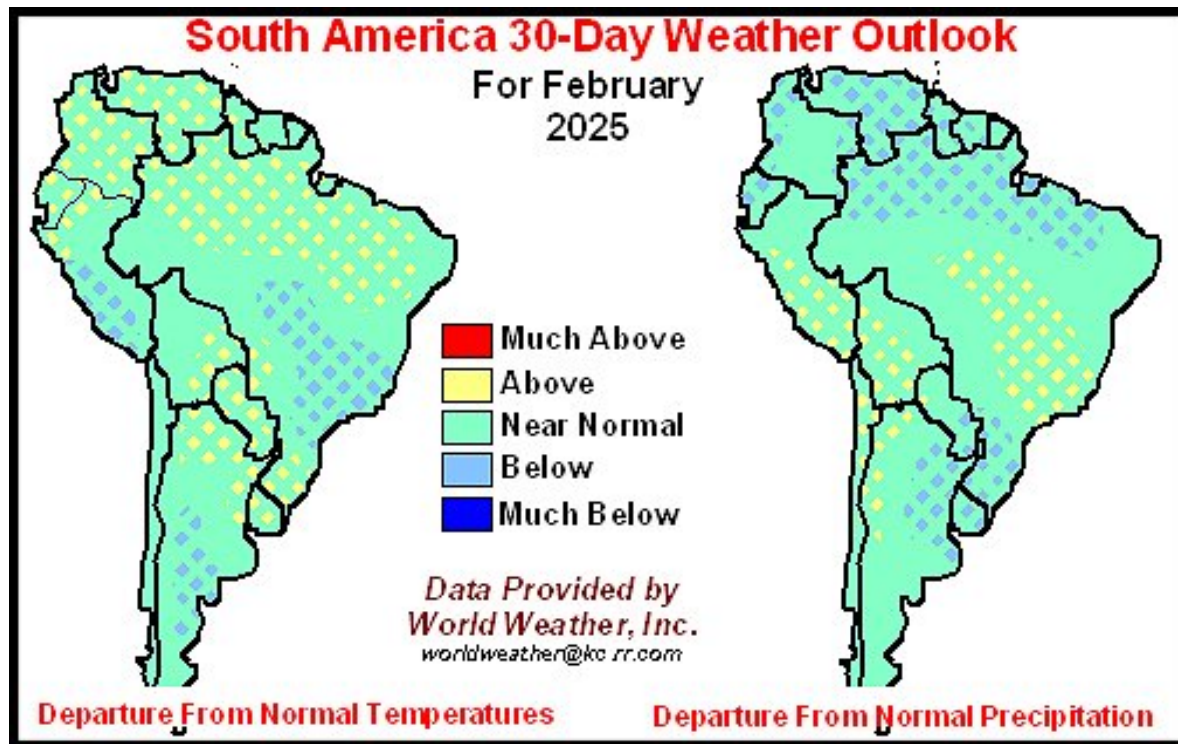
Soil moisture is rated adequate to excessive in much of Brazil's crop country. Rain was spread out enough over time to limit severe flooding, though the wettest fields in center-wets and center-south Brazil would benefit from drier weather to reduce flood potentials. Returning heavier rainfall in this coming week may lead to more significant flooding and areas of standing water.



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Early-season soybean and first-season corn harvest is off to a slow start in portions of Brazil due to wet weather this month. The harvest is just starting and will gradually expand in coming weeks as more crops finish maturing. Despite some abundant to excessive rainfall, soybean production is expected to be very good this season due to timely rain and greater than usual planted acreage. Rainfall has been spread out enough to limit severe flooding and wet weather diseases, though some of the wettest fields are vulnerable to such conditions.

In addition to the sluggish start to the harvest, Safrinha corn planting will expand in the coming weeks once the soybeans come off the fields. The main production areas have ample moisture to support aggressive establishment and early-season growth. Planting will continue to advance poorly if the soybean harvest remains sluggish.



WEATHER OUTLOOK

Brazil will receive frequent rain again this week. Scattered showers and thunderstorms will occur most days, though southern Brazil will experience some brief periods of drier weather, mainly over the weekend. Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Espirito Santo, Goias, and eastern Sao Paulo will receive 1.50 to 5.00 inches of rain with local amounts of 7.50 inches or more by next Monday morning. The remaining production areas will receive 0.75 to 3.00 inches of rain with local amounts of 4.00 inches or slightly more. Portions of southern Rio Grande do Sul will also only receive 0.25 to 0.75 inch of rain. The frequent rain pattern will persist for much of Brazil February 4-10, although the intensity of rain should slacken considerably offering some potential for fieldwork after a period of drying.

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The temperature profile will trend near to slightly below normal in much of Brazil this week. Daytime highs will peak to the 80s and lower 90s with pockets only warming to the 70s during periods of more significant rain. Low temperatures will be in the 60s and 70s with pockets in southern Brazil cooling to the 50s. Seasonable temperatures are slated for most locations February 4 – 10.

The abundant to excessive rain expected from mid-week this week into early next week will bring on some new fear about the success of early soybean harvesting and the planting of Safrinha corn and cotton. This week's boost in rainfall may lead to flooding in portions of Minas Gerais, Goias, southeastern Mato Grosso and parts of Sao Paulo. Other areas will get enough rain to maintain wet field conditions and the need for drying will rise greatly due to delays in fieldwork.

There will be some concern over crop quality because of the wet conditions; however, there is some potential for less frequent and less intensive rain Feb. 4-10 and that may bring some much needed relief. As long as rain continues to fall frequently and heavily the potential for more meaningful delays to soybean harvesting and Safrinha corn and cotton planting will rise. Weakening La Nina conditions later in February should bring about a change.

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