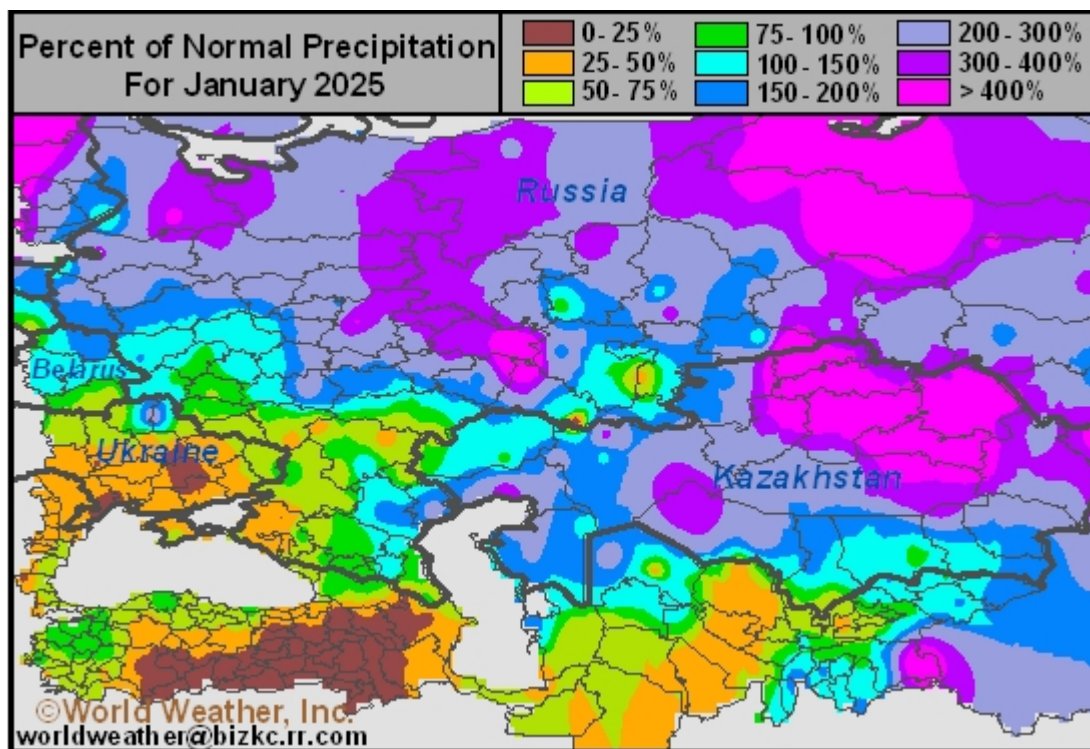


Russia, Ukraine Will Be Warmer Than Usual; No Crop Damage

By Andrew Owen

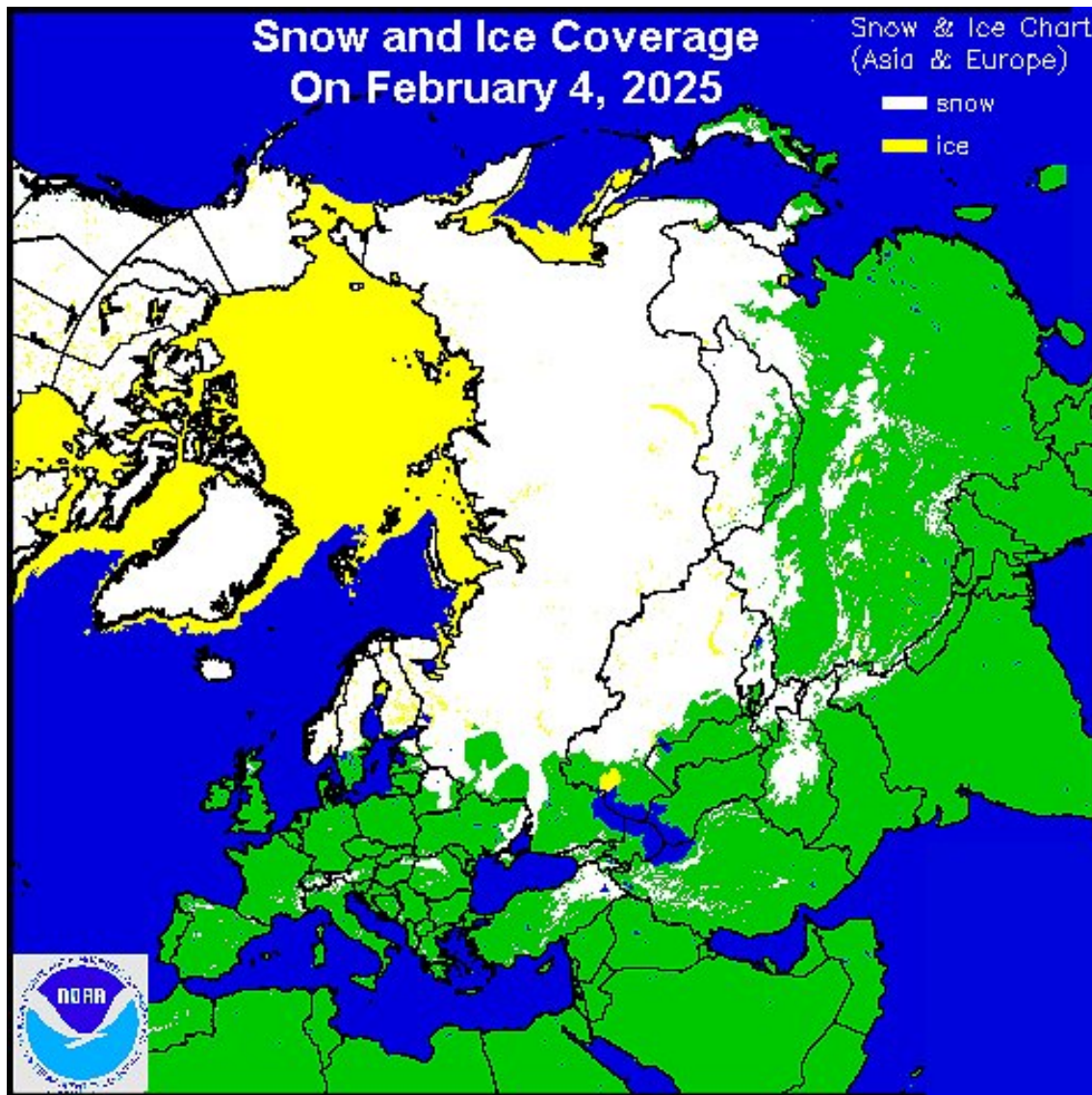
Kansas City, February 5 (World Weather Inc.) – Several areas in Ukraine and portions of Russia's USDA defined 'Southern Region' experienced drier than normal conditions in January. These areas were generally snow-free, leaving winter grains and oilseeds exposed to the weather elements. Precipitation will be limited through at least the middle of next week and snow-free conditions will persist for several fields. However, there is not a significant threat for winterkill as warmer than normal conditions are slated for the snow-free locations. Pockets in western Kazakhstan and southwestern Russia are also snow-free, though no impacts to the crops are expected. The main production areas have ample moisture in the soil to support aggressive growth this spring once seasonal warming brings crops out of dormancy.

A large section of Ukraine and immediate neighboring areas in southwestern Russia into portions of the USDA defined 'Southern Region' in Russia were drier than normal in January. These areas received 25-75% of normal precipitation for the month. The remaining locations in the western Commonwealth of Independent States received near to above normal precipitation with portions of the Ural Mountains region, eastern New Lands, and northern Kazakhstan receiving two to four times normal precipitation.



Soil moisture is rated adequate to excessive in a large section of the western CIS. However, a large portion of Ukraine, the 'Southern Region', and a few locations in southwestern Russia, western Kazakhstan, and Belarus were snow-free as of February 4. Other locations in the western CIS were blanketed by at least a light amount of snow.

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Winter wheat, barley, rye, and rapeseed prospects are generally favorable for the western CIS. The main production areas have enough moisture to support new growth this spring once seasonal warming increases soil temperatures. The main concern going forward in the next few weeks will be the threat for damaging cold in the snow-free areas. As long as snow precedes any colder weather, production potentials will remain favorable across the region.

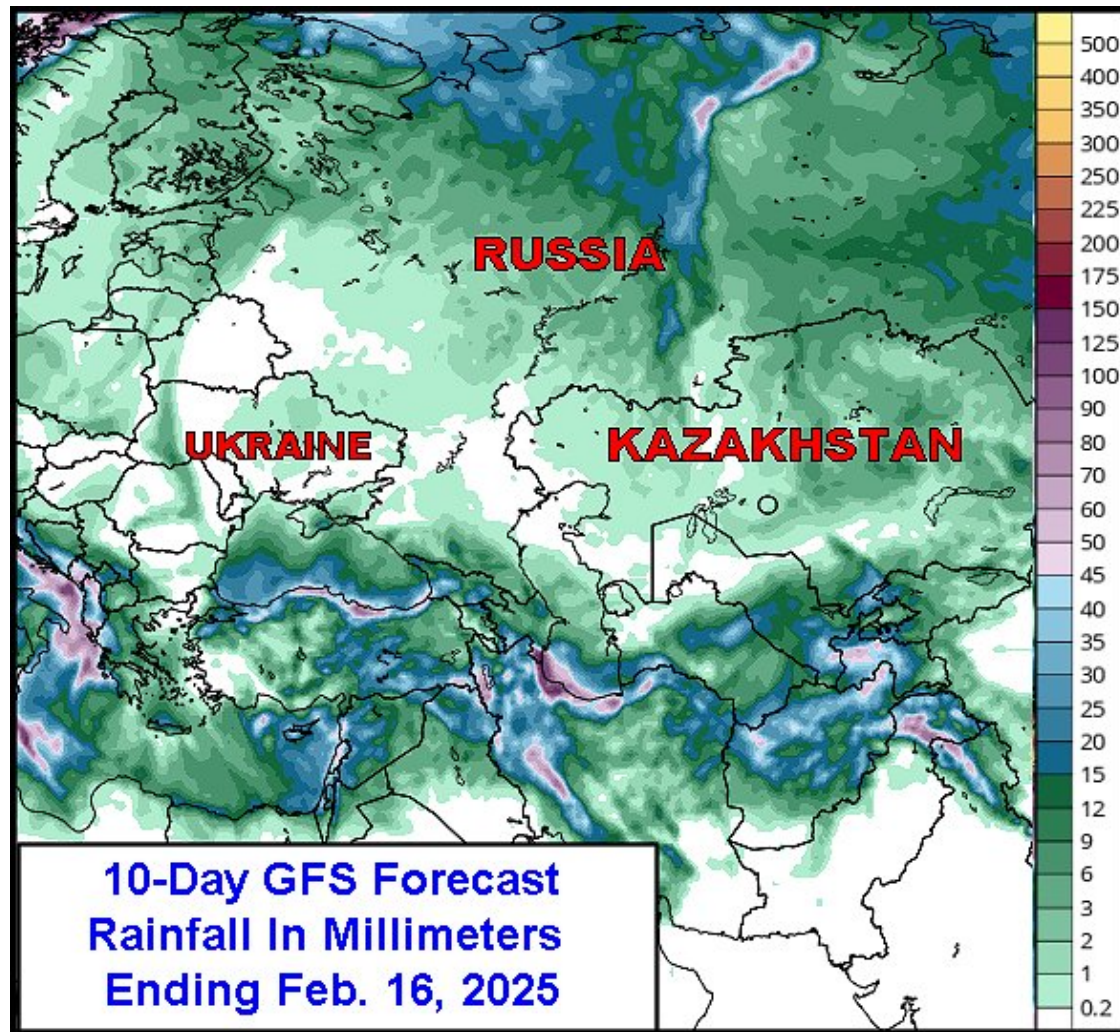
WEATHER OUTLOOK

The western CIS will trend drier than normal through the middle of next week. Higher pressure will extend from Scandinavia into northern Russia most days that will help divert atmospheric disturbances and moisture away from the region. The eastern New Lands, northern Kazakhstan, and neighboring locations, along with southern fringes of the 'Southern Region', will still have a few opportunities for light precipitation. Resulting

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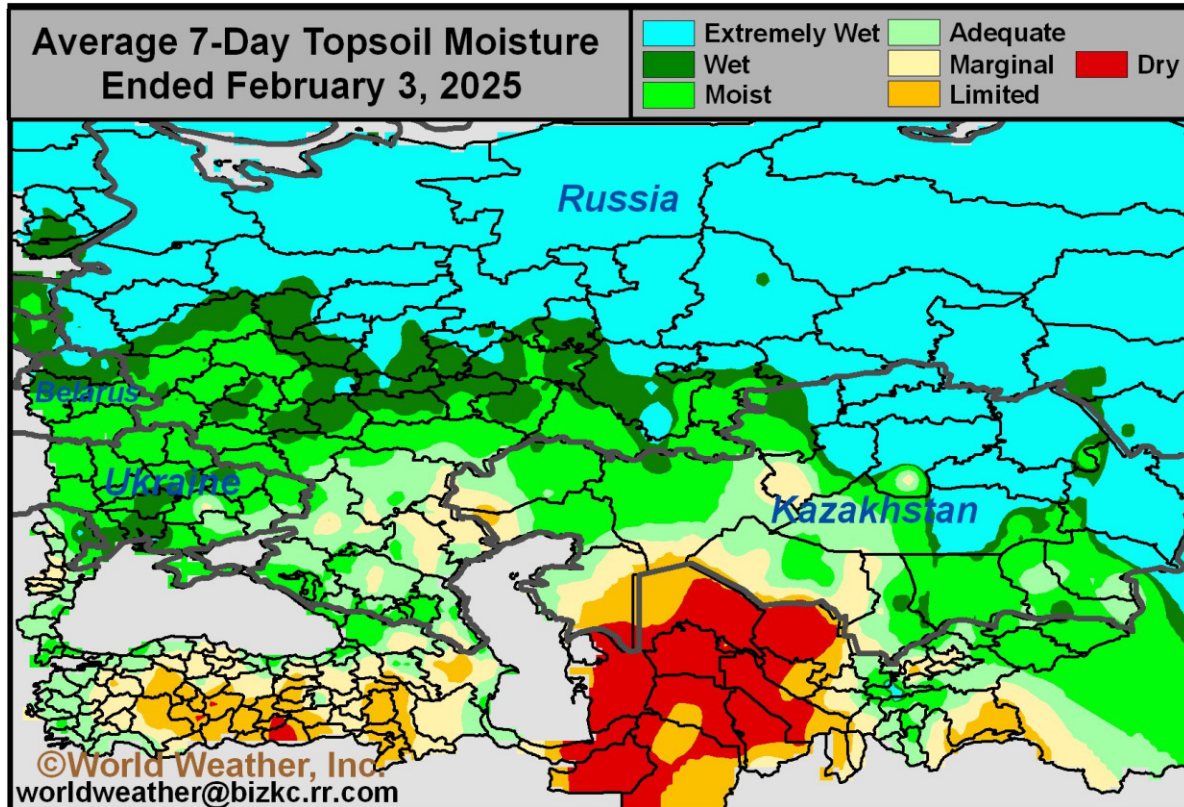
precipitation will be too light to impact long-term soil conditions or significantly bolster snowpack. Periods of light precipitation will then be possible February 13-19 as a trough of low pressure potentially builds over Russia.

Seasonable to seasonably warm weather is slated for the western CIS through next Wednesday. Nighttime low temperatures will remain well above zero degrees Fahrenheit and there is no significant threat for winterkill in the snow-free areas. Areas with snow on the ground may see a net reduction in snowpack, though daytime temperatures will not be warm enough to melt all of the snow. With a trough of low pressure potentially building over Russia February 13-19, temperatures may drop near to below normal for the western CIS.



Winter crop impacts will be minimal through the middle of next week despite the lack of precipitation. Soil moisture will remain mostly unchanged and there will still be ample moisture for the crops this spring. The main concern later this month will be the gradual cooling trend once the trough builds over Russia. There will be opportunities for snow ahead of the coldest weather, which may shield crops from damage in the currently snow-free locations. While confidence is low for the timing and intensity of the cold during the second week of the outlook, a close monitoring of the situation is warranted.

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