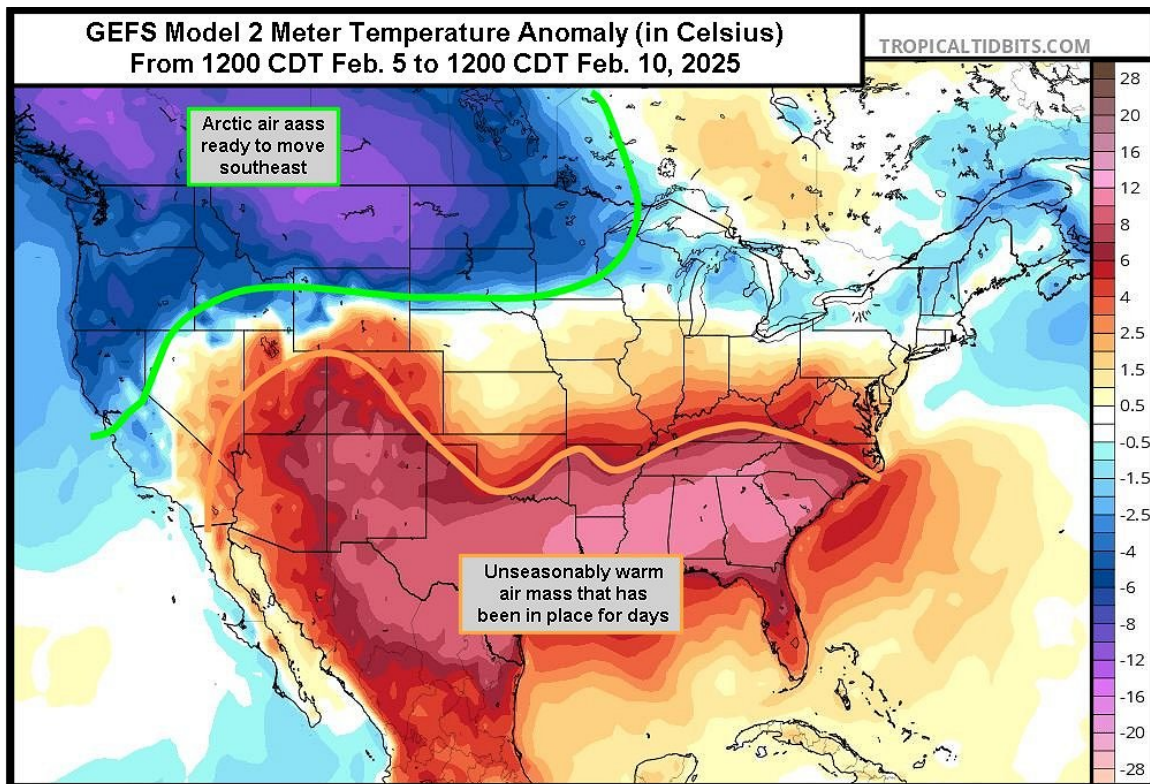


Arctic Air To Move Into U.S. Hard-Red Winter Wheat Region

By Scarlett Waters

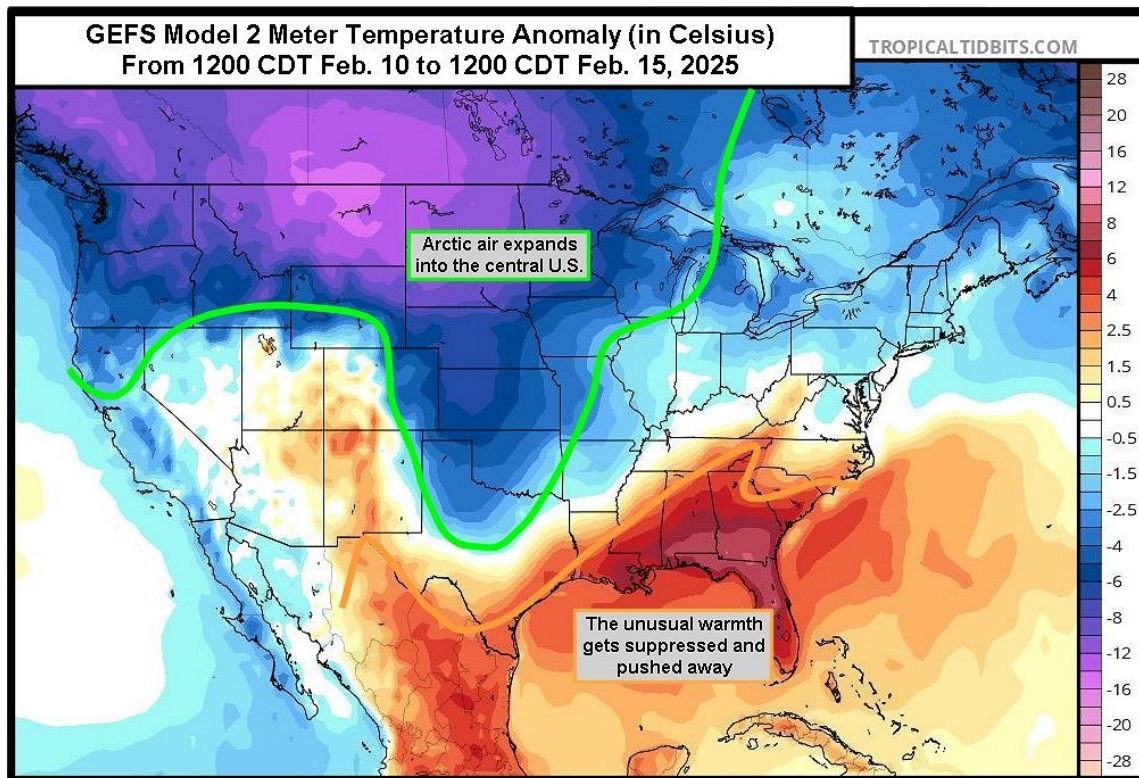
Kansas City, February 6 (World Weather Inc.) – *A bitter cold airmass building up in Canada's Prairies is getting ready to plunge southward and when it does there is likely to be some crop and livestock stress across much of the Great Plains and in a part of the western Midwest where temperatures will trend sharply colder once again after a period of milder weather this week.* The change in air masses will also stimulate some significant snowfall, first in the northern Plains, Great Lakes region and northeastern United States Friday through the weekend and then farther to the south across the central Plains and lower Midwest next week. The snow will help protect winter crops, but livestock stress will be significant in some areas and travel delays should be expected as well.

In the coming days, an arctic airmass will settle over the Canadian Prairies and U.S. Northern Plains, bringing prolonged colder than usual temperatures to these regions through at least late February. In the coming weeks, this airmass will dip further southward into the U.S. Hard-Red Winter wheat region several times with warmer biased temperatures from the south competing with it. The forecast fluctuating temperatures that will result from this battle between the air masses is expected to increase livestock stress and induce some heaving soil conditions in the southern Plains which may lead to some root and tiller damage in wheat production areas. Snow is likely to evolve as the air masses conflict and that should translate into some favorable protection for wheat in the central Plains against possible winterkill especially after recent warm weather reduced winter hardiness.



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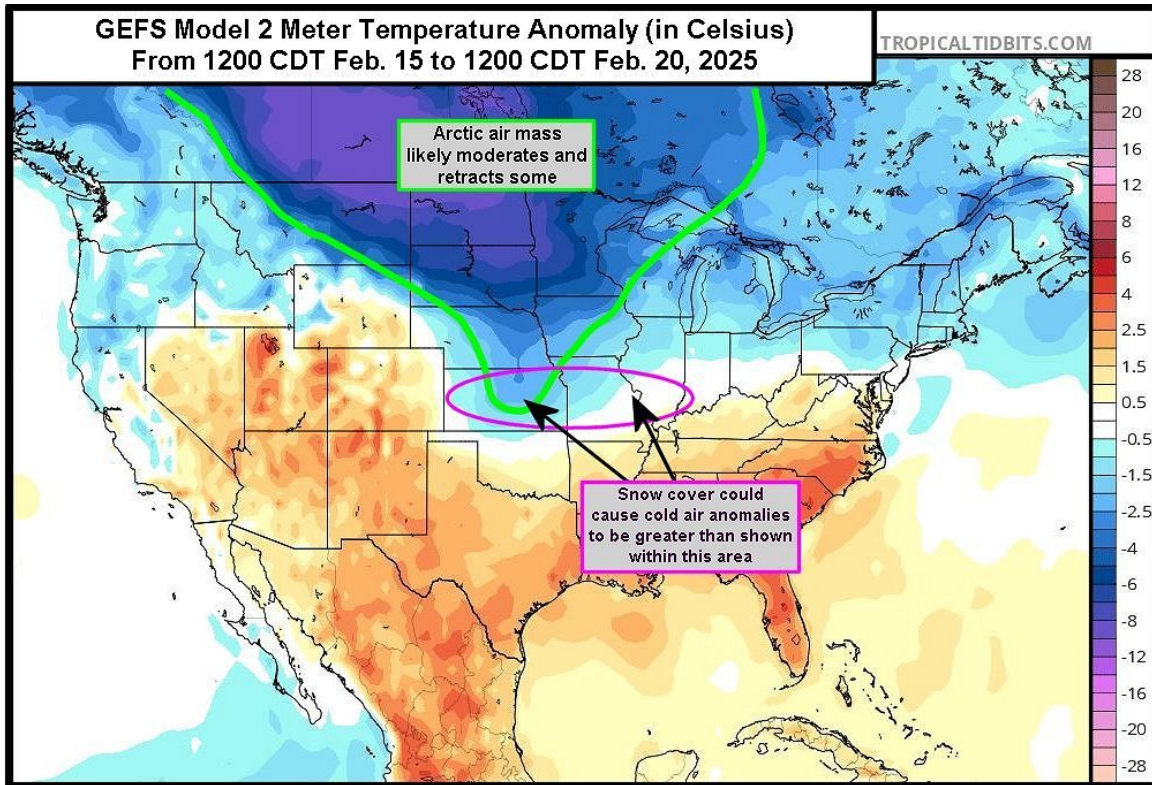
The first wave of cold air will sink into the southern plains beginning Saturday evening into Sunday, where 80 to 90-degree highs Saturday afternoon from Lubbock to Midland will give way to Sunday morning lows in the lower 30s and lower 40s. Areas farther north in Colorado and Kansas will also drop roughly 40 degrees Fahrenheit overnight. This drop in temperatures over a 12-hour period will cause livestock stress. Additionally, wind speeds will increase as this airmass enters the region with sustained wind speeds forecast to vary between 25 and 40 mph. After the initial drop in temperatures this weekend temperatures from Sunday through mid-week next week will continue to gradually cool. By next Wednesday, high temperatures in the Texas Panhandle will be in the upper 20s to lower 40s with lows in the low teens to middle 20s.



A snow event is expected to occur across Kansas, eastern Colorado, Nebraska, the Dakotas, and northern Oklahoma beginning Tuesday morning and will continue into Thursday. This event is currently forecast to bring between 3 to 7 inches of total snow to the affected region. This snow will be important for insulating crops; particularly in Kansas, Nebraska, and northward as morning temperatures are expected to drop near and below zero Fahrenheit when the snow event occurs.

Cold air will continue to linger into the second week of this outlook in the central and northern Plains while warmer biased temperatures return to Texas. Computer weather forecast models are suggesting a second wave of arctic air will surge into the central and southern Plains around the weekend of February 22-23, though this forecast is more than two weeks out in time and is likely to change in the coming days. If this cold surge verifies, a similar round of sharply decreasing temperatures may induce livestock stress and soil heaving in the southern plains. Areas in the northern Plains into the Canadian Prairies will largely remain 10 to 30 degrees Fahrenheit below average through late February.

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There is much talk in the commodity trade and weather circles about **Stratospheric Warming** and more bitter cold into North America and Europe because of a Split Polar Vortex. **Be extra cautious here, there may be a little too much hype for this event.** Most likely the stratospheric warming event will mostly perpetuate the pattern of cold weather already present across much of North America in late February and March. The jury is still out on how much cold will be forced to the ground from the stratosphere and how much colder the air will be than it is predicted to be next week. Most likely the primary byproduct of the event will be to prolong the colder bias rather than make it notably more intense, but some of that was already in the forecast cards before this stratospheric warming event began.

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