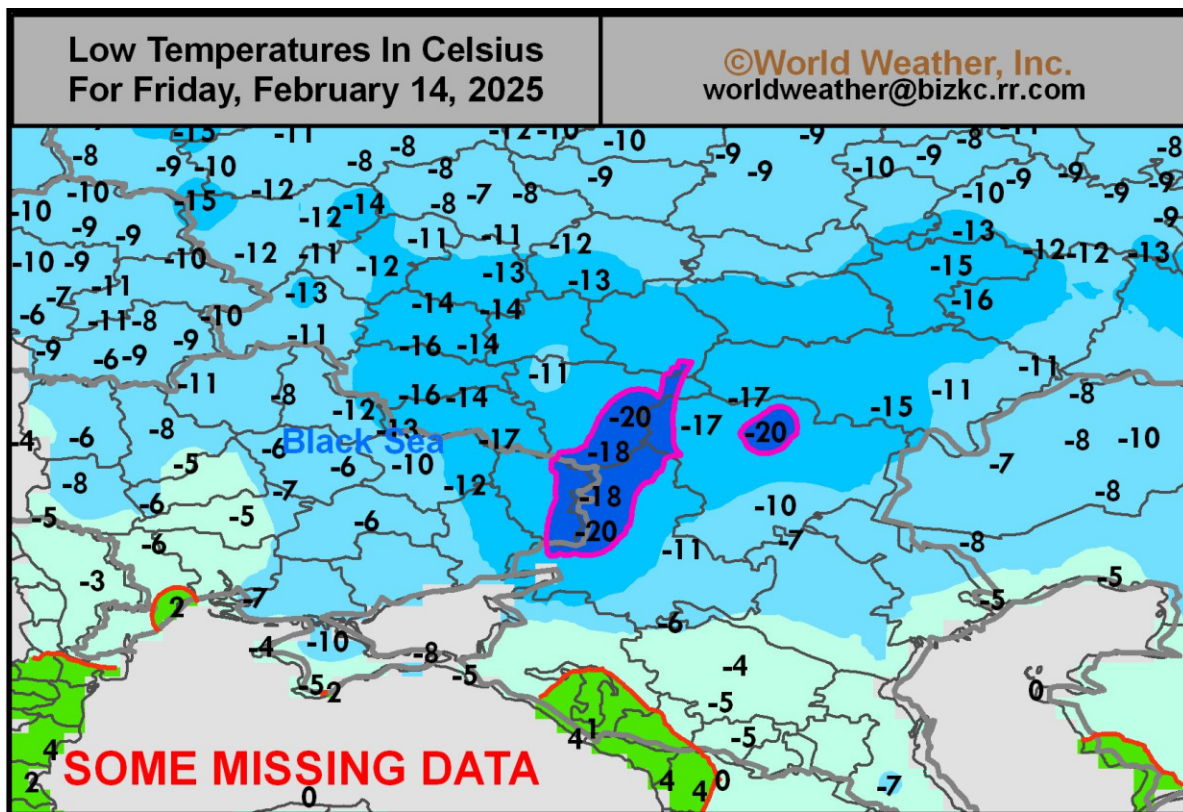


Russian Winter Wheat Will Mostly Be Safe From Damaging Cold

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, February 14 (World Weather Inc.) – While pockets in Russia's Volga River Basin and neighboring locations saw temperatures dip near or below zero degrees Fahrenheit this morning, the coldest areas were blanketed by snow. No damage to winter grains or oilseeds was suspected. Snow and slightly warmer air will shift into portions of the western Commonwealth of Independent States today and Saturday before colder air returns later this weekend and most days next week. Nighttime low temperatures will again drop near or below zero degrees in portions of crop country and this weekend's snow event should help bolster snowpack ahead of the cold. Crop damage will likely be minimal as the main areas will be covered by snow or will not see damaging cold weather.

A few pockets in Russia's Volga River Basin and potentially eastern fringes of Ukraine saw temperatures drop as low as -4 degrees Fahrenheit this morning. Other locations in the western Commonwealth of Independent States cooled to the positive single digits or teens this morning with portions of the USDA defined 'Southern Region' in Russia and portions of western Ukraine only cooling to the 20s.

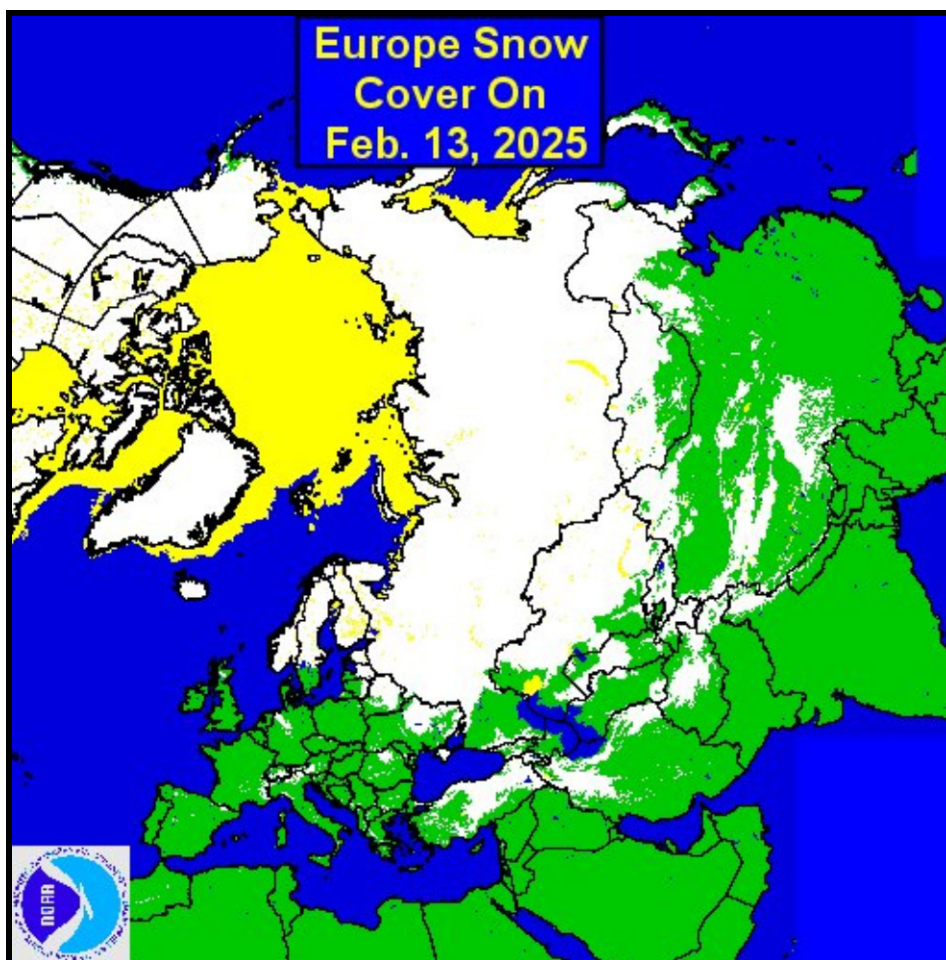


As of February 13, portions of the 'Southern Region', western Ukraine, and pockets in western Kazakhstan were snow-free or had minimal snow on the ground. Other winter grain and oilseed production areas in the western CIS were generally blanketed by snow.

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The pockets that experienced damaging cold weather this morning were generally blanketed by snow. No winterkill was suspected for the winter wheat, barley, rye, and rapeseed.

There is still potential for improvements for the winter grains and oilseeds across the western CIS despite several crops establishing poorly this past autumn. Timely precipitation over the winter will help bolster topsoil moisture this spring once seasonal warming melts the snow. The main concern will be that some of the moisture may not reach subsoil levels. As long as there is no winterkill prior to spring and wet weather evolves late this winter or early this spring, the environment for crop improvements will be good. Production potentials remain less than ideal due to the poor conditions when the crops were planted.



The main production areas in the western CIS will have a few opportunities for precipitation through the end of next week. A disturbance will bring precipitation to much of the region today and Saturday. Precipitation will be limited later this weekend into next week, though some light snow flurries will still occur. Moisture totals by next Friday morning will range from 0.10 to 0.50 inch with local amounts up to 1.00 inch in eastern Ukraine and portions of southwestern Russia. Pockets in the 'Southern Region' will also receive 0.50 to 1.50 inches of moisture with precipitation generally falling as rain. Other production areas will see precipitation fall as snow or a wintry mixture. Accumulations will

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range from a dusting to 3 inches with local amounts of 4 inches or slightly more in eastern Ukraine and southwestern Russia. Much of the western CIS will again have a few opportunities for mostly light precipitation February 22 – 28.

Warmer air ahead of today and Saturday's disturbance will briefly shift into the western CIS. However, a cold air mass will begin spread across the region Sunday and remain through the end of next week. Nighttime lows Sunday and next week will drop to the positive single digits and teens for much of the western CIS with portions of the Volga River Basin, northeastern Ukraine, western Kazakhstan, and neighboring locations cooling below zero degrees on a frequent basis. The temperature profile will trend closer to normal February 22 – 28 and the threat for damaging cold weather will decrease.

Winterkill should be minimal for the western CIS Sunday and next week. The main production areas will generally be blanketed by snow during the coldest periods, though minor damage will be possible in western Kazakhstan. The 'Southern Region' will also not experience any damaging cold weather despite the region trending colder than usual as long as snow falls as expected.

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