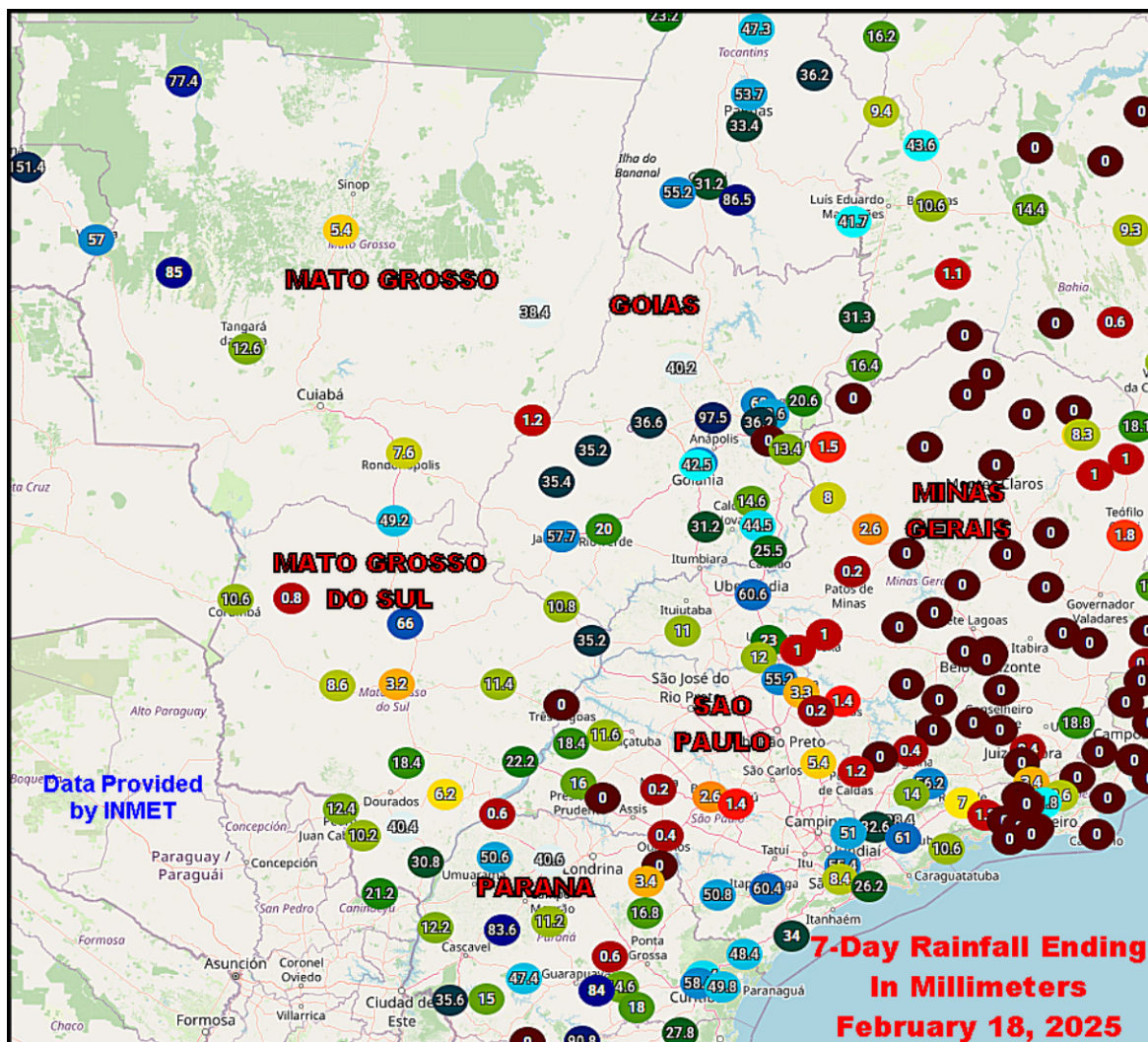


Brazil Moisture Profile May Not Be Ideal At End of Rainy Season

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, February 18 (World Weather Inc.) – An unexpected ridge of high pressure impacted Brazil grain, oilseed, coffee, citrus and sugarcane weather in the past couple of weeks ending a very wet period and bringing on a bout of much drier weather. The ridge is unlikely to hold in place long enough to make dryness a chronic problem; however, *the diminishing influence of La Nina is having an impact too and that change may reduce some of the rainfall that was previously expected. As a result, the next 30 days of precipitation in center west and center south Brazil will be a little lighter than usual which “may” leave soil moisture a little lighter than usual when the rainy season ends in April.*

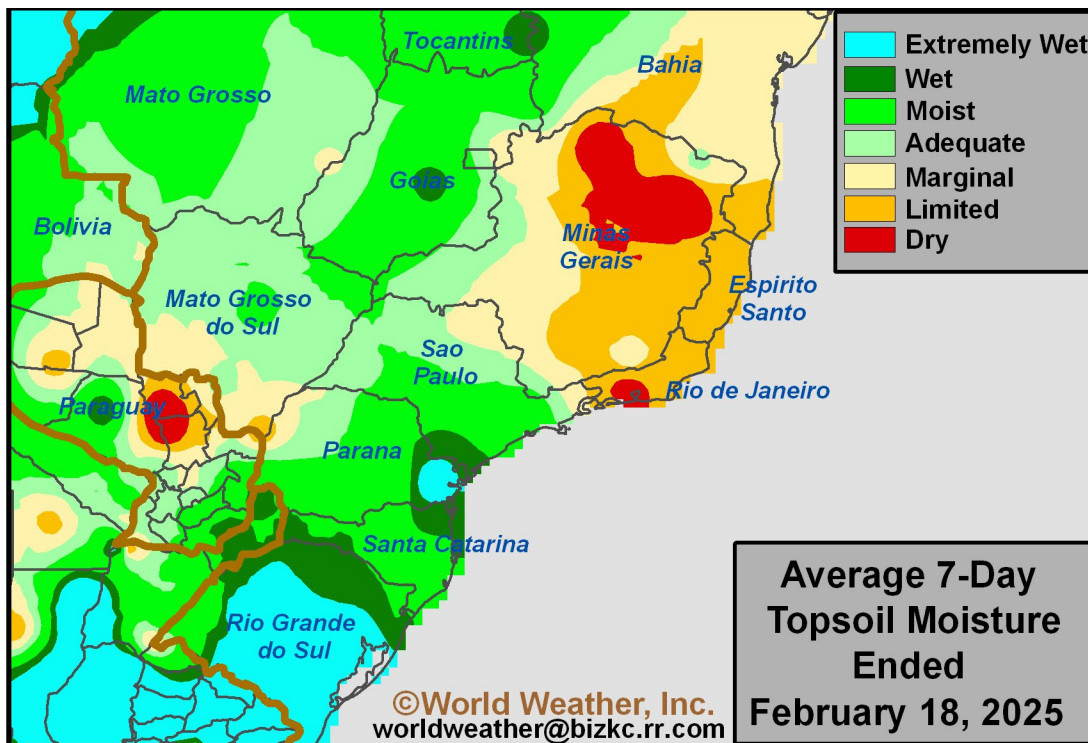


Rainfall lightened up beneficially in Brazil corn, soybean, rice and cotton areas during the the past couple of weeks with rainfall in this past week finally getting low enough that some net drying occurred in parts of center west and center south crop country. Drying was needed after weeks of excessive rain slowing fieldwork and crop

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maturation rates. The change in weather occurred in sufficient time to induce some aggressive field progress with the harvest of early soybeans in Mato Grosso jumping 20 percentage points between February 9 and February 16. World Weather, Inc. believes that the combination of improving weather and early soybeans finally reaching fully maturity has brought on the aggressive field progress. Producers also know that rain is being advertised again for next week and if the bulk of harvesting and Safrinha planting is not done by the end of this month the potential for big cuts on corn production will rise.

CONAB reported that Safrinha corn planting was 43.3% done on Feb. 16 which was up from 20.8% on Feb. 9, but down from last year when 67.1% of the crop was planted. Much of the delay in harvesting is because of delayed planting and not so much the recent rainy weather, although that was a factor as well.



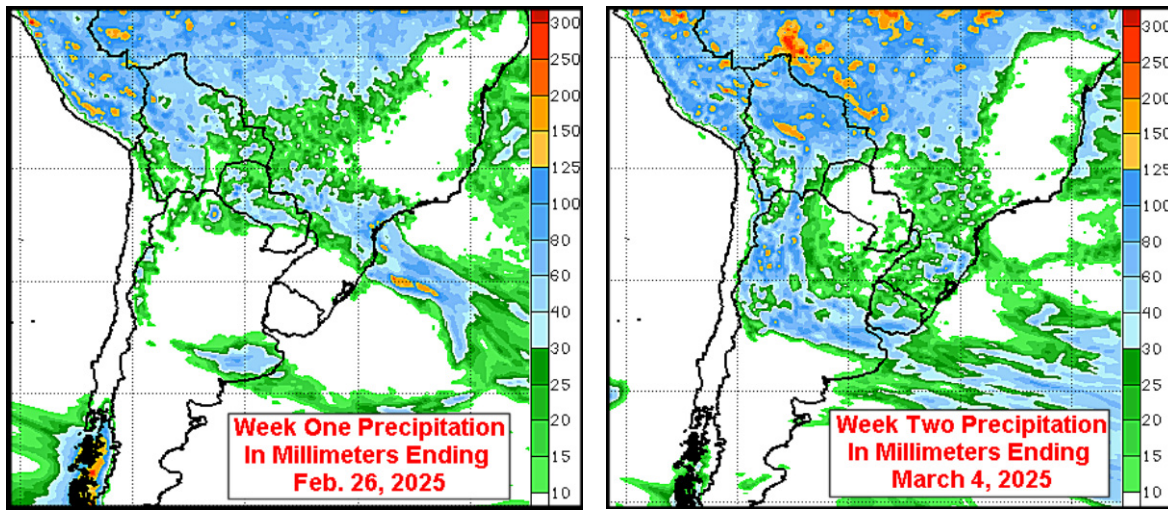
The latest topsoil moisture assessment clearly shows the improvement in field conditions in Mato Grosso. A week or two ago the ground was saturated with moisture down deep into the subsoil and the situation has improved and it is likely to improve additionally in this coming week due to more limited rainfall in parts of the Safrinha crop region.

Generally speaking, Safrinha corn planting for the nation was 35.7% done compared to 45.3% last year. Many states are reporting Safrinha planting to be advancing faster than last year with Mato Grosso the primary exception. Mato Grosso produces nearly half of the Safrinha corn and the majority of Safrinha cotton. Safrinha cotton planting was 96% done Feb. 16 compared to 99% last year and Mato Grosso was 95.8% done compared to 86% last week and 100% in 2024.

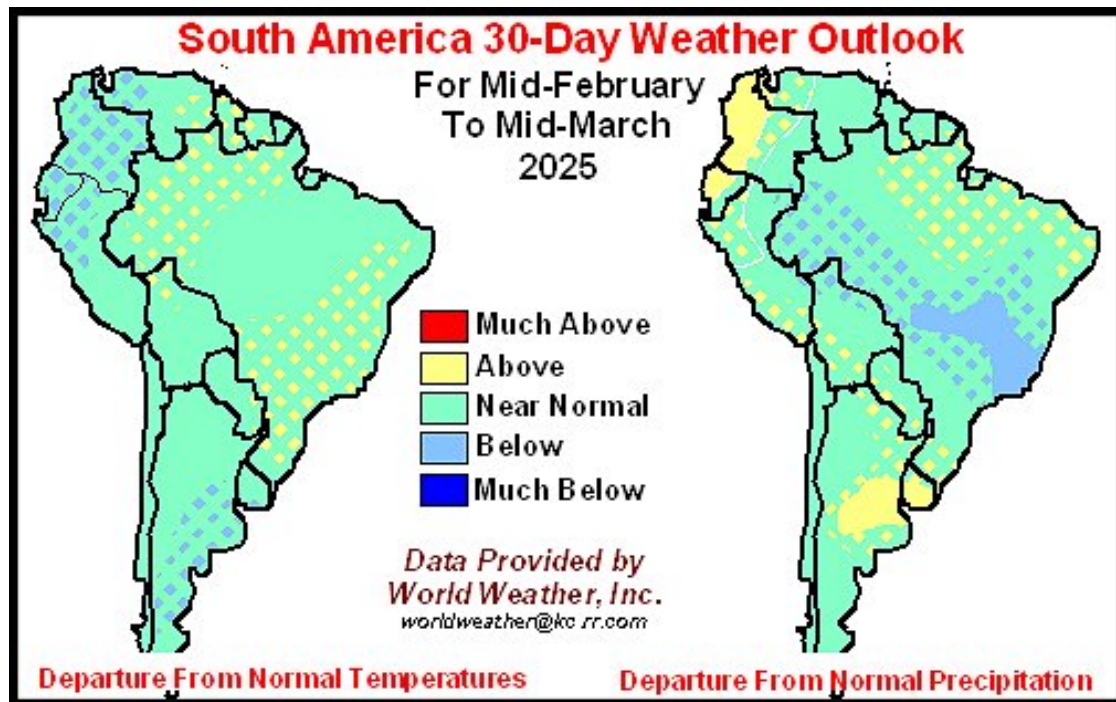
Most computer forecast models have suggested sporadic and light rainfall during the coming week. Totally dry weather is unlikely, but the showers that evolve are expected

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to be brief and light enough to promote another week of aggressive fieldwork. Some increase in rainfall is then expected in the following week.



The weather pattern predicted will be ideal if most of the fieldwork can get done in this coming week, but that will take a lot of work and the weather must cooperate. In the meantime, the longer range weather outlook after Safrinha crops are planted, emerged and established will be crucial in determining production potential. Any dry and warm weather that occurs prior to reproduction and filling could be a threat to yields especially if subsoil conditions are not saturated with moisture when the monsoon ends.



It is imperative for the ground to be completely saturated with moisture after the rainy season ends because that is the moisture that Safrinha corn and cotton will feed upon

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to support reproduction and filling. The normal withdrawal dates for seasonal rain are mostly in April and if rainfall is lighter than usual and/or they it ends earlier than usual there may be some threat to Safrinha crop yields. *The latest forecast data is trending a little lighter than usual for rainfall during the next 30 days. Completely dry conditions are not likely, but there will be need for more abundant rain through April to provide the best environment for Safrinha crops to reproduce and fill normally.*

In a normal summer, Safrinha crops are planted in late January and early to mid-February and the rainy season occurs through April resulting in saturated field conditions when the rainy season ends. Late season crops then reproduce and fill using subsoil moisture to sustain normal growth and development. This year's soil moisture may not be as saturated as it is in some years which could lead to moisture stress during reproduction and filling. *That is only speculation at this point in time, although the 30-day outlook through mid-March does not provide much reason to anticipate greater than usual rain. The combination of timely rain and seasonably warm temperatures could leave some production areas a little dry.*

The drier forecast for coffee, citrus and sugarcane areas is probably more of a concern than it is for Safrinha corn and cotton since some of these areas are already too dry. There is plenty of time for improved rainfall, although the odds do favor lighter than usual precipitation into April especially in southern and eastern Minas Gerais and areas north into Bahia.

Sao Paulo sugarcane and coffee crops may need to be most closely watched in the next few weeks since they are drying out most aggressively today. World Weather, Inc. anticipates some timely rainfall soon, though it is difficult to say if the rain will be sufficient enough to restore the best production potentials or not.

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