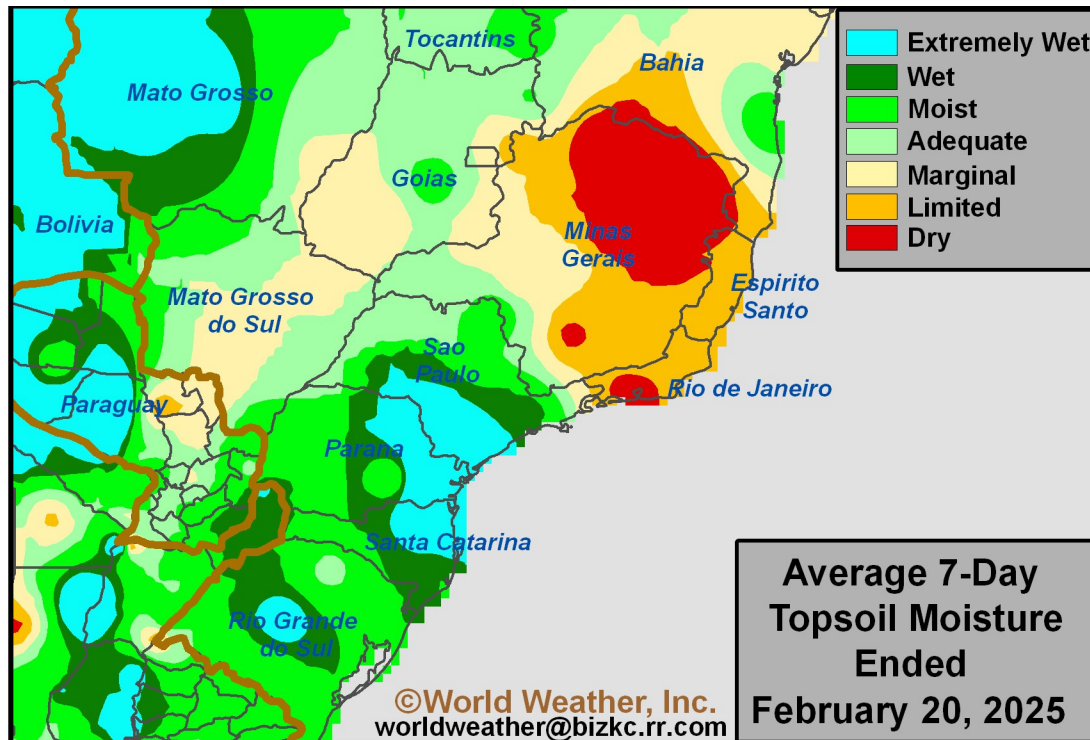


Brazil Coffee Areas Drying Out; Limited Relief Likely

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, February 20 (World Weather Inc.) – Brazil's most important Robusta coffee production areas of Sul de Minas, Cerrado Mineiro and Zona da Mata have been steadily drying down recently and there is not much reason to expect big changes for a while. The recent commodity market trade frenzy for coffee may not have had much to do with the weather, but weather is certainly playing into the bullishness right now and the influence may continue for at least the next ten days



Some timely rain has occurred recently in eastern Bahia's cocoa and coffee areas, but it was not very great and only a few areas near the central coast received enough rain to ease recent drying. The most aggressive dry down this week has been from northern and central Sul de Minas production areas into northeastern Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo. Irrigation is available to some of the crops in Bahia and Espirito Santo, but Sul de Minas, Cerrado Mineiro and Zona da Mata production areas are much more dependent upon frequent rainfall during the growing season to support the best yields and crop quality.

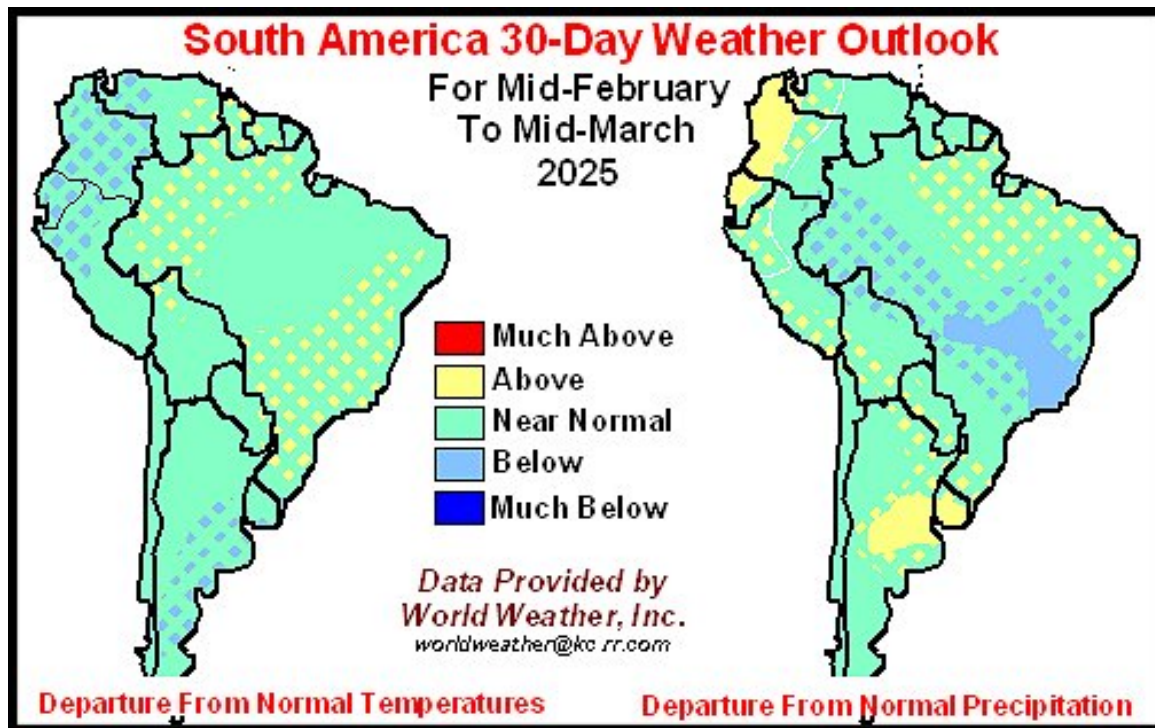
Rainfall and soil moisture had been sufficient most of the growing season since the start of flowering in late October and early November. Cherry setting and development likely advanced well, but the recent downturn in rainfall has been ongoing for a couple of weeks and in some areas a little longer. The ground is just now getting dry enough to stress crops and temperatures this week have been ebbing their way above normal.

Recent rain has been sufficient in Sao Paulo and extreme southern Sul de Minas as well as parts of Parana to support coffee development, despite the lighter than usual intensity. Areas to the north, however, have not seen much rain and have been dominated

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by a ridge of high pressure aloft and it is unlikely to change greatly for the next ten days and possibly two weeks.

The dry and warm bias in coffee areas will prevail resulting in rising crop stress from the central and northern parts of Sul de Minas through Zona da Mata and Cerrado Mineiro into interior parts of Bahia. That will induce some significant late season crop stress that will result in lower cherry and eventual bean quality. The harvest which begins in May could be reduced by poor rainfall if there is not significant improvement in rainfall during March and April.



The rainfall outlook for March is lighter than usual across the same coffee areas that are driest today. Totally dry weather is unlikely, but when rain falls it may be more brief and lighter than usual perpetuating the low moisture profile and continuing speculation of crop quality and yield.

A close watch on the situation is warranted. A few analog years have suggested an erratic rainfall pattern through the balance of the rainy season which might impact production for this year. There might also be an impact on the 2025-26 crop season if the soil is drier than usual when the rainy season ends this year. That could lead to greater tree stress prior flowering in September and October which “might” have some impact on next year’s production. All of these comments are highly speculative and much caution is advised in using the data provided here. However, the near term outlook does keep precipitation limited and temperatures warm which may leave speculation of the crop running high at least for a while longer.

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