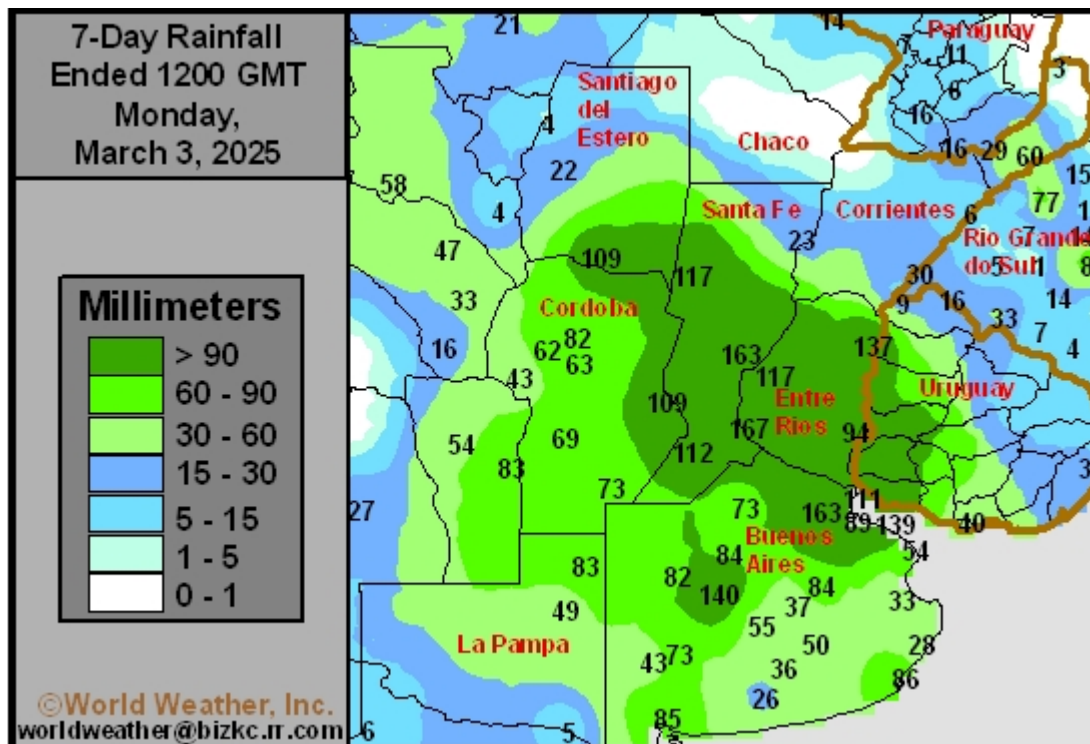


Argentina Crops Improving; More Rain On The Way

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, March 3 (World Weather Inc.) – *Waves of rain inundated Argentina's Pampas farming region during the past week. The rain greatly increased soil moisture for areas that were previously struggling with drought.* Soybeans, corn, and other crops that are still developing likely benefitted significantly from the rain. *Early season crops that were maturing and ready for harvest experienced delays in fieldwork because of too much moisture and a sunseed quality issue has likely developed because of the rain.* Additional rain is expected through Saturday. *The rain will continue to promote a better environment for some late-season development; although, portions of Buenos Aires, Entre Rios, and neighboring locations will be too wet for ideal late-season development and early-season maturation and harvesting.*

Significant rain was noted in much of central and southern Argentina during the past week. Entre Rios, central and southern Santa Fe, eastern Cordoba, southern Santiago del Estero, and northern Buenos Aires received 2.87 to 6.57 inches of rain for the seven-day period ending this morning. Other locations in Buenos Aires and Cordoba into La Pampa and San Luis received 1.42 to 3.35 inches of rain. Northern Santa Fe and central Santiago del Estero into southern Corrientes received up to 0.91 inch of rain. Other locations in northern Argentina received little to no rain.

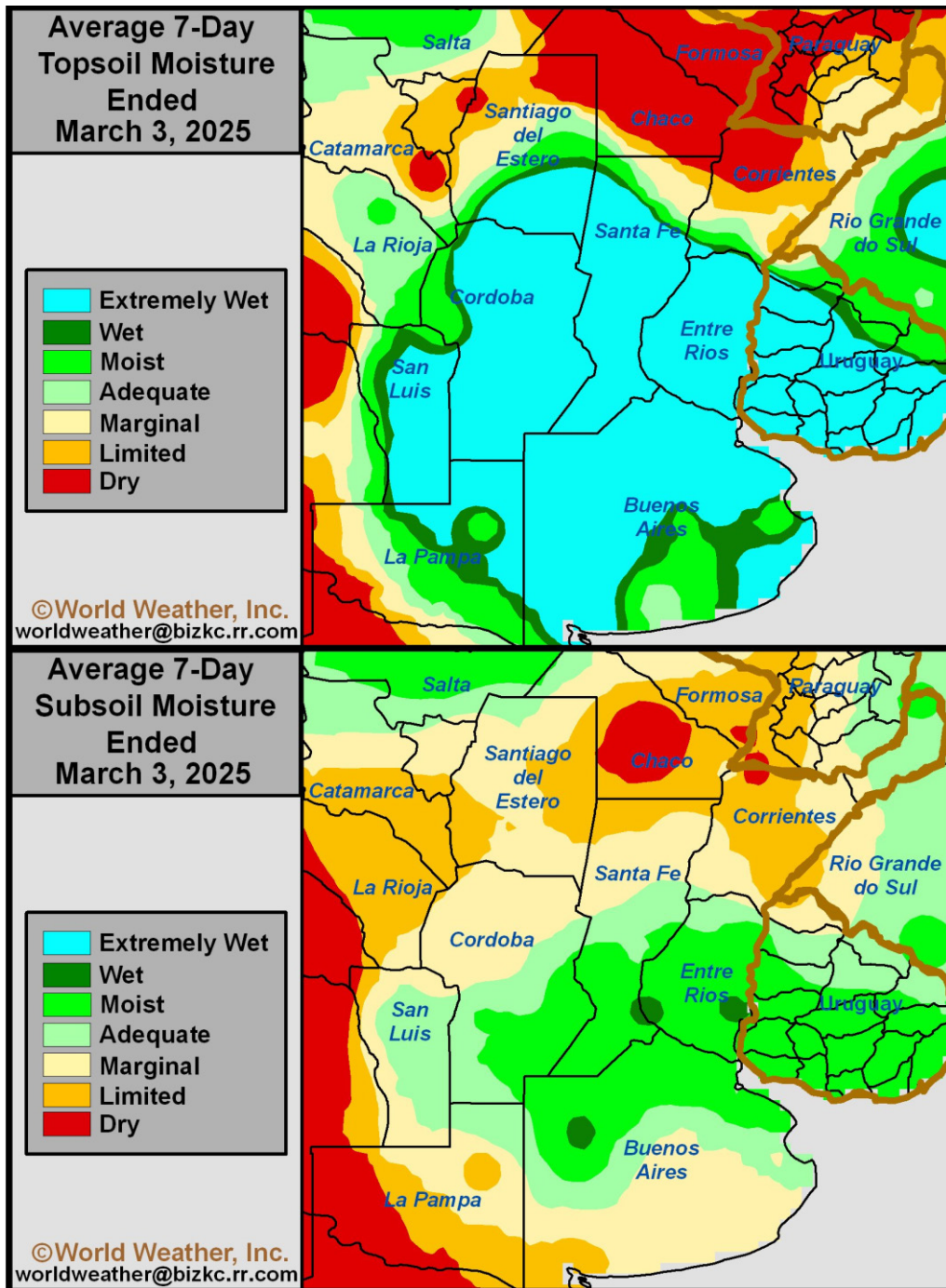


Northern Argentina (which was dry during the past week) saw temperatures surge above normal during the past week with highest readings climbing above 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures were milder farther to the south with highest readings in the 80s and lower 90s, though temperatures were cooler during periods of more significant rain.

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Lowest temperatures were in the 60s and 70s in the northern half of crop country and the 50s and 60s in the southern half.

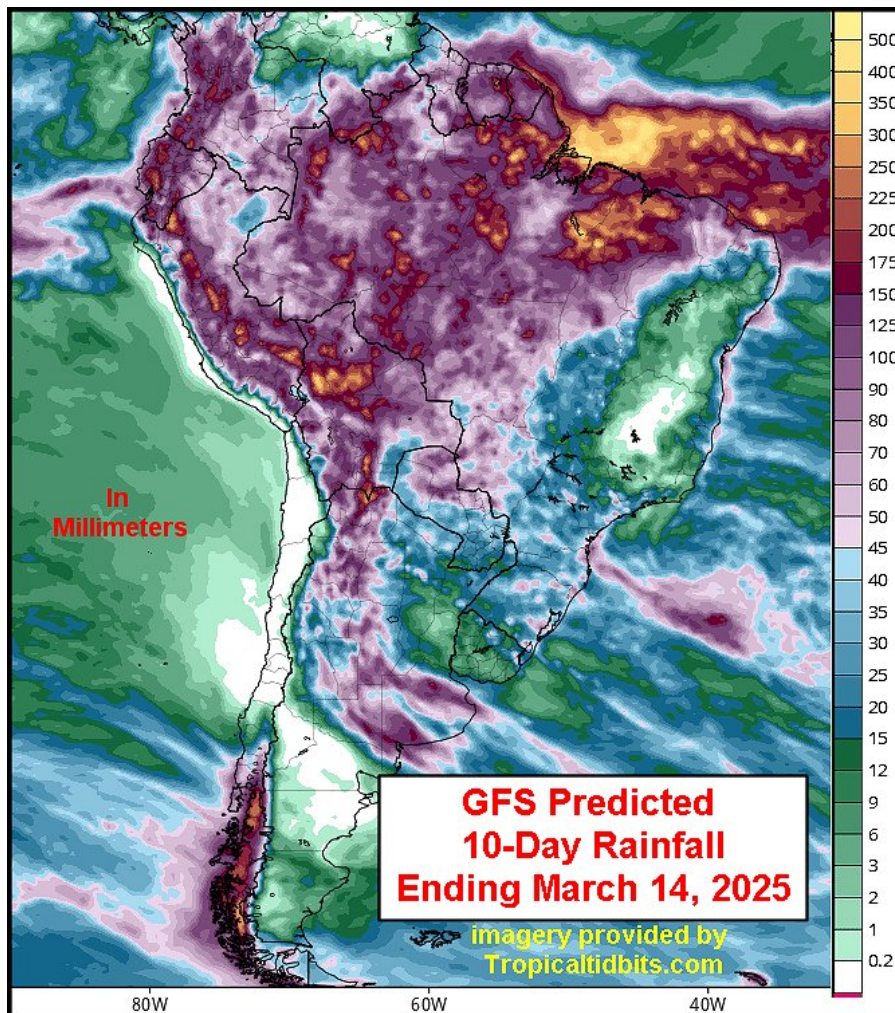
Recent rainfall helped lift topsoil moisture to adequate or excessive levels in much of central and southern Argentina. ***Subsoil moisture was rated adequate or marginally adequate in the heart of the nation's most important crop areas today while northern Argentina continued to have a shortage of moisture and considerable crop stress as a result of it.***



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Sunseed and rice harvesting is ongoing in Argentina. As of February 27, rice harvesting was 29% complete, well ahead of 3% this time last year. Sunseed harvesting was 20% complete, down slightly from 21% this time last year. Most other crops were still developing or maturing.

Late-season crop improvement occurred in much of the Pampas farming region from recent rain. Some areas have become too wet recently since the recovery from drought began a few weeks ago and the ground is becoming too wet. Early season corn and sunseed maturation and harvesting were delayed by recent rain and the quality of some sunseed crops had deteriorated greatly. Late season crops have been reproducing and filling recently and those are the crops that have benefited most from recent rain. Some improved yield potential has likely evolved because of recent rain, although production cuts from dryness earlier in the year may not be fully reversible.



WEATHER OUTLOOK

The Pampas farming region will see a good mix of rain and dry weather this week. A disturbance will initially promote scattered showers and thunderstorms for southern Argentina and portions of Cordoba, Santa Fe, and Entre Rios today and Tuesday. Southern

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fringes of crop country in La Pampa and Buenos Aires will receive rain Wednesday and Thursday while areas farther north receive little to no rain. A strong frontal boundary will then promote more widespread precipitation Friday and Saturday before drier weather evolves Sunday. Moisture totals by next Monday morning will range from 0.75 to 3.00 inches and local amounts over 4.00 inches in Buenos Aires, La Pampa, Cordoba, San Luis, and southern sections of Santa Fe and Entre Rios. Other locations in Santa Fe and Entre Rios into Santiago del Estero will receive 0.25 to 1.50 inches of rain with locally greater amounts. Most other locations in northern Argentina will receive 0.10 to 0.50 inch of rain.

Drier-than-normal weather is then slated for much of crop country March 11 – 17.

The temperature profile will trend near to above normal across Argentina early this week despite the waves of rain. Northern Argentina will warm to a range of 90 to 105 degrees through Friday before highs settle to the 80s and 90s this weekend and early next week. Central and southern Argentina will warm to the 70s and 80s most days with portions of central Argentina warming to the 90s through Friday. Pockets in far southern Argentina will only warm to the 60s. Low temperatures will be in the 60s and 70s through Saturday. Lows will dip to the 50s and 60s Sunday and next Monday with pockets in the south cooling to the 40s. The temperature profile will drop near or slightly below normal March 11 – 17.

Additional rain this week will either improve or continue to promote a good environment for late-season corn, soybean, and other crop development in areas that are not already too wet. For the wettest areas, though, drying is needed and more concern will evolve over sunseed quality. Harvesting of sunseed, rice, and other early-season crops will either be on hold or advance very slowly until drier weather evolves this weekend and next week. The reduction in rain during the second week of the outlook will promote a better environment for maturation and early-season harvesting.

Northern Argentina will likely remain too dry for ideal late-season development and additional rain will be needed later this month.

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