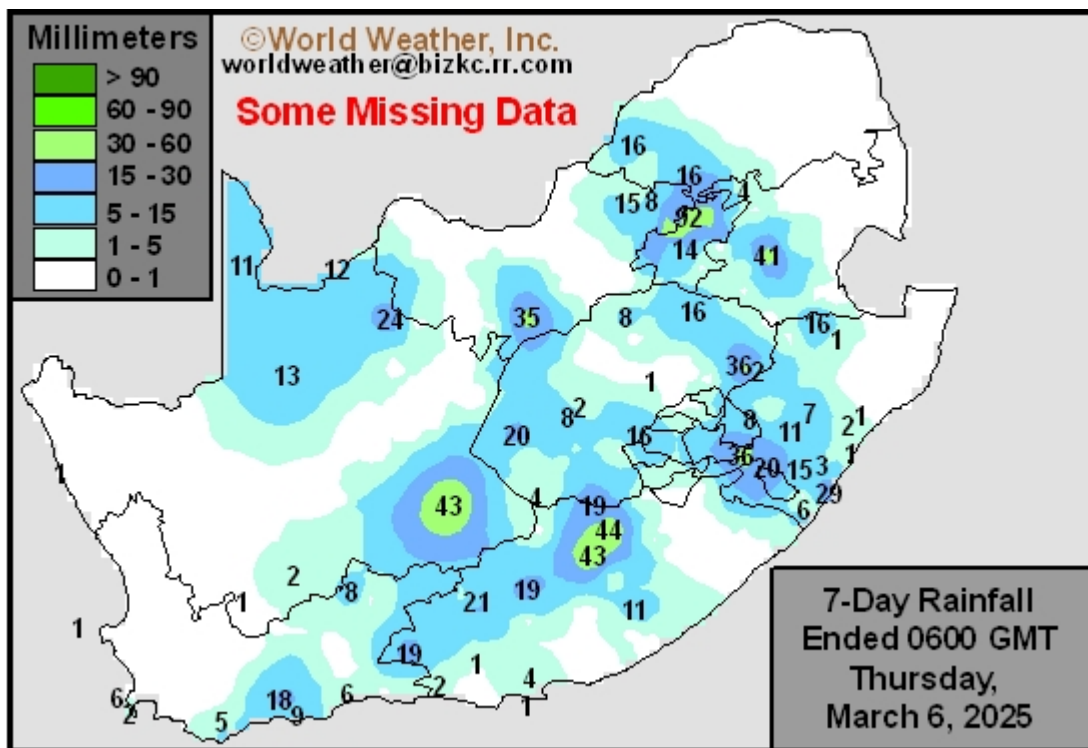


South Africa Weather Still Good For Late Season Crops

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, March 6 (World Weather Inc.) – Rain was scattered across South Africa’s main summer grain, oilseed and cotton production areas during the past week. The rain helped maintain a good environment for aggressive crop development, although a few unirrigated fields in the northwest continued a little too dry. Some peanut harvesting may be underway; though, the bulk harvesting for all crops will occur in from Late April through mid-winter. South Africa will see a good mix of rain and dry weather during the coming week. *Rainfall will help keep soil moisture at favorable levels for aggressive development. Yield potentials will remain favorable except possibly in a few dryland production areas in the northwest where low soil moisture has prevailed this summer.*

Rain was often scattered across the main production areas in eastern and central South Africa and Northern Cape during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.32 to 1.73 inches, though some data was likely missing. One location in Gauteng also reported 3.62 inches of rain.

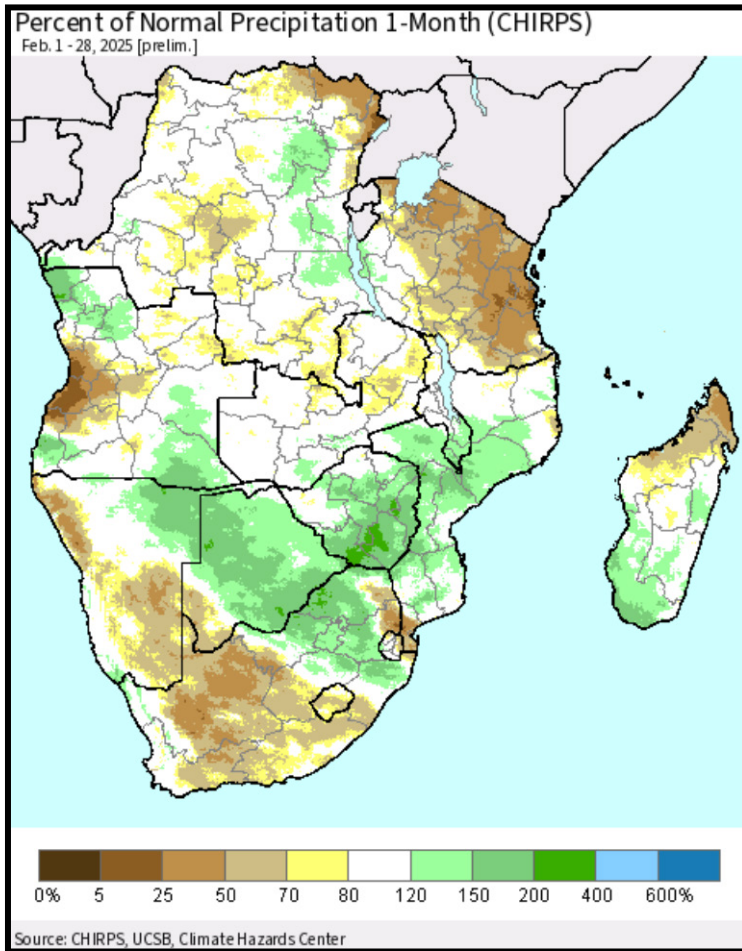


Temperatures were warm during the past week with daytime highs often reaching the 70s and 80s Fahrenheit in the main production areas. Western South Africa and pockets in central and eastern South Africa warmed to the 90s during drier periods as well. Low temperatures were often in the 50s and 60s with pockets only cooling to the 70s at times.

The main production areas from Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Gauteng into northern and central Natal, the eastern half of Free State, and much of North West generally received near or above normal rainfall in February. Southern Natal, western Free State, and most locations in Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, and Western Cape were drier than usual, though

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timely precipitation was still suspected in portions of crop country in western Free State and neighboring locations.



Waves of erratic rain in recent weeks helped bolster or keep soil moisture at adequate or excessive levels in the main summer grain, oilseed, and cotton areas of South Africa.

The precipitation helped support aggressive growth for most locations. Timely precipitation has occurred for much of the growing season and yield potentials are favorable. The early planted crops may begin maturing late this month and early April and timely rain is still needed in the coming weeks to maintain a good outlook for the crops.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

South Africa will see a good mix of erratic rain and dry weather during the coming week. Light rain will initially be

scattered across a few locations today. A disorganized disturbance will promote scattered showers and thunderstorms Friday into Tuesday with the main band slowly advancing from west to east across the country. Spotty rain will likely persist Wednesday, mainly in eastern South Africa. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range from 0.75 to 3.00 inches with local amounts of 4.00 inches or slightly more in Natal, Mpumalanga, and Eastern Cape. Western Cape and portions of western and southern Northern Cape will also receive little or no rain. Much of South Africa will again have several opportunities for rain March 14 – 20.

Seasonable to seasonably warm weather is slated for South Africa through next Thursday. Daytime highs will peak to the 70s and 80s with many areas in western South Africa often warming to the 90s. Pockets in eastern South Africa will also only warm to the 60s during periods of more significant rain this weekend and next week. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s with pockets in eastern South Africa and Northern Cape only cooling to the 70s at times. The temperature profile will then drop near or even slightly below normal March 14 – 20.

Additional rainfall in the coming weeks will keep soil moisture at adequate to excessive levels in a large section of South Africa's crop country. The environment will remain favorable for aggressive coarse grain, oilseed, cotton, and other crop development. Yield potentials will remain favorable.

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