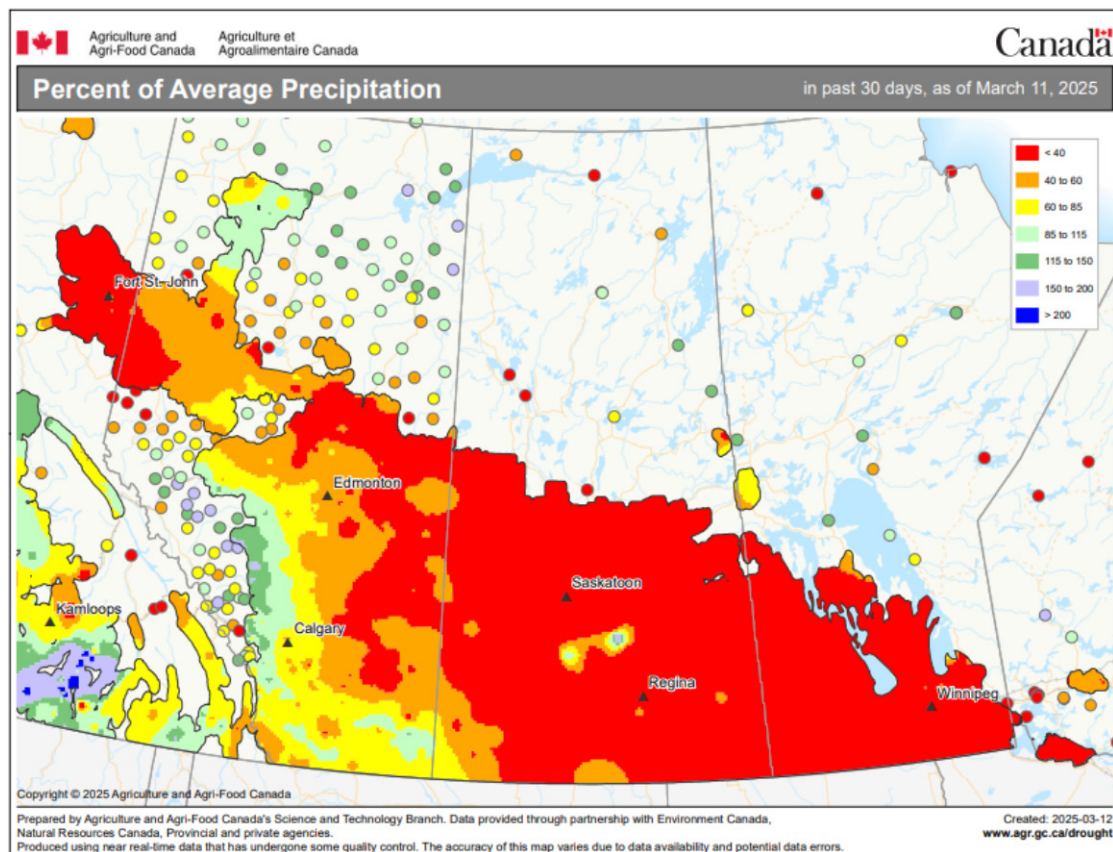


Canadian Prairies Will Be Impacted By Winter Storm

By Andrew Owen

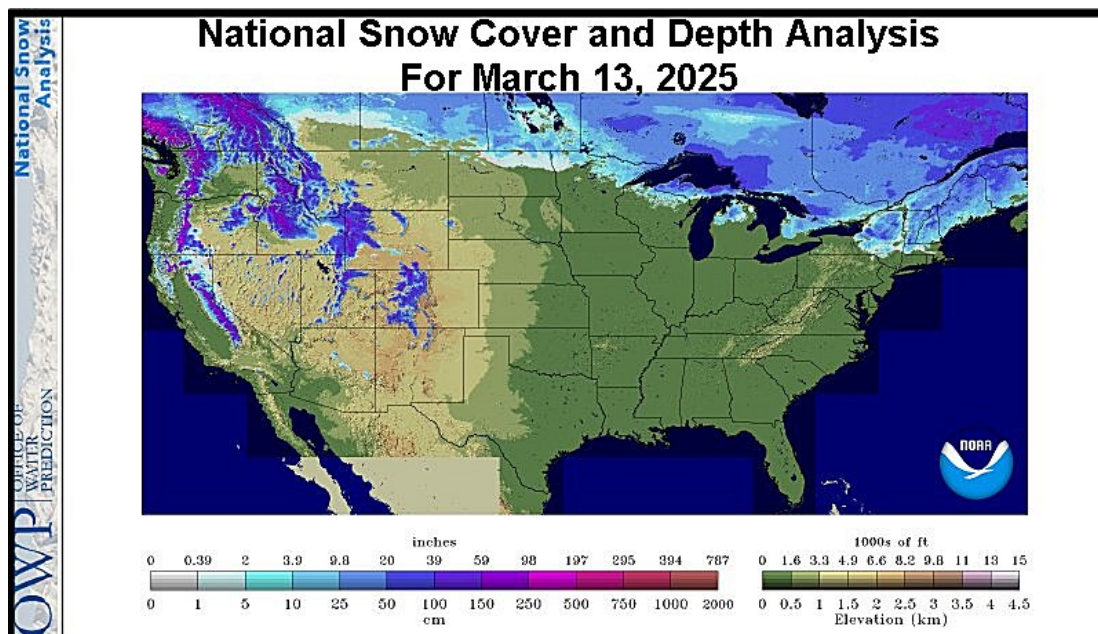
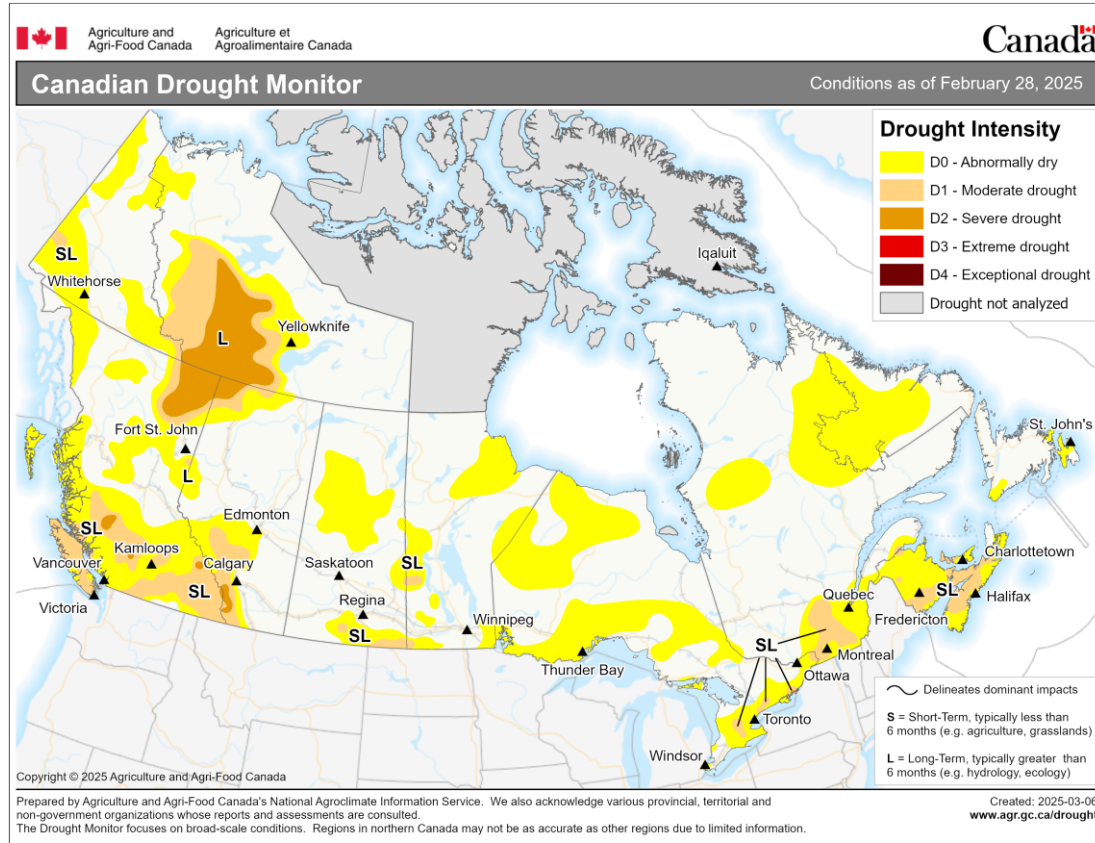
Kansas City, March 14 (World Weather Inc.) – A winter storm will impact the Canadian Prairies in the coming days as a strong disturbance makes its way across North America. Snow began in several production areas Thursday before the main band of precipitation shifts into Manitoba and eastern Saskatchewan today and Saturday. *Several locations in Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan will see precipitation start out as freezing rain or a wintry mixture before changing over to snow from this event. The ice, snow, and breezy conditions will likely cause hazardous travel conditions and may damage infrastructure. In the meantime, the moisture profile is variable across the Prairies with several locations in western Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba still dealing with a moderate drought or abnormally dry conditions. With that said, the moisture profile is much better this year compared to recent springs and planting prospects are more favorable. Timely precipitation will still be needed later this month and in April to completely erase the moisture deficits and support ideal establishment.*

A large section of the Prairies was drier than usual during the past month. There were several locations in west-central Alberta and pockets in southern Alberta and Alberta's Peace River country that received 85% to 150% of normal precipitation for the 30-day period ending March 11; however, a large section of the Prairies received less than 60% of normal precipitation.



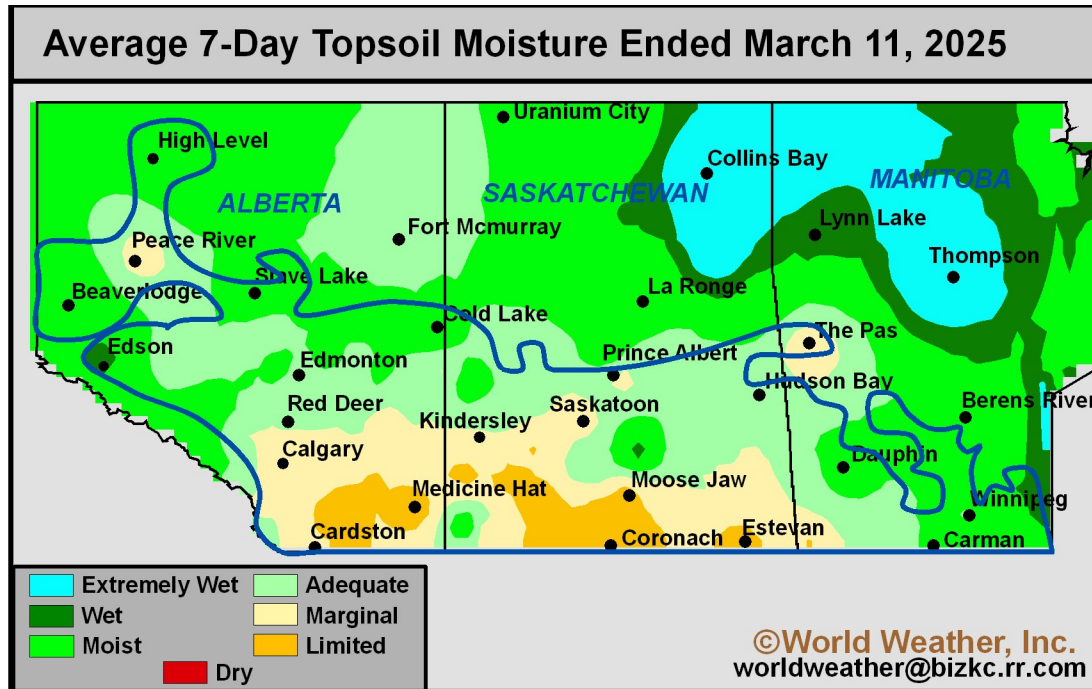
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Temperatures for the 30-day period ending March 10 were near or below normal for a large section of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and southeastern Alberta. Other areas in Alberta experienced seasonable to seasonably warm weather with portions of Alberta's Peace River country warming several degrees above normal for this time of year.



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As of February 28, several locations in southwestern, west-central, and central Alberta, along with portions of southern and northern Saskatchewan and several pockets in Manitoba, were abnormally dry or under a moderate drought. The remaining locations in the Prairies were generally drought-free. Southern Alberta and portions of southwestern and south-central Saskatchewan were snow-free as of this morning while other production areas in the Prairies had at least light amounts of snow on the ground.



Despite several production areas under a moderate drought or abnormally dry conditions, the moisture profile is in much better shape compared to recent years for a large section of the Prairies. Several production areas entered the spring season in previous years under significant drought that impacted planting and establishment. [The main production areas would still benefit from waves of precipitation in the coming weeks before widespread planting begins, but if there can be at least a few light precipitation events periodically planting should advance well.](#)

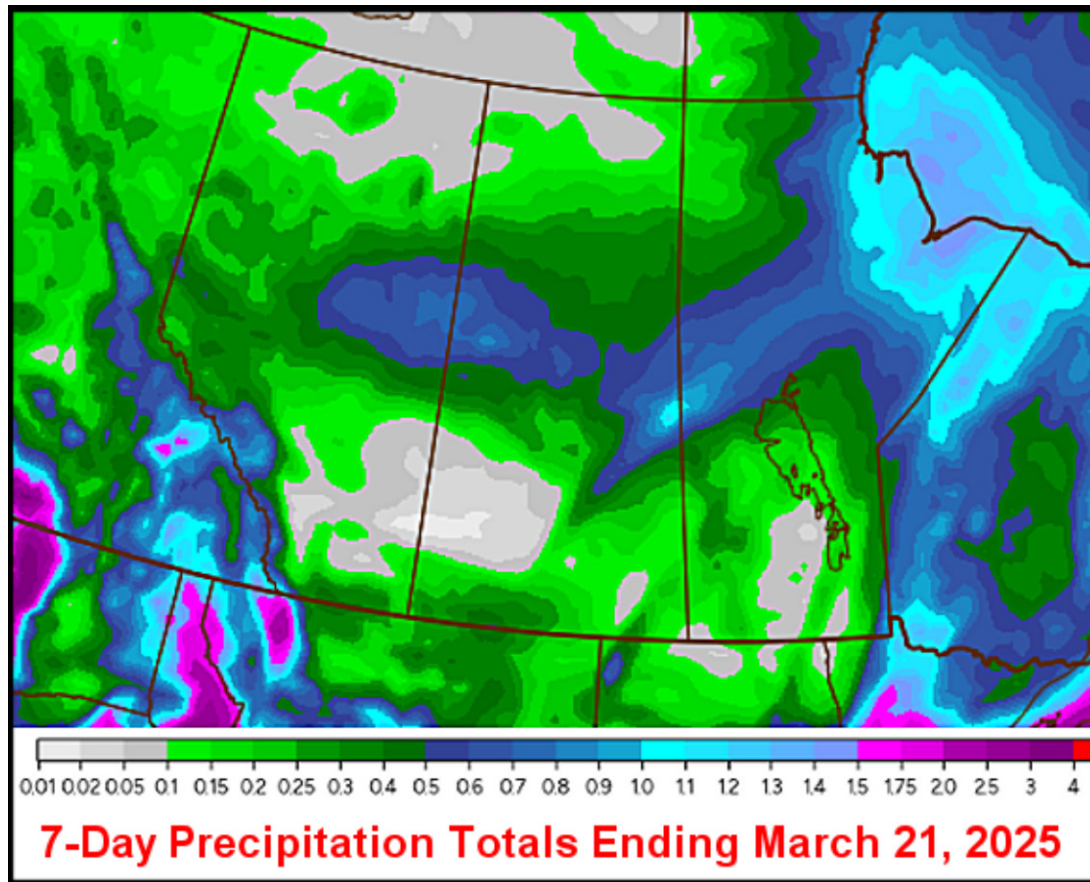
WEATHER OUTLOOK

In the short-term, the Prairies will be impacted by a winter storm as a strong disturbance evolves over the U.S. Plains. This system will slowly make its way from the central Plains into the Upper Midwest and Ontario through Saturday and will bring precipitation to a large section of the Prairies. Alberta and much of Saskatchewan will generally be cold enough for precipitation to fall as snow or a wintry mixture. Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan will otherwise see precipitation start out as freezing rain or a wintry mixture before changing over to snow Friday and Saturday.

West-central and northern Alberta through northern Manitoba will receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of moisture from this event with portions of southeastern Manitoba receiving more

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than 1.00 inch of moisture. Other locations will only receive trace amounts to 0.35 inch of moisture with many areas in southeastern and south-central Alberta into portions of southern Saskatchewan missing out on the precipitation completely. A few areas in southern Manitoba may also be a little drier biased.



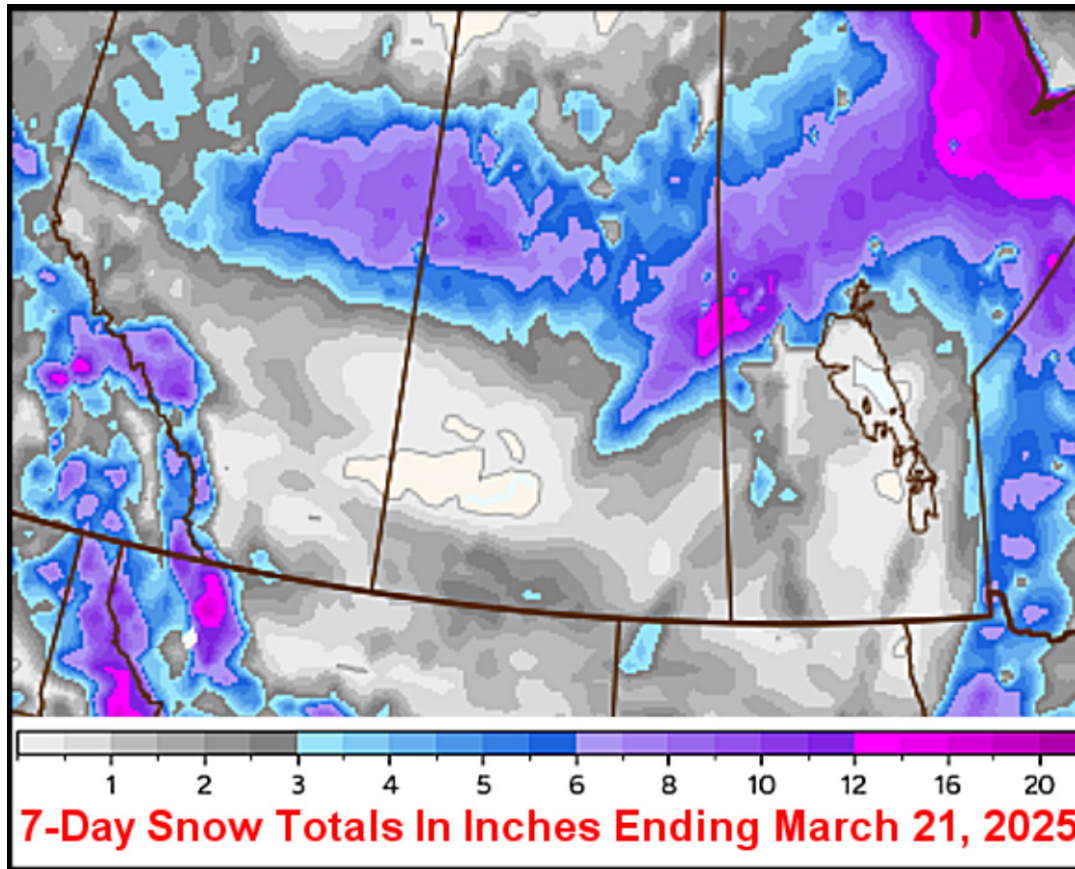
Snow accumulations will be greatest from west-central, north-central, and northeastern Alberta through northern portions of Manitoba where 3 to 7 inches and locally greater amounts are possible. Snowfall elsewhere in the Prairies will range from a dusting to 3 inches with portions of southern Alberta and pockets in southern Saskatchewan missing out on the snow completely. Portions of Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan could also see a few tenths of an inch of ice accumulate before the snow.

This winter storm will likely impact travel during the next two days, most notably in Manitoba, portions of eastern and northern Saskatchewan, and portions of northern and west-central Alberta. In addition to the rain and snow, strong winds will likely promote blizzard-like conditions at times. Road closures and infrastructure are likely, especially in portions of Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan that see ice accumulate ahead of the snow. Livestock may be stressed as well.

A few disturbances will generate mostly light precipitation for portions of the Prairies Sunday into next week once the winter storm comes to an end. The first disturbance will generate a dusting to 3 inches of snow for portions of Alberta, central and southern Saskatchewan, and southern Manitoba Sunday and Monday. Not much snow is expected

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toward the middle of next week. A relatively active jet stream will then promote alternating periods of precipitation and dry weather for the Prairies March 21 – 27.



Temperatures will trend near or below normal for much of the Prairies through the latter part of next week. Portions of the southern Prairies will warm to the 30s and 40s Fahrenheit with pockets in southern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan warming to the 50s and 60s. Colder air will settle over the region most other days with highs often reaching the 20s and 30s. Portions of the northern and eastern Prairies will also only warm to the teens at times. The temperature profile will then fluctuate between cooler and warmer than usual March 21 – 27.

Snow melt will be minimal in the coming weeks for much of the Prairies due to the additional precipitation and lack of significant heating. Some of the moisture will likely seep down into the soil in April once seasonal warming begins and could chip away at times of the dryness. However, the driest locations in western and southwestern Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan will likely see drought or abnormally dry conditions persist. Even with the pockets of dryness, spring planting prospects remain more favorable compared to some recent years for much of the Prairies. Last year planting conditions started out quite dry and then turned wet enough to favor good planting progress before the summer turned very warm and dry again.

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