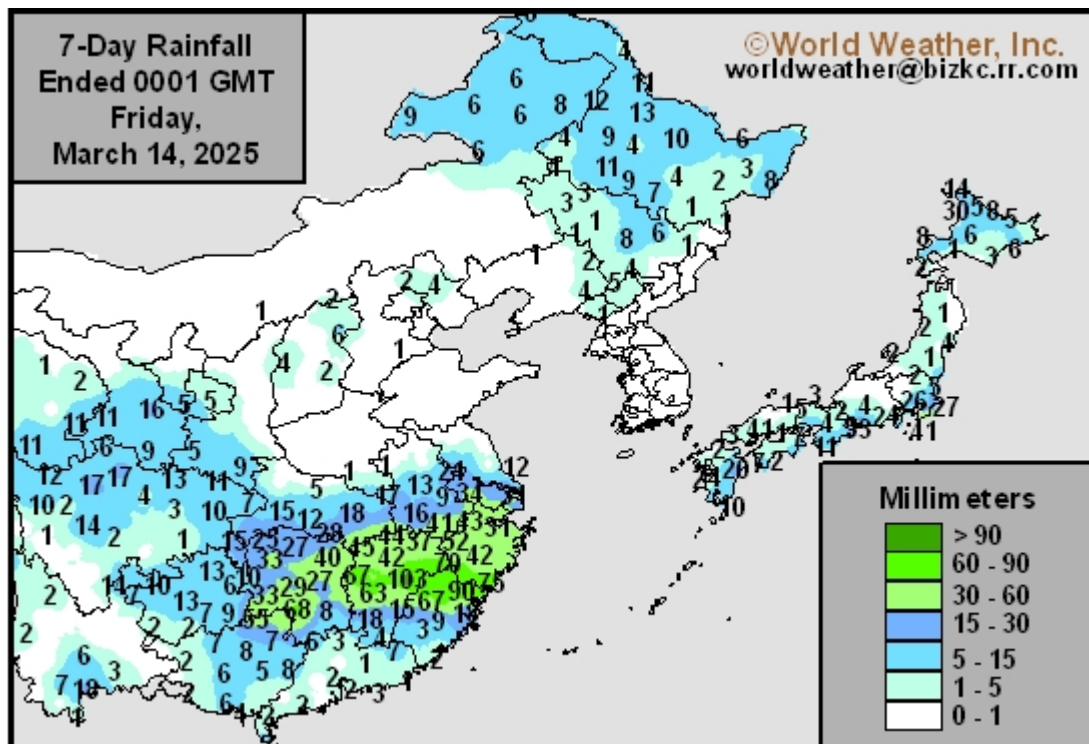


China Planting Prospects Improving As Rain Persists

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, March 14 (World Weather Inc.) – Rainfall expanded for several areas near and south of the Yangtze River in recent days. Several locations received enough rain to bolster soil moisture that is needed as early-season planting normally begins in March. Several areas in southern China are still struggling with moisture deficits and additional rain is needed for ideal establishment. Southern China and the Yangtze River Basin will continue to see a good mix of rain and dry weather through the end of next week that will either further improve planting prospects or support a good environment for planting. Winter rapeseed conditions in the Yangtze River Basin will remain favorable as well. Winter wheat prospects in the North China Plain will be relatively good as well despite the region trending drier than normal through at least the end of next week.

Precipitation varied across the main production areas in China during the past week. Jiangxi, Hunan, Zhejiang, northern Fujian, and southern sections of Jiangsu and Anhui received 0.51 to 2.76 inches of rain with local amounts up to 4.06 inches for the seven-day period ending this morning. Several areas in Hubei, Sichuan, Guizhou, southern Yunnan, and northern Guangxi received 0.16 to 1.10 inches of rain. Heilongjiang, northeastern Inner Mongolia, and Jilin received 0.12 to 0.51 inch of moisture. Other production areas were either dry or did not receive enough precipitation to counter evaporation.



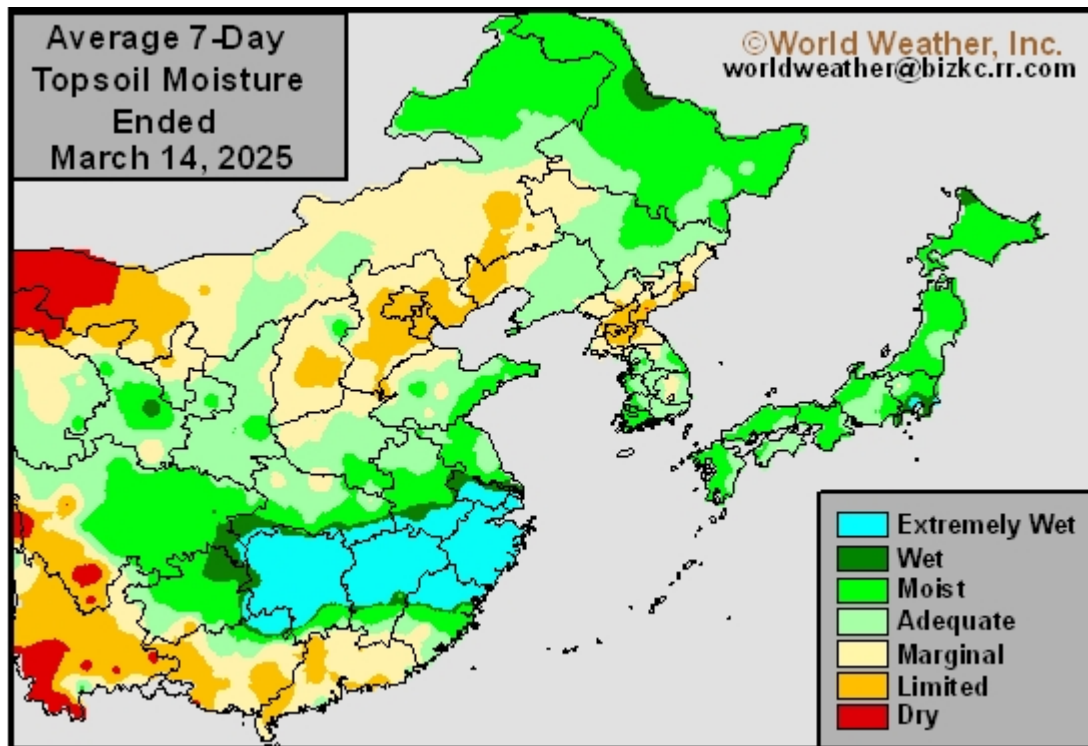
The Yangtze River Basin generally has adequate to excessive amounts of moisture due to the recent precipitation. Soil moisture is adequate or marginally adequate in most other locations, though several areas in Yunnan, Guangxi, and Hebei still have a shortage of moisture despite periods of erratic rain in recent weeks.

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Warm daytime temperatures have helped increase soil temperatures significantly across southern China in recent days. Portions of the Yangtze River Basin have also warmed enough to bring winter rapeseed out of dormancy. The North China Plain is otherwise too cold to bring much of the winter wheat out of dormancy.

Early-season rice and corn planting normally begins in March for portions of southern China. Sugarcane development also evolves at this time of year. Several areas in Yunnan, Guangxi, and Guangdong are too dry to support ideal planting and establishment despite some recent rain. Producers may wait for an increase in precipitation before putting a significant amount of crop in the ground.

Winter rapeseed conditions are favorable across the Yangtze River Basin due to the waves of precipitation in recent weeks. Warmer weather is needed to bring all the crops out of dormancy and support aggressive growth. Winter wheat prospects are relatively good in the North China Plain as well, though timely precipitation would be welcome later this month and early April as the crops come out of dormancy.

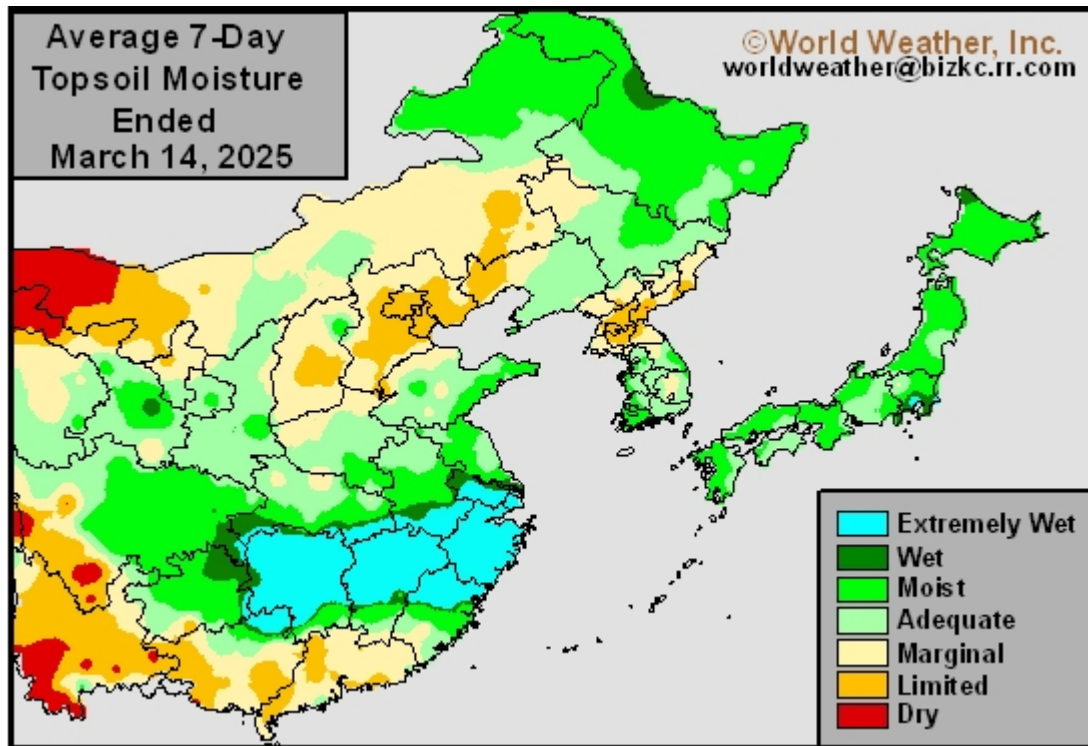


WEATHER OUTLOOK

Areas near and south of the Yangtze River will see a good mix of precipitation and sunshine through the end of next week. The most widespread and significant precipitation will occur today and Saturday as a disturbance and weak frontal boundary advances over China. Light and erratic rain will continue on a frequent basis for Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, and neighboring locations Sunday into next week while the remaining locations receive little to no precipitation. Moisture totals by next Friday morning will range from 0.75 to 4.00 inches and locally greater amounts in Fujian, southern sections of Jiangxi and Hunan, and neighboring locations. The remaining areas will receive 0.50 to 2.00 inches

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of moisture. Waves of precipitation will persist for much of southern China and the Yangtze River Basin March 22 – 28.



The periods of rain and warm weather will either improve early-season planting conditions or continue to promote a good environment for planting in much of China in the coming weeks. However, the driest areas in Yunnan and Guangxi may need additional rain to completely fix the moisture deficits. Winter rapeseed conditions will remain favorable across the Yangtze River Basin in the coming weeks as well. Temperatures will be warm enough to bring most of the crops out of dormancy in the coming week.

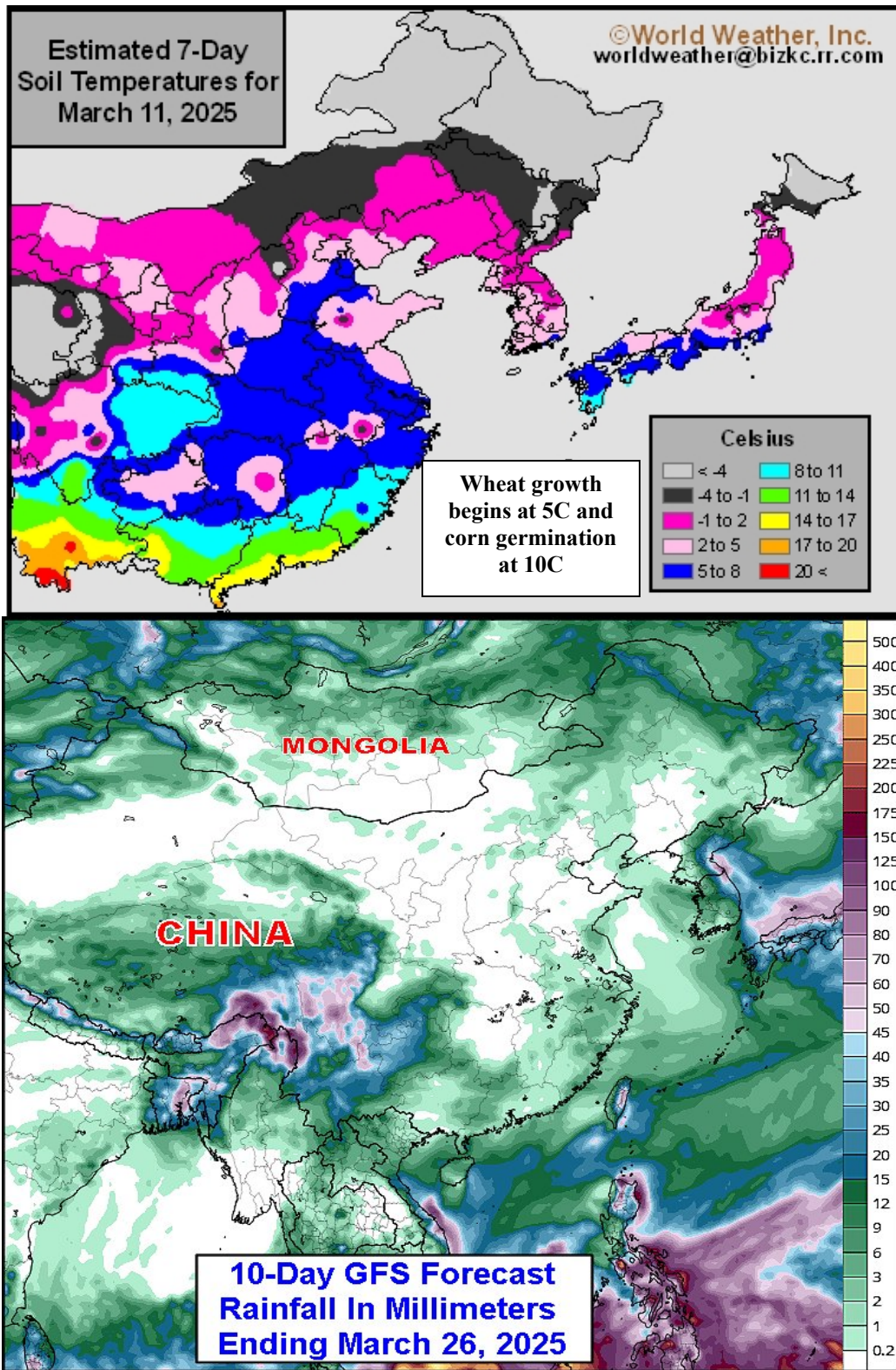
Drier-than-normal weather is slated for much of the **North China Plain, central Yellow River Basin, and northern China** through the end of next week. Erratic precipitation will still occur in portions of Shaanxi, Shanxi, Henan, and central Inner Mongolia today and Saturday. Light snow flurries will also occur in portions of northern China over the weekend and early next week. Portions of Shaanxi, Shanxi, central Inner Mongolia, and Henan will receive trace amounts to 0.40 inch of moisture with locally greater amounts by next Friday morning. Portions of central Inner Mongolia will also see a dusting to 5 inches of snow accumulate.

Little to no precipitation is slated for the remaining locations. Drier-than-normal weather will likely persist March 22 – 28, though brief periods of light precipitation will again be possible.

The temperature profile will be warm enough to gradually bring winter wheat out of dormancy in the North China Plain and neighboring locations later this month. Early-season development conditions will be relatively favorable. However, a few pockets may trend a

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little too dry for ideal growth toward the end of March and the need for timely rain will increase.



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