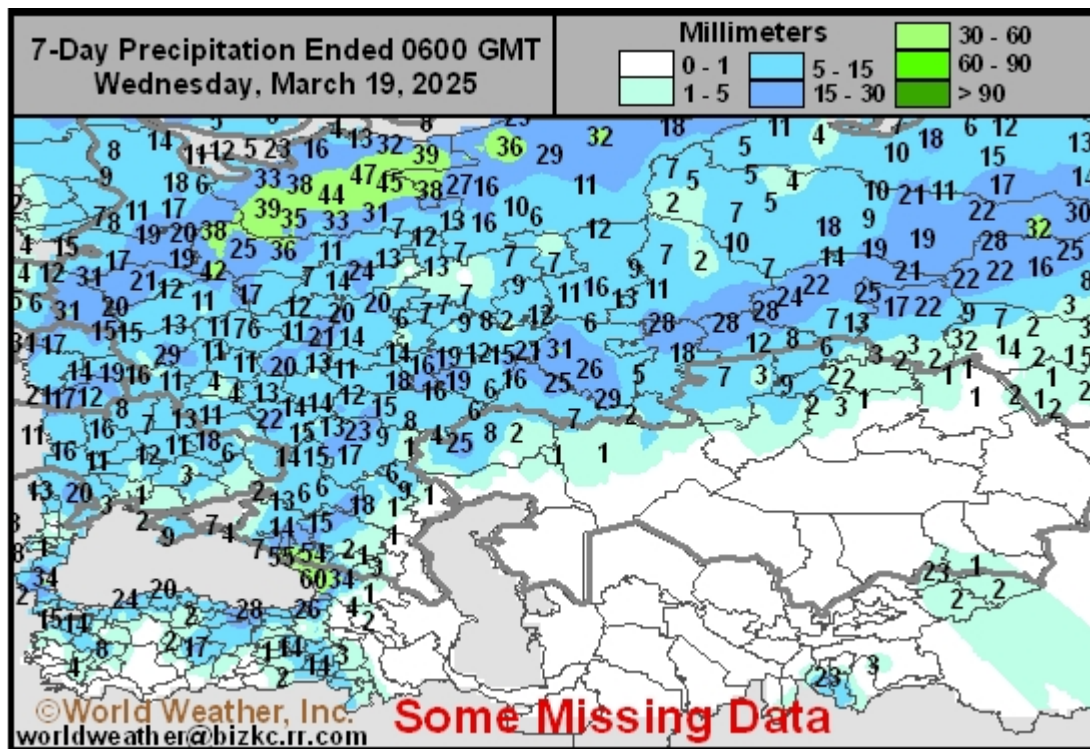


Russia, Ukraine Precipitation Minimal, Temperatures Warm

By Andrew Owen

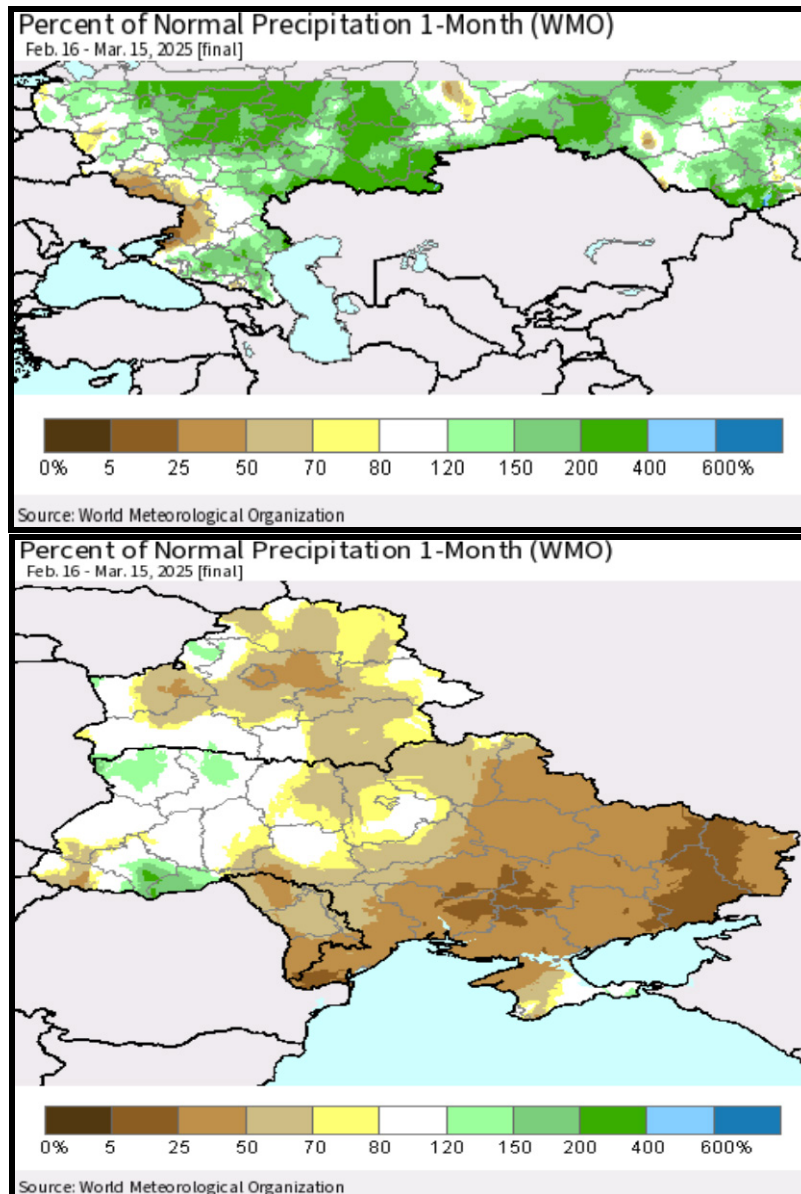
Kansas City, March 19 (World Weather Inc.) – *Early season winter grain and oilseed prospects for Russia, Ukraine, and neighboring areas are a little better now than last autumn due to “some” winter precipitation that has improved topsoil moisture after a dismal planting and establishment season due to dryness.* The main production areas have enough moisture to support some initial new growth in the coming weeks as more crops come out of dormancy however, much of Eurasia’s main winter crop areas will trend drier than normal through the end of this month while temperatures are above normal. *The warm biased temperatures are unlikely to cause rapid drying, although without much precipitation a gradual drying trend is expected raising the need for timely rain going into April.*

Much of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and western Kazakhstan saw a mix of precipitation and sunshine during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.43 to 1.22 inches with pockets that only received trace amounts to 0.32 inch.



Precipitation varied across the main production areas in Russia, Ukraine, and neighboring countries in recent weeks. The eastern two-thirds of Ukraine, a large section of Belarus, and immediate neighboring areas in southwestern Russia were generally drier or much drier than normal for the 30-day period ending March 15. Other locations in Russia and much of western Kazakhstan trended wetter than usual while western Ukraine saw precipitation trend closer to normal.

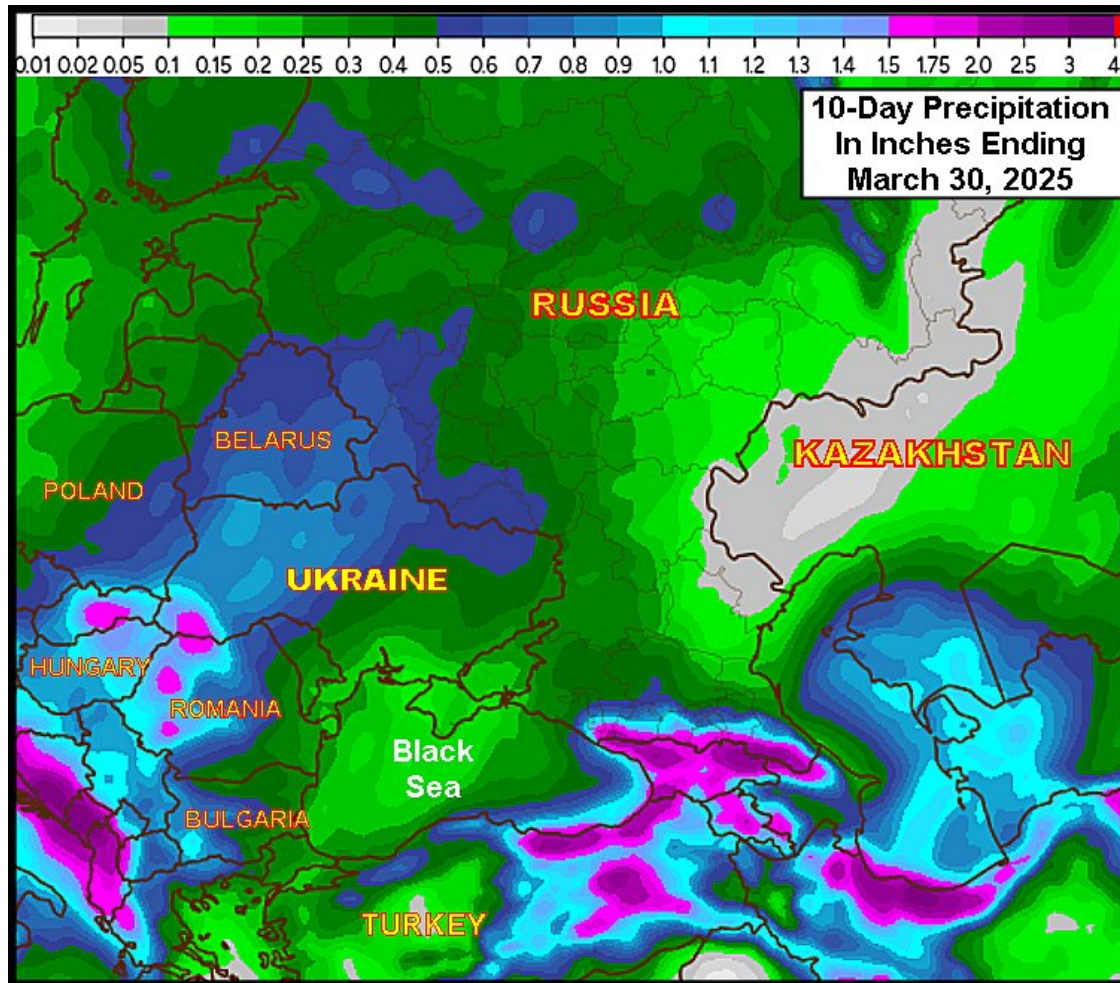
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Soil moisture is rated adequate to excessive in much of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. However, portions of Russia's USDA defined 'Southern Region' only have marginally adequate moisture in the topsoil. Soil temperatures are warm enough to bring some of the winter crops out of dormancy in the 'Southern Region' and a few pockets in Ukraine and western Kazakhstan. Other production areas are too cold to bring crops out of dormancy.

Winter wheat, barley, rye, and rapeseed initial growth prospects are relatively favorable for Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, western Kazakhstan, and neighboring production areas. The main crop areas have enough moisture in the short-term to support new growth once seasonal warming brings all crops out of dormancy. However, Russia's 'Southern Region' and portions of eastern Ukraine will likely need timely precipitation later this month and early April to limit additional drying. A week or two of drier than usual weather may dry the soil enough to impact early-season growth.

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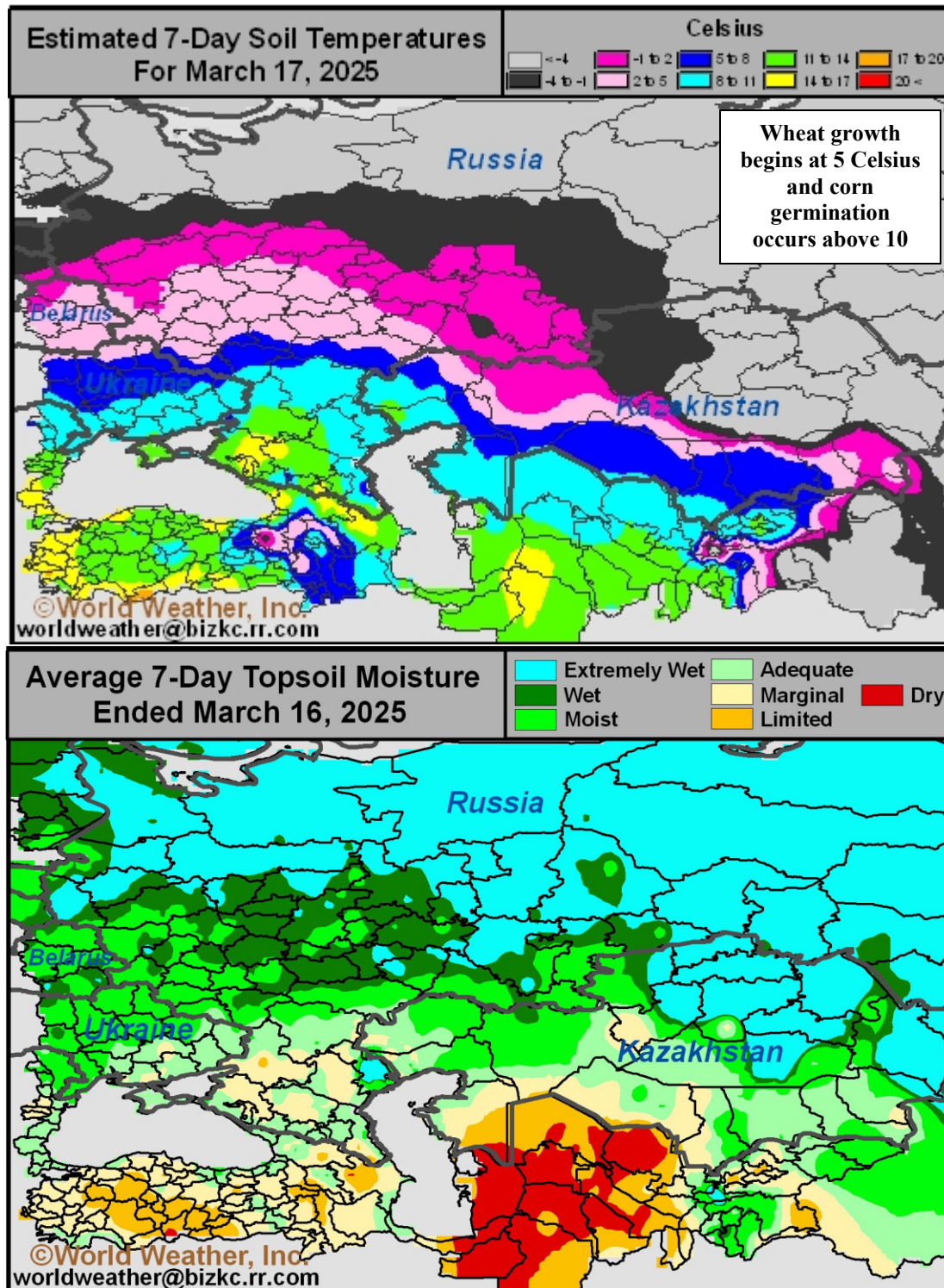
Drier-than-normal weather is slated for much of Russia, eastern Ukraine, western Kazakhstan, and neighboring locations through the middle of next week. Periods of light precipitation will occur, though resulting precipitation will be too light to significantly impact long-term soil conditions. Western Ukraine and Belarus will otherwise see a mix of precipitation and sunshine. Much of the precipitation will occur later this weekend into early next week as disturbances track near the region. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 0.10 to 0.75 inch and local amounts of 1.00 inch or slightly more. Drier than normal weather is then slated for much of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and western Kazakhstan March 27 – April 2 when a weak high-pressure ridge potentially builds over the region.

Temperatures will be relatively mild during the coming week for the main Eurasian winter crop areas. Daytime highs will peak to the 40s and 50s Fahrenheit with pockets only warming to the 30s. There is potential that portions of Ukraine warm to the 60s toward the middle of next week as well. Seasonable to seasonably warm weather is expected March 27 – April 2 when the ridge potentially funnels warmer air into the region.

Slow drying is slated for much of Southern Russia, eastern Ukraine and western Kazakhstan in the coming ten days, despite a lack of significant daytime heating. Some areas may become a little too dry to support ideal long-term winter grain and oilseed

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conditions and the need for more significant rain will increase in early to mid-April as more crops come out of dormancy.



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