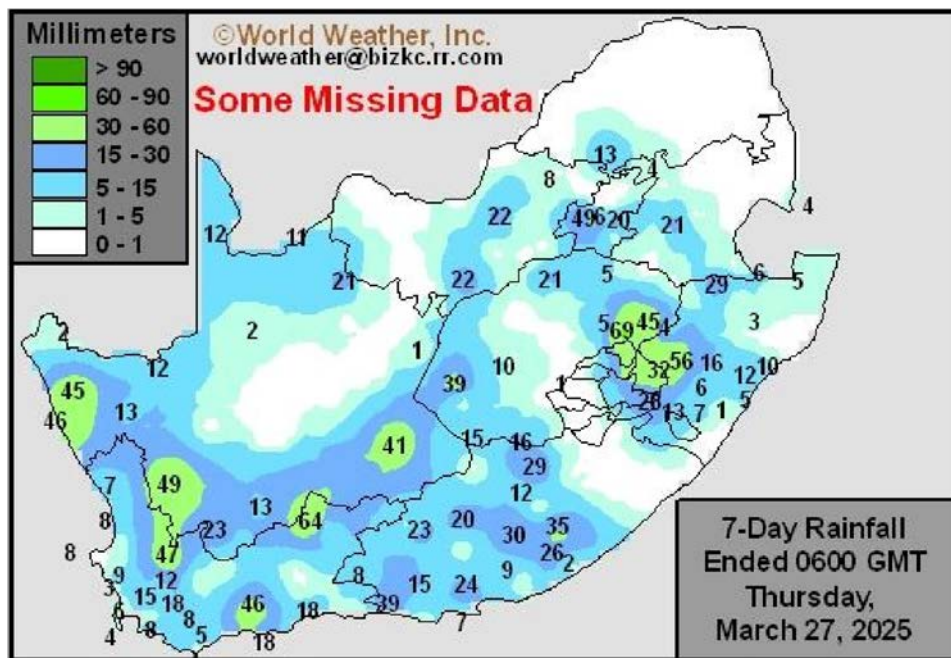


South Africa Crop Prospects Still Favorable Due To Recent Rain

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, March 27 (World Weather Inc.) – Timely rain continued across the main production areas in South Africa during the past week. *The rain, adequate soil moisture and seasonable temperatures promoted a good environment for aggressive growth. Yield potentials are favorable due to frequent rainfall over the growing season.* Alternating periods of rain and dry weather are slated for the country during the coming week. *Soil moisture will remain at favorable levels for aggressive growth across the region. Some of the earliest-maturing crops are being harvested and as more of the crop matures the need for abundant rain will decrease.*

Rain was often scattered across the main production areas in South Africa during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.39 to 1.93 inches with local amounts up to 2.72 inches in eastern Free State and immediate neighboring locations. Portions of Limpopo also received little or no precipitation. Temperatures were near or slightly above normal with highest readings generally reaching the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit. Lowest temperatures were in the 50s and 60s with pockets outside the main production areas cooling to the 40s at times.

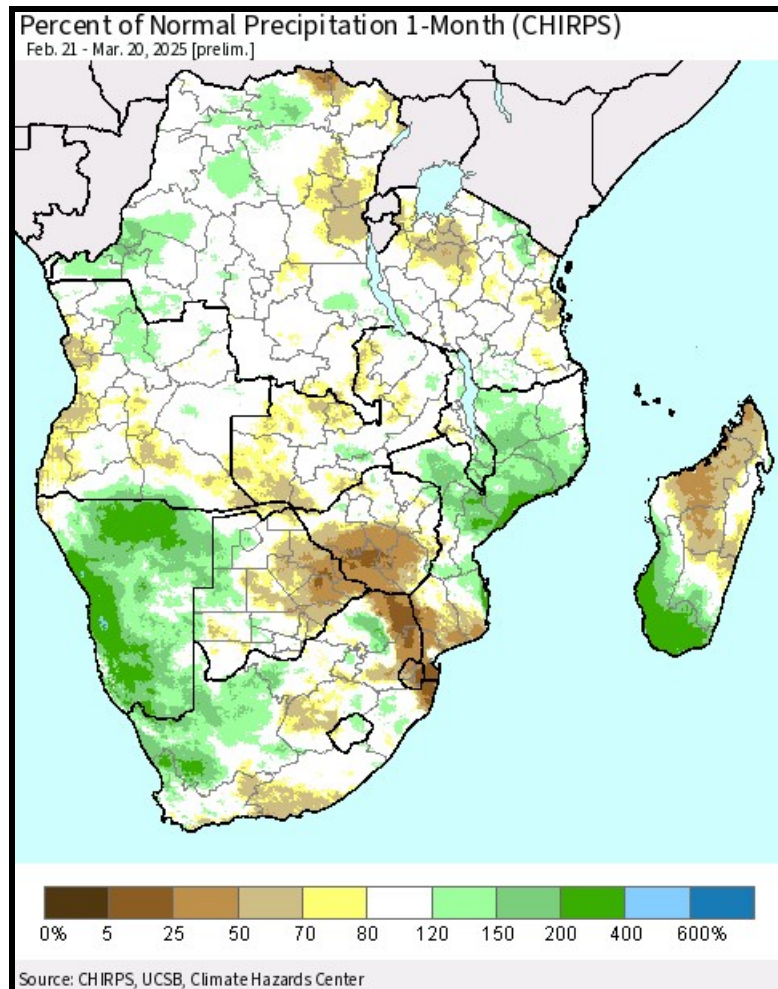


Portions of western Free State and pockets in Mpumalanga were drier than normal in recent weeks. However, a large section of South Africa's production region received near normal rainfall for the 30-day period ending March 20. Many areas in Northern Cape were even wetter than usual.

The environment remained favorable for aggressive coarse grain, oilseed, cotton, and other crop development across South Africa's main production areas during the past week. Additional rain combined with the already ample amount of moisture in the soil continued

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to support a good outlook for this season. Yields are expected to trend higher than usual compared to last season due to the generally favorable weather over the growing season. The earliest planted oilseeds may already be maturing and getting ready for harvest in the coming weeks. However, the bulk of the harvest begins late in April or May.



South Africa's main production areas will continue to see a good mix of rain and dry weather during the coming week. The first disturbance will generate scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms today into Friday with a few lingering showers Saturday. Another disturbance will promote the next round of rain Sunday into the middle of next week. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range from 0.75 to 4.00 inches in much of eastern and central South Africa. However, a few pockets in northern Limpopo and western sections of Free State and North West will only receive 0.25 to 0.75 inch of rain. Eastern Northern Cape will receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of rain with local amounts over 1.00 inch. Other areas in Western Cape will receive little or no rain. The main production areas will again have opportunities for rain April 4 – 10, though rain totals may trend lower compared to the first week of the outlook.

The temperature profile will trend near to slightly above normal for South Africa through next Thursday. Daytime highs will peak to the 70s and 80s most often with portions

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of western South Africa and pockets in the north warming to the 90s. A few locations in eastern, central, and southern South Africa will also only warm to the 60s during periods of more significant rain. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s with pockets in eastern and southern South Africa cooling to the 40s. Seasonable to seasonably warm weather will prevail April 4 – 10.

Additional rain in the coming week will keep soil moisture at adequate to excessive levels in much of South Africa's crop region. The environment will remain favorable for aggressive growth. Production potentials will remain mostly unchanged. However, the need for drier weather will increase toward mid-April in the wettest fields as more of the crops mature and need to be harvested.

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