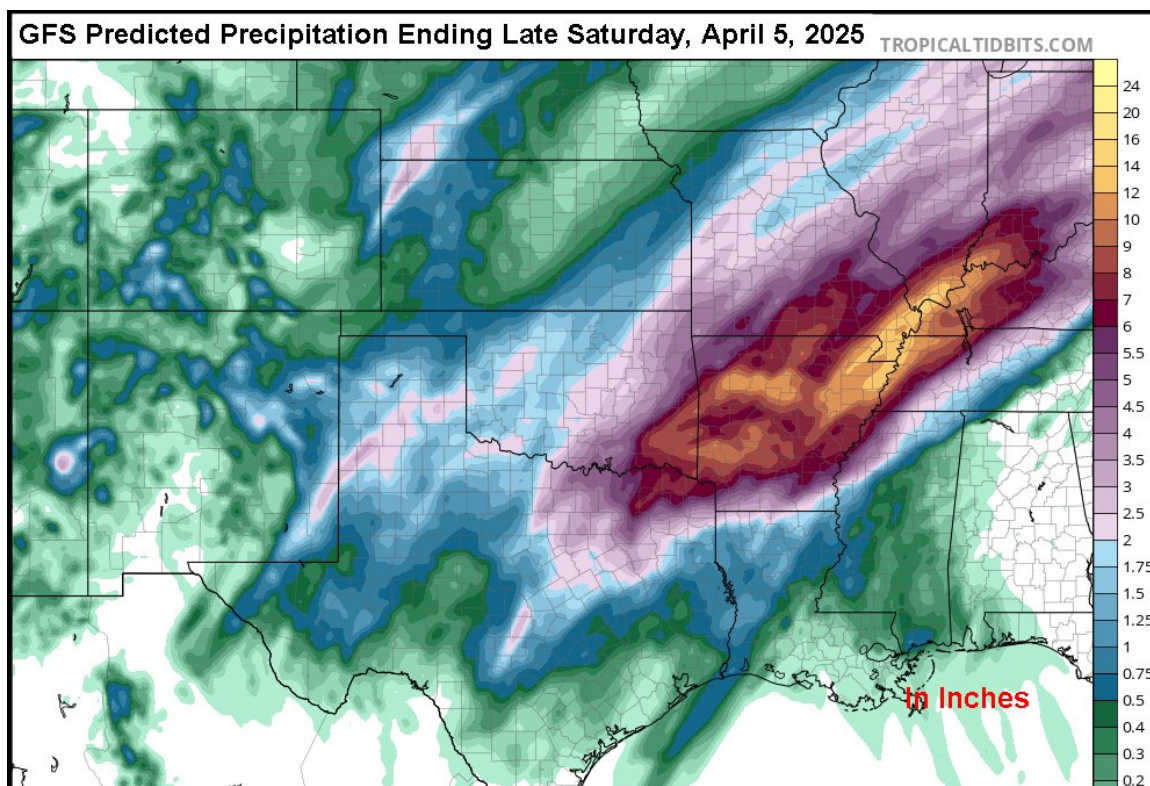


U.S. Hard Red Wheat To Be Stressed Again By Cold

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, April 3 (World Weather Inc.) – Weather conditions have been anything, but settled this year in U.S. hard red winter wheat production areas. Wild temperature swings, extremely dry conditions, blowing dust and a few bouts of light rain and snow have been reported. The drought conditions have been most disturbing because with that has come some very dry and warm conditions recently and now there is a good chance for hard freezes to occur Sunday across most of the production region. The freezes will just be one more bout of stress that this year's crop has had to endure, but with it will be some potential for minor damage to recent growth that may act as a deterrent against normal plant development until rain and warming returns again. The best news for the region, though, is that rain and snow will precede the cold and that will provide the potential for crop improvement once the cold passes.

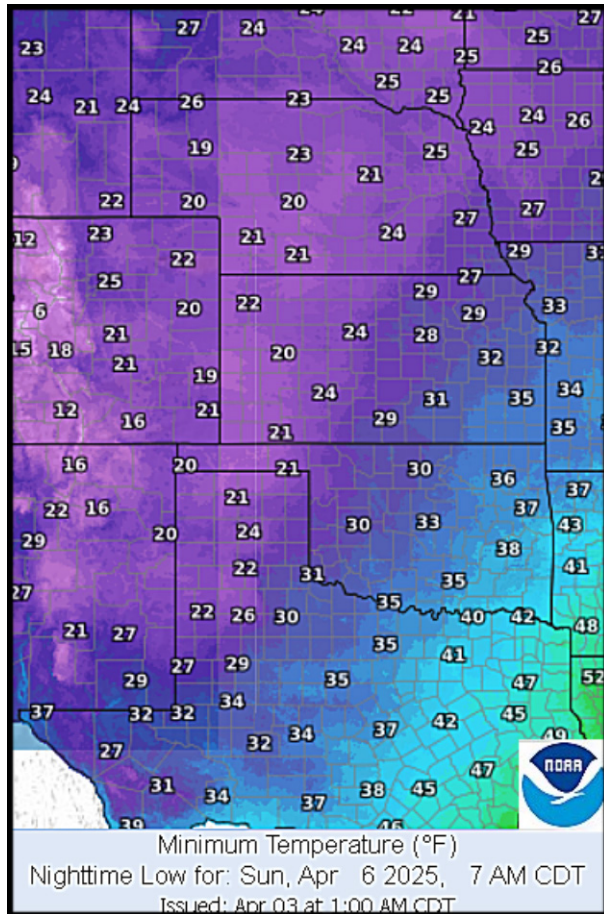
Every week the weather provides a new extreme for the central and southwestern Great Plains. Recent temperatures in the 80s and lower 90s were noted across the region, although cooling in the past couple of days has brought back a more seasonable range of temperatures. Excessive wind speeds were recorded last week with relative humidity ranging from 1-24% resulting in tremendous soil moisture losses and more stress for crops.



Weather conditions are going to change once again, but before it turns cold across the region the southern Plains have a good chance to see some badly-needed precipitation. Showers and thunderstorms will begin this evening in the southwestern Plains

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and increase Friday before ending Saturday. The precipitation is expected to vary from 0.75 to 2.00 inches from the Oklahoma and Kansas border region into southern portions of West Texas and the Texas Blacklands. The moisture expected will be hugely beneficial for wheat, canola and grazing conditions. No improvement in dryland crop conditions can



occur without the moisture and this event will set the stage for more aggressive crop development next week.

Colder air coming into the high Plains region behind the next two days of precipitation will induce some heavy, wet, snowfall from southeastern Colorado and northeastern New Mexico into West Texas and the Texas Panhandle. The snow is expected to melt relatively quickly due to warm soil conditions, but it will accumulate fast and may stick around long enough to protect some winter crops from the freezes that are likely Sunday morning. Snow accumulations will vary from 2 to 6 inches with a few counties and parts of counties in northwestern sections of the Texas Panhandle getting upwards to 10 inches of snow. However, as noted above, the snow will melt quickly and it will not likely be that deep for very long.

Producers are hoping for sufficient snowfall to protect winter crops from some of the damaging properties of low temperatures in the 20s Fahrenheit.

Most of the wheat crop will be adequately protected from the cold and no serious impacts are likely because of hard freezes, but that statement is largely true based on two facts. First, the more advanced wheat fields are irrigated and they must have significant snow around Sunday morning to protect the heart of the crop from the coldest temperatures and second most crops should not be advanced enough to be harmed by such temperatures.

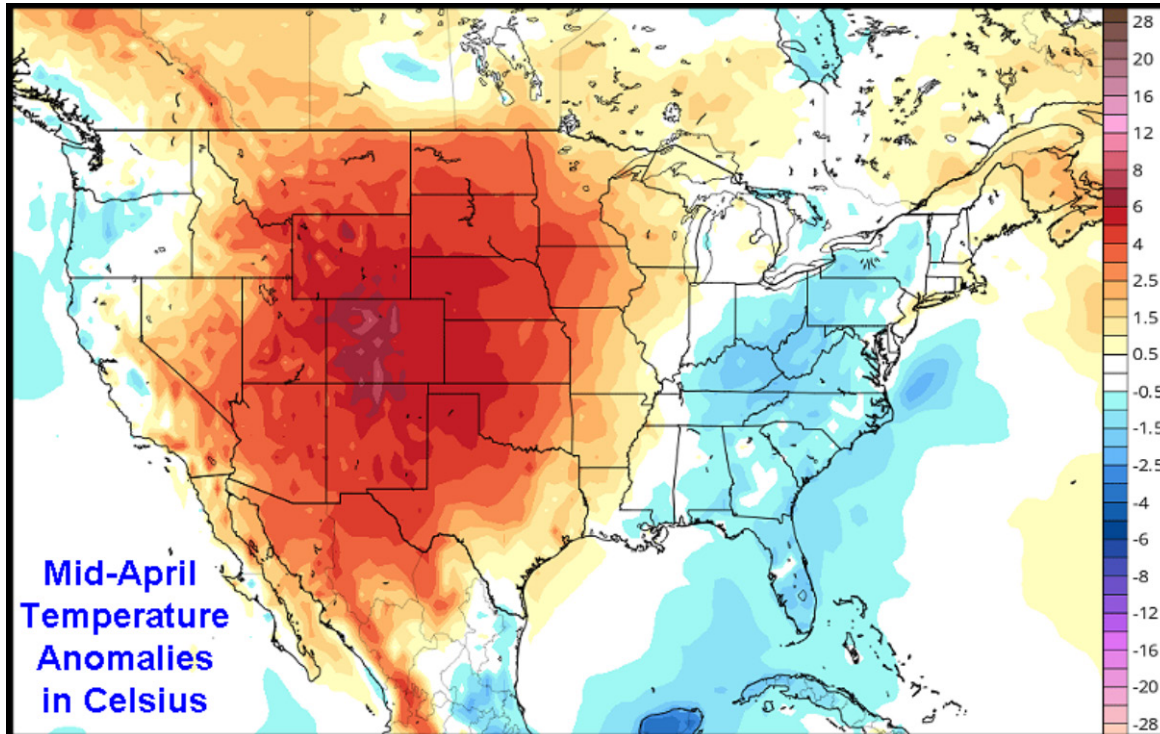
Recent bouts of unusually warm to hot temperatures have stressed wheat and canola pressuring it to develop more quickly than usual. Some of the more advanced wheat is in irrigated fields of Texas, western Oklahoma and possibly in extreme southwestern Kansas and southeastern Colorado. Most of the crop is jointed in those areas. There may be a few fields that are already booting, but that should be limited to a few areas in the south. Low temperatures in the 20s Fahrenheit should not permanently harm winter wheat that is mostly jointed, although it will burn back recent vegetative growth and for unirrigated crops, that have already been stressed by drought and blowing dust, this will just be one more reason to anticipate lower yields because of the stressful environment.

With that said the rain expected tonight into Saturday morning will be sufficient to greatly improve field moisture and that will set the stage for a quick recovery by crops that might get damaged in the coming freeze event. There is not much follow up rain expected.

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but the moisture should be sufficient to help crops recover from the freeze. Additional rain is a must, though if the crop is going get to its fullest production potential and that is going to be hard to come by.

The next ten days after Saturday should be dry and a strong warming trend is likely for mid- to late-week next week into the following weekend. Temperatures should return to the 80s and some lower 90s in a week to ten days from now and that, too, will be stressful for crops maintaining some potential for a tough production year. With that said, there is still plenty of time for greatly improved weather, although there is not much opportunity for serious weather changes through mid-April.



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