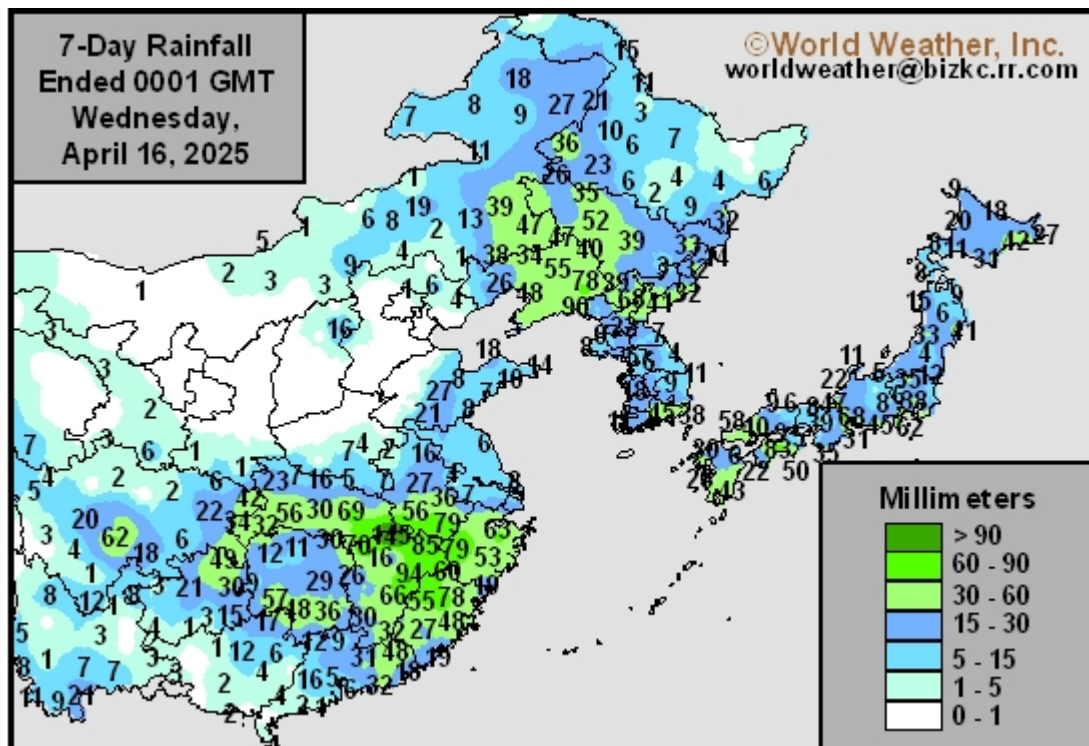


Southwestern China, North China Plain Still In Need Of Rain

By Andrew Owen

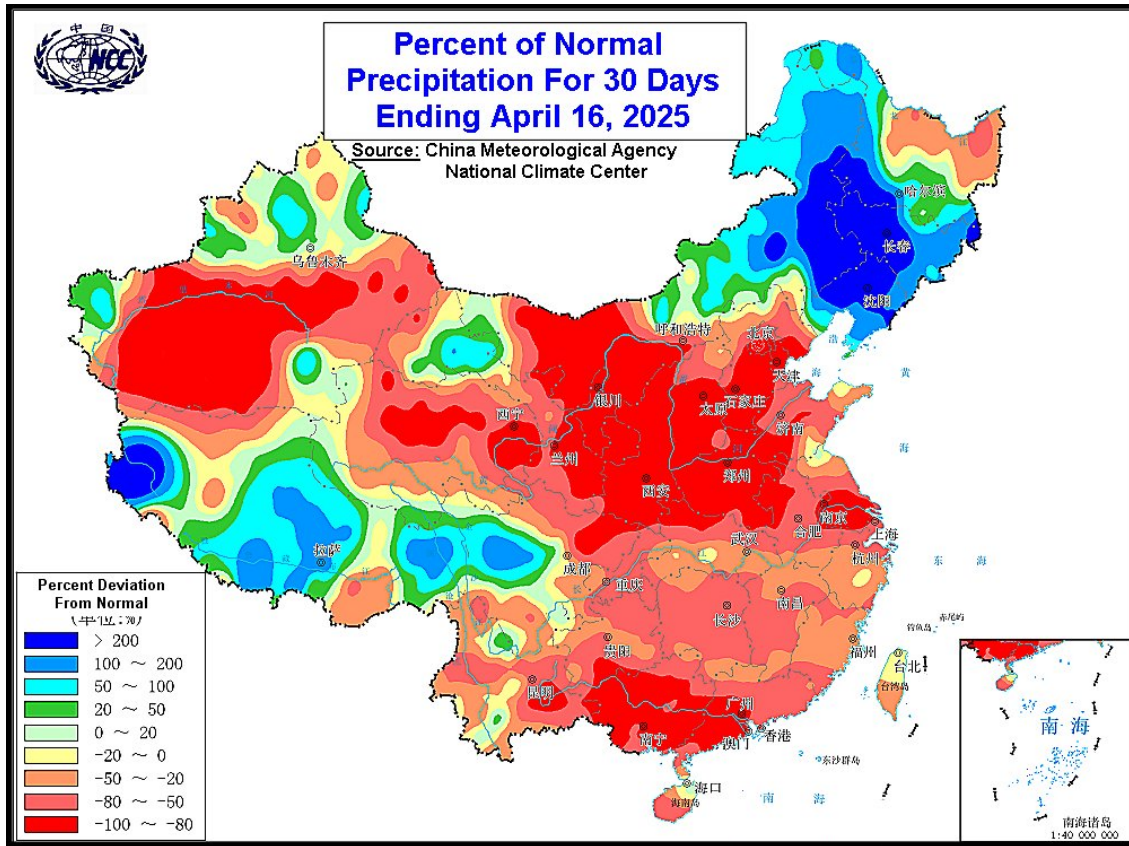
Kansas City, April 16 (World Weather Inc.) – *A large section of China's main agricultural region was drier than normal during the past month. Moisture shortages are ongoing for the North China Plain, Yellow River Basin and both east-central and southwestern sections of the nation due to the continued lack of rain and warmer than usual temperatures.* The need for rain is high in order to improve planting, establishment, and general development conditions in the driest areas. Additional drying may start to raise concern over possible production impacts, although *rain chances in the next ten days are improving for areas near and south of the Yangtze River and the Yellow River Basin and North China Plain.* Other areas will have opportunities for precipitation and soil moisture may either increase slightly or experience little change for a while. ***Drought, according to the Chinese Meteorological Agency has expanded over the past few weeks.***

Precipitation varied across the main production areas in China during the past week. Fujian, Zhejiang, and eastern Guangdong into Jiangxi, southern Anhui, Hunan, Hubei, eastern Guizhou, and portions of Sichuan reported 0.63 to 3.11 inches of rain with local amounts up to 5.71 inches in Jiangxi for the seven-day period ending this morning. Liaoning, Jilin, and east-central Inner Mongolia received 1.02 to 2.17 inches of moisture with a local amount of 3.07 inches in eastern Liaoning. Western Guangdong, northern Guangxi, southern Yunnan, Jiangsu, northern Anhui, eastern and central Shandong, and portions of Heilongjiang, northeastern Inner Mongolia, and central Inner Mongolia received 0.24 to 1.42 inches of moisture. Other production areas were either dry or did not receive enough precipitation to impact long-term soil conditions.



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A large section of southern China, the Yangtze River Basin, and portions of the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin received below to well below normal precipitation for the 30-day period ending April 10. Several areas in Guangdong, Guangxi, Henan, Jiangsu, and neighboring areas received less than 25% of normal precipitation during this time. Northeastern China received near to above normal precipitation.



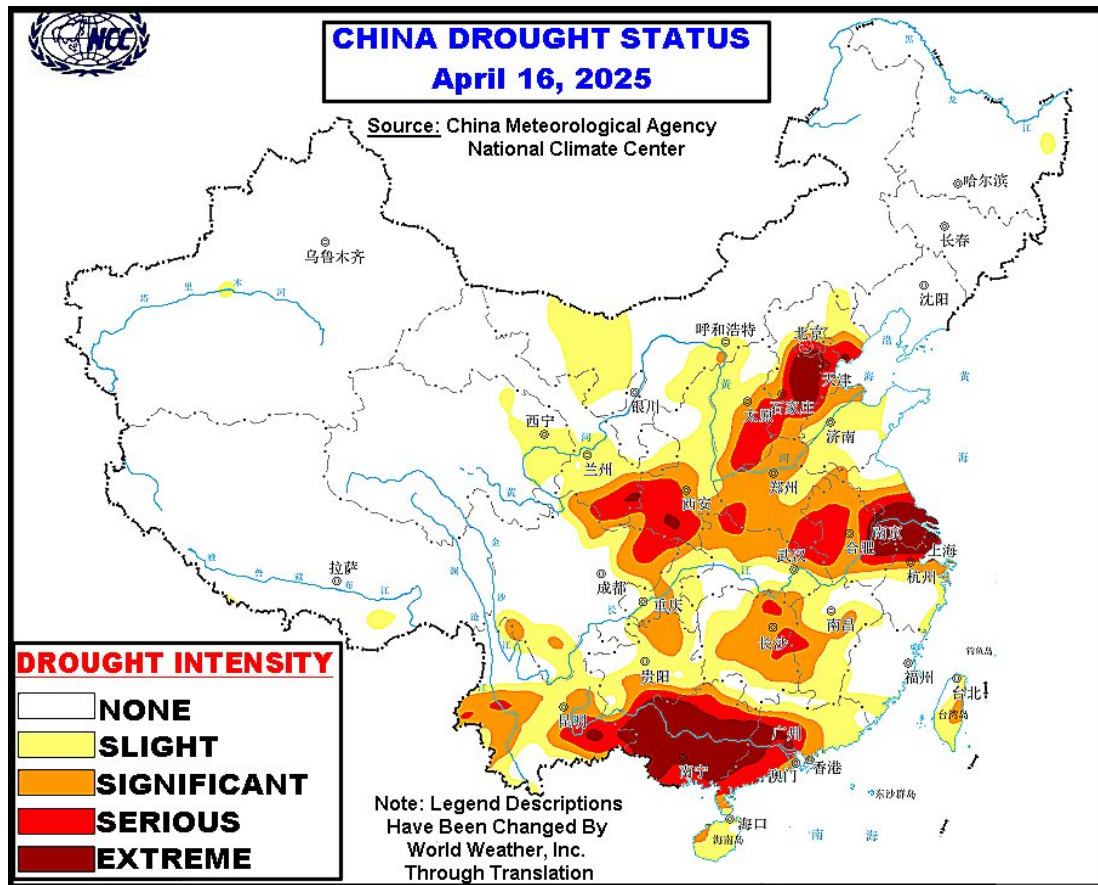
China's Meteorological Agency has been suggesting drought has been expanding across east-central China in recent weeks. Much of the region from southern Shaanxi to Jiangsu has experienced rapidly developing drought conditions this month and dryness has also expanded across Hebei and Shanxi. Other areas of drought have recently evolved in parts of eastern Hunan and western Jiangxi while it has persisted and expanded from parts of Yunnan into western Guangdong. The most serious drought is in Guangxi, western Guangdong, southern Jiangsu and in parts of Hebei.

Soil moisture shortages are ongoing for Yunnan, Guangxi, Hebei, Shanxi, and neighboring areas due to the lack of rain and gradual warming in recent weeks. Other locations have adequate moisture with portions of southeastern China and Liaoning having excess moisture in the topsoil.

Planting conditions have varied near and **south of the Yangtze River** in recent weeks due to the uneven rainfall. Yunnan, Guangxi, and several neighboring areas have been too dry to support ideal conditions for rice, corn, and sugarcane. Other locations received enough rain for generally good rice and corn planting and sugarcane development. The need for more significant rain remains high in the driest areas of southwestern China. Production may be impacted if the region remains drier than usual in coming weeks. Winter

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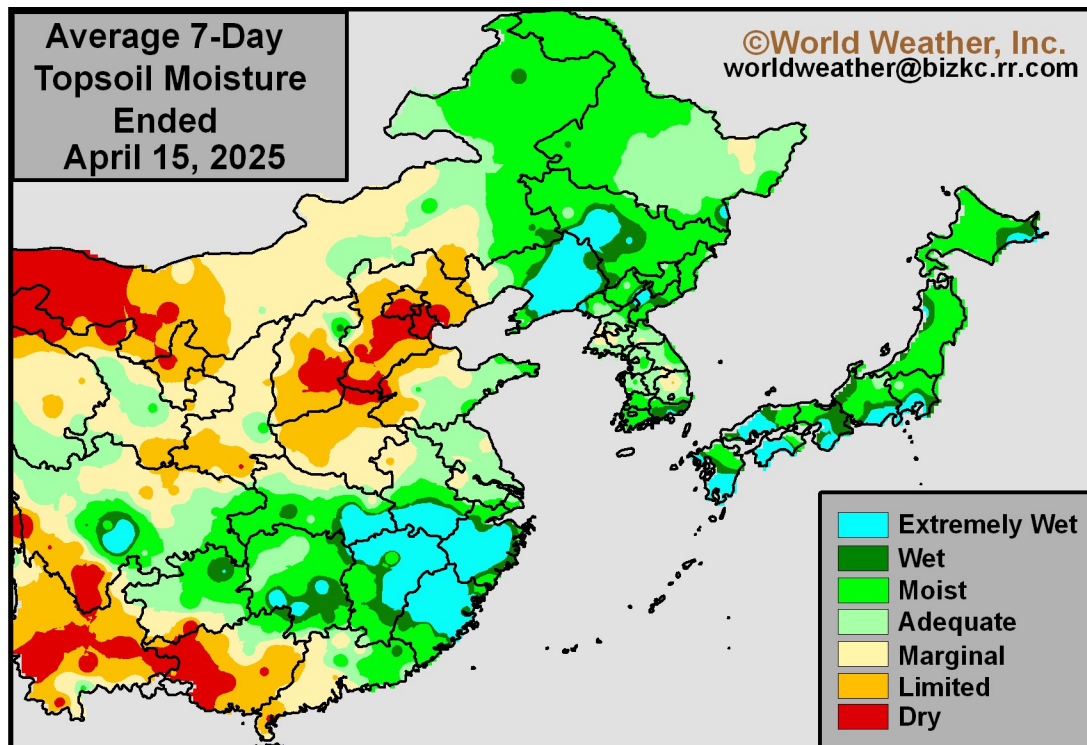
rapeseed harvesting is underway in portions of the Yangtze River Basin. The wettest locations would welcome drier weather to support more aggressive harvesting. Yields are expected to be good.



The North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin are also in need of timely precipitation in the coming weeks. The ground has firmed a little too much to support ideal winter wheat growth and early-season planting of the summer grains, oilseeds, and cotton. There is still time for better rainfall to improve winter wheat development and summer crop planting prospects. Remember that wheat is largely irrigated in China. Planting of spring and summer crops in northern China usually begins in May and early-season prospects are favorable. Some sugarbeet and spring wheat planting can begin in April, although the bulk of planting comes a little later.

Southern China and the Yangtze River Basin will have several opportunities for rain through the middle of next week. Light rain will initially be scattered across a few locations today. Disturbances will then generate more widespread and significant rain Thursday into the first part of next week when tracking over the region. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 0.25 to 1.00 inch with drier pockets in much of Yunnan, western and southern Guangxi, and southern Guangdong. Other locations will receive 0.75 to 4.00 inches of rain and locally greater amounts. A similar rain pattern is expected April 24 – 30.

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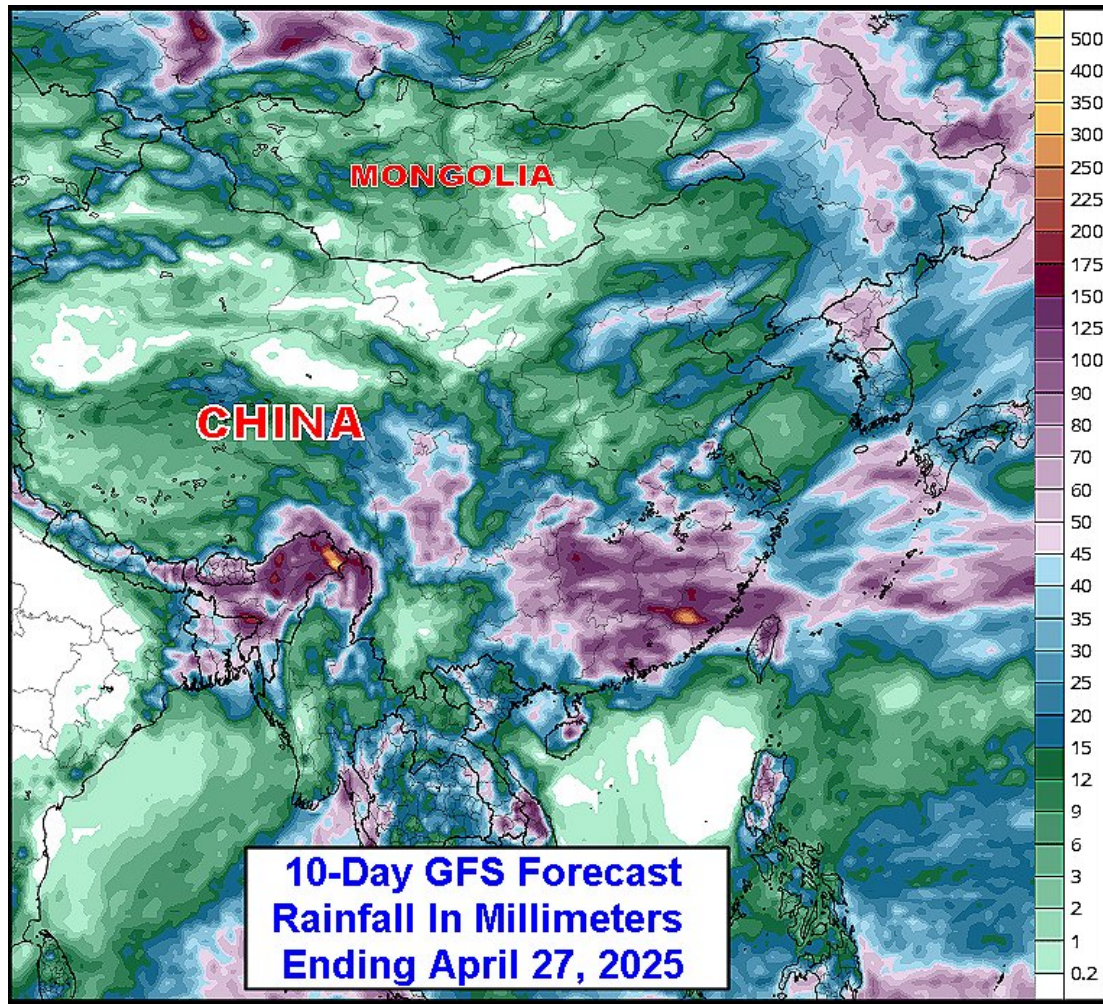
WEATHER OUTLOOK

Southwestern China will not receive enough rain to completely fix the moisture deficits in the coming weeks. The environment will remain less than favorable to poor for new rice, corn, and sugarcane growth. Other locations near and south of the Yangtze River Basin will receive enough rain to support aggressive crop development. Harvesting of the winter rapeseed may otherwise advance slowly at times in the wettest locations.

The North China Plain, central Yellow River Basin, and northern China will also have opportunities for precipitation through the middle of next week. Two disturbances will promote the first round of precipitation through Friday. Disturbances will continue to generate erratic precipitation this weekend and the first part of next week. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 0.50 to 3.00 inches in much of Northeast China. The North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin will receive 0.25 to 1.50 inches of rain with local amounts over 2.00 inches in Hebei, Shanxi, and neighboring locations. Northeast China will see a mix of precipitation and sunshine April 24 – 30. The North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin will otherwise trend drier than normal during the second week of the outlook.

The rain will be welcome where it occurs in the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin through the middle of next week. The moisture profile will improve in several locations, though rain will be too light and erratically distributed to completely fix the moisture deficits. Winter wheat development conditions will improve or remain generally good. Early-season planting prospects may also improve marginally. However, much more rain will be needed in May to support ideal planting and establishment. Northeast China will likely have ample moisture to support aggressive planting in May.

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