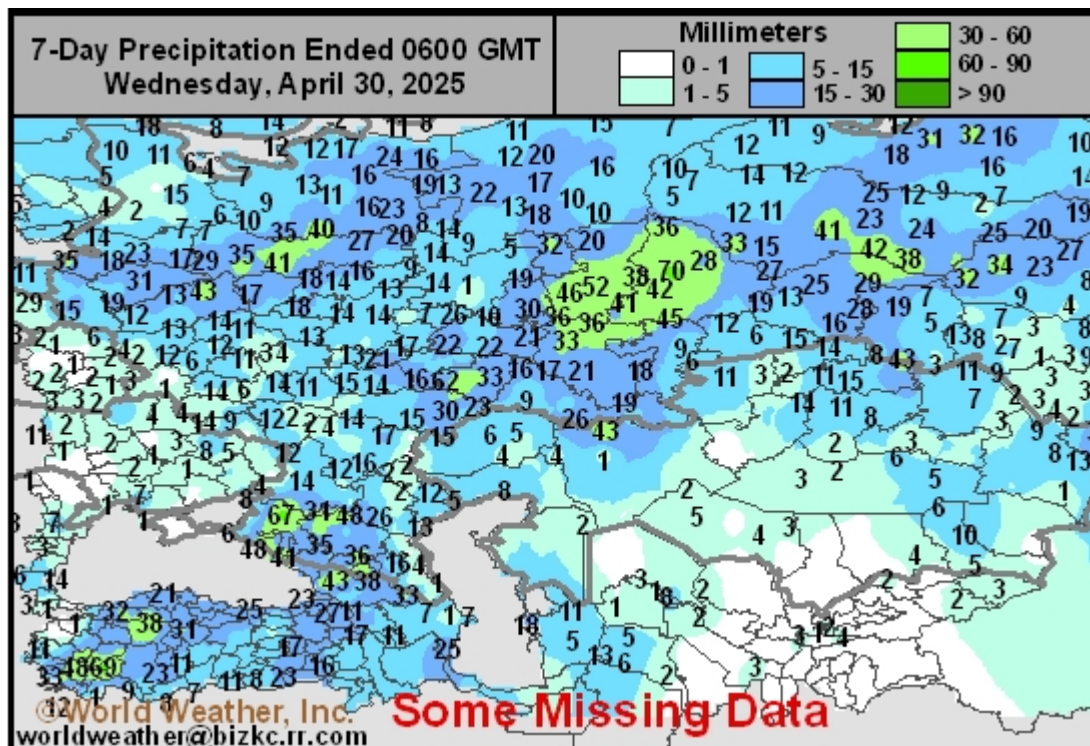


Russia, Eastern Ukraine Will Soon Need Greater Moisture

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, April 30 (World Weather Inc.) – Rough weather has dominated winter crops from Ukraine through Russia's USDA defined 'Southern Region' since planting and despite some improved soil moisture in March and early April, the need for rain will soon rise once again. The biggest threat to crops in this most recent week was not the limited rainfall, but widespread frost and freezes that burned back new vegetative development in many crop areas. Rapeseed may have been damaged in Ukraine where the cold followed eight days of warm weather. Timely precipitation earlier this season helped improve the moisture profile and stimulated new crop development and early season spring planting; however, the region has been trending drier once again and this trend will continue for the next ten days raising new concern for the already beat up crop. Winter crop development conditions may deteriorate marginally in the driest fields, though no major production impacts are expected as long as timely precipitation returns in mid-May. Planting of summer crops will advance swiftly.

Much of Russia and Kazakhstan's production areas received rain during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending April 29 ranged from 0.20 to 1.10 inches with local amounts up to 1.69 inches. A few locations in Ukraine and Belarus received up to 0.43 inch of rain, though most locations received little to no precipitation.

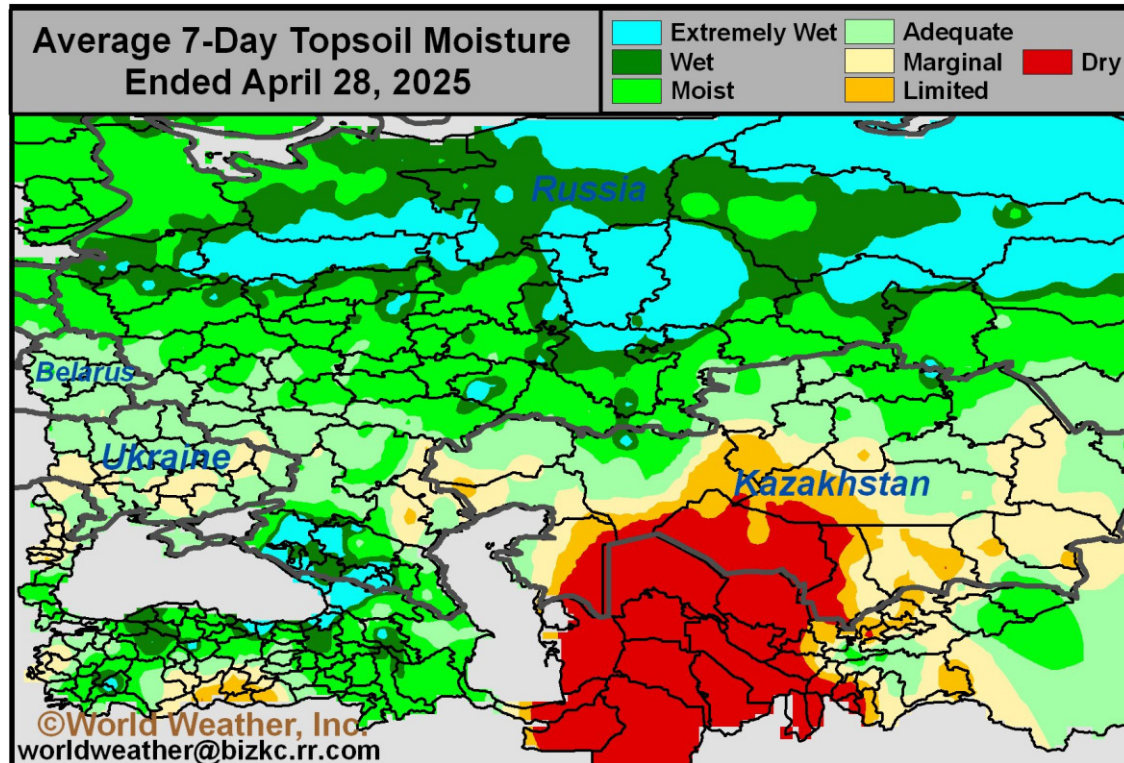


Temperatures during the April 17-24 period were well above normal and some readings last week reached the 70s and lower 80s Fahrenheit. The warmth stimulated crop development and then during the weekend and early this week frost and freezes occurred

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in most areas burning back new crop growth and raising concern over rapeseed production potentials.

Although several winter crops established unevenly or poorly last autumn, precipitation in recent weeks was enough to support a better environment for grain and oilseed development. There is still a need for periodic rain in the coming weeks to further improve or maintain a good outlook for plant development. Planting of the summer grains and oilseeds has also improved due to timely precipitation in recent weeks.



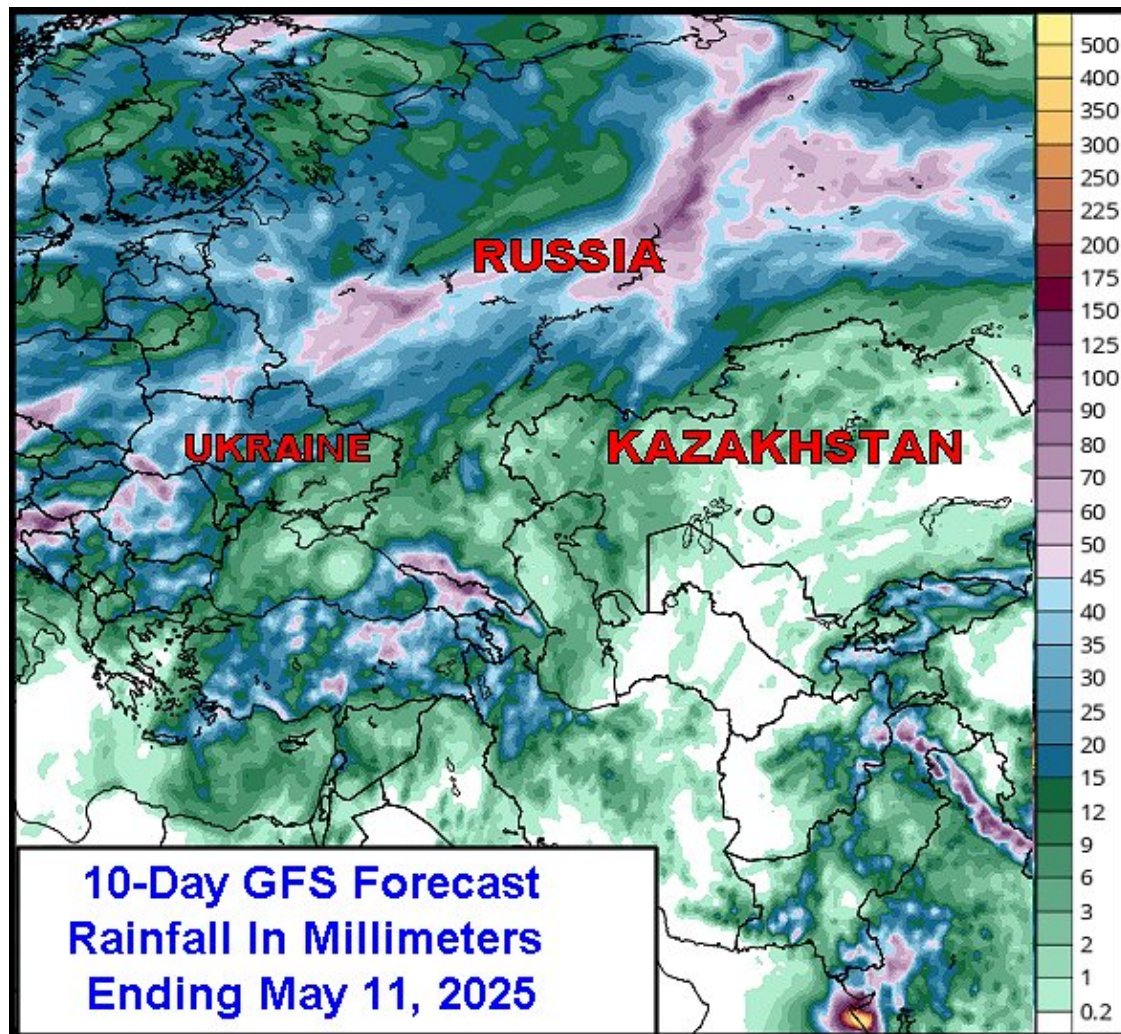
WEATHER OUTLOOK

Russia's Volga River Basin and 'Southern Region', eastern Ukraine, and western Kazakhstan will remain drier than normal through the middle of next week. Disturbances tracking near these areas will still promote light and erratic precipitation at times. However, resulting precipitation will either be lost to evaporation or too light to impact long-term soil conditions. Northern Kazakhstan and Russia's New Lands will also trend drier than normal during this time. These areas will also miss out on much of the rain or not receive enough to counter evaporation. The remaining production areas in Russia and Ukraine into Belarus and neighboring locations will have several opportunities for precipitation. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 0.50 to 2.00 inches with local amounts of 3.00 inches or slightly more. Much of Russia, Ukraine, western and northern Kazakhstan, and Belarus will have a few opportunities for erratic rainfall May 8 – 14. Resulting rainfall will be too light to impact long-term soil conditions in most locations.

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Temperatures will trend near to above normal for much of Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus through the middle of next week. Daytime highs will peak to the 50s and 60s most often through Saturday with pockets from Ukraine into western Kazakhstan warming to the 70s. Highs later this weekend and the first half of next week will increase to the 60s and 70s, though many areas in Belarus, western Russia, and neighboring locations will only warm to the 50s. Low temperatures will be in the 30s and 40s through Saturday with pockets in Ukraine, Russia's 'Southern Region', and western Kazakhstan only cooling to the 50s. Lows later this weekend and the first part of next week will increase to the 40s and 50s with pockets still cooling to the 30s.

Net drying will again occur from western Ukraine through Russia's Volga River Basin and 'Southern Region' into western Kazakhstan through at least the middle of next week. These areas will have some moisture to support new growth for the winter grain and oilseeds, along with planting and establishment of the summer grains and oilseeds; however, the need for timely rain will again increase later in May to avoid any production impacts due to dryness. Other locations in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus will either receive enough rain or have enough moisture to maintain a relatively good outlook for both winter crop development and summer crop planting.



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