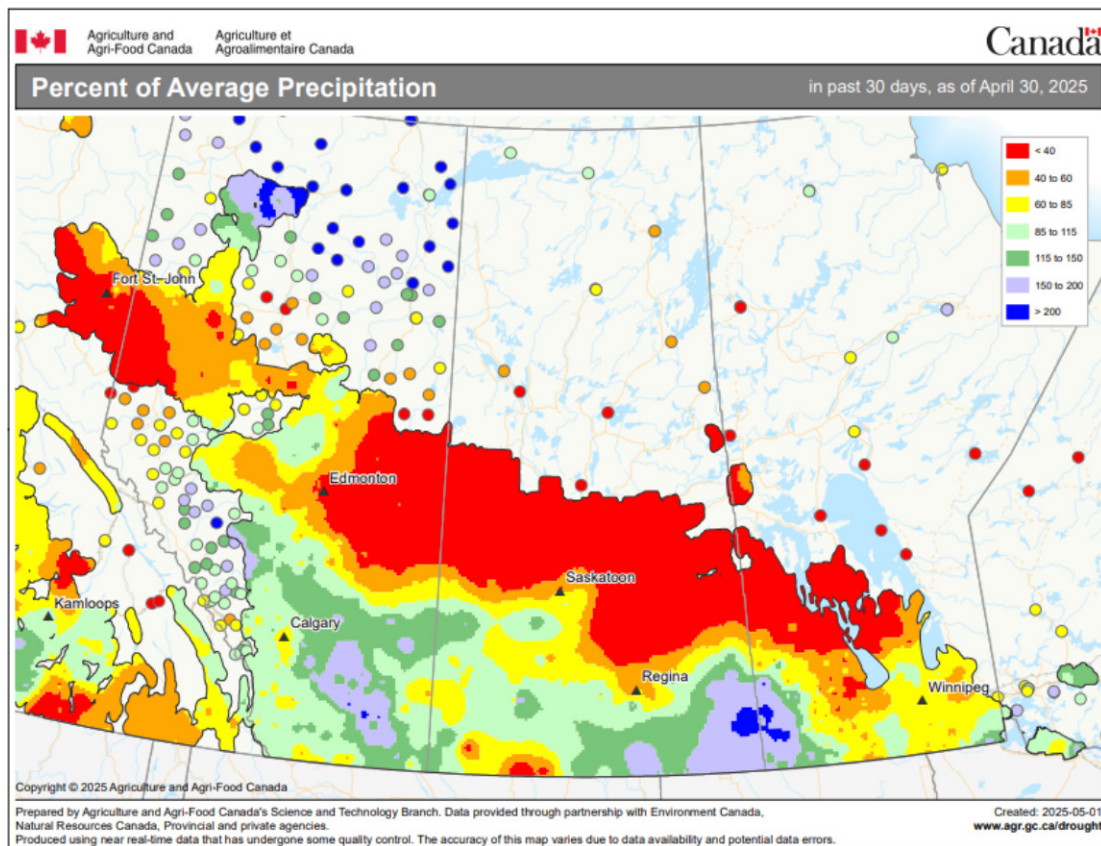


Canadian Prairies To Dry Down As Planting Begins

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, May 2 (World Weather Inc.) – *Spring planting has begun in Canada's Prairies and soil moisture varies greatly across the region. Some areas are too dry for seed germination while others are favorably moist. The next ten days and possibly two weeks will be warmer or much warmer than usual. That will raise soil temperatures sufficiently for more aggressive planting to take place; however, dryness will remain and will likely expand during this period raising concern about long term crop development potentials.* There is potential for timely rain to evolve in the second half of this month, but confidence in the significance of that precipitation is not very high right now.

Precipitation varied significantly across the Canadian Prairies in April. Southern and portions of west-central and extreme northwestern Alberta, along with portions of southern and west-central Saskatchewan and southwestern Manitoba, received near to above normal rainfall. Precipitation as a percent of normal ranged from 85-200% with wetter pockets for the month. Other production areas were drier than usual with many areas from northern and east-central Alberta through northern, central, and east-central Saskatchewan into northwestern, west-central, and central Manitoba receiving less than 40% of normal precipitation.

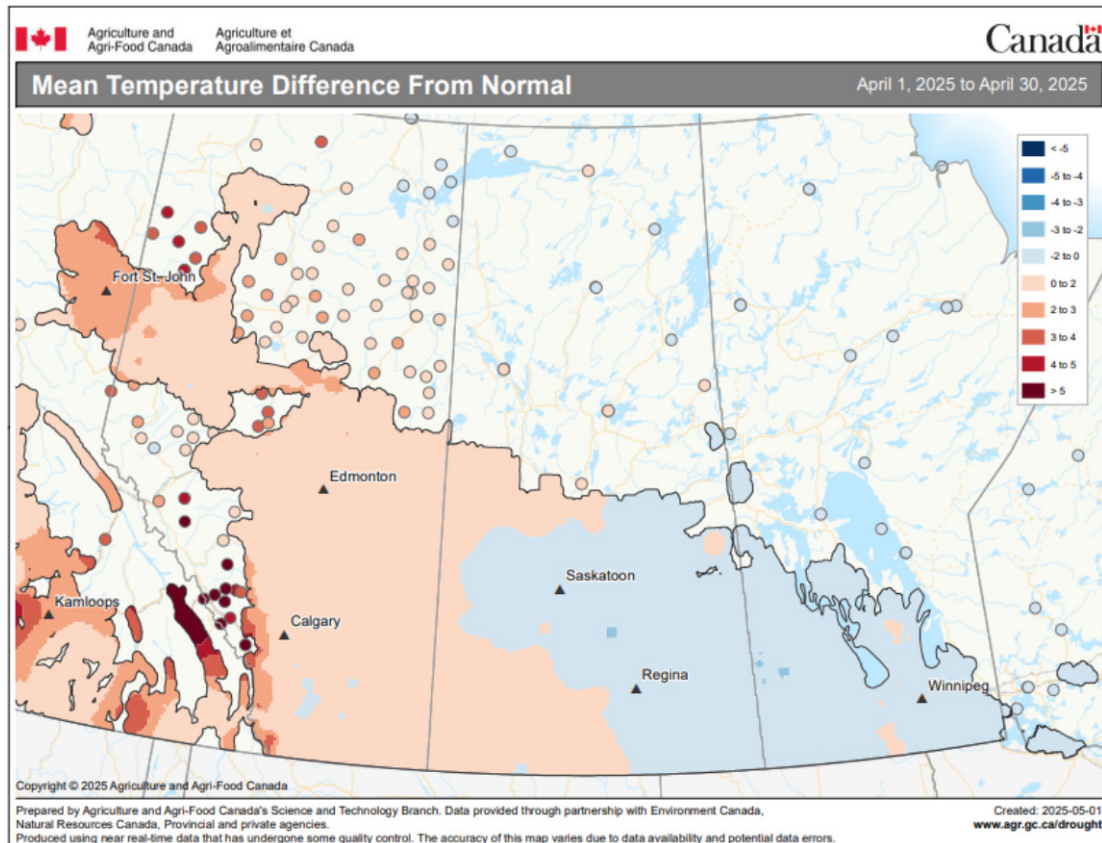


The temperature profile for the Prairies in April was generally near normal. Only a few pockets near the Rockies in Alberta and northeastern British Columbia saw slightly

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warmer than usual conditions. Soil temperatures have slowly increased and may have warmed enough for planting to begin. However, additional warming is needed to lift soil temperatures to high enough levels for widespread planting.

Despite timely precipitation over the winter and earlier this spring, several locations in Alberta and Saskatchewan still have a shortage of moisture. The environment is much more favorable compared to recent years where drought impacted planting, most notably in Alberta and southwestern Saskatchewan. As long as timely precipitation occurs in the coming weeks as more crops go into the ground, establishment conditions will be relatively favorable for the Prairies.



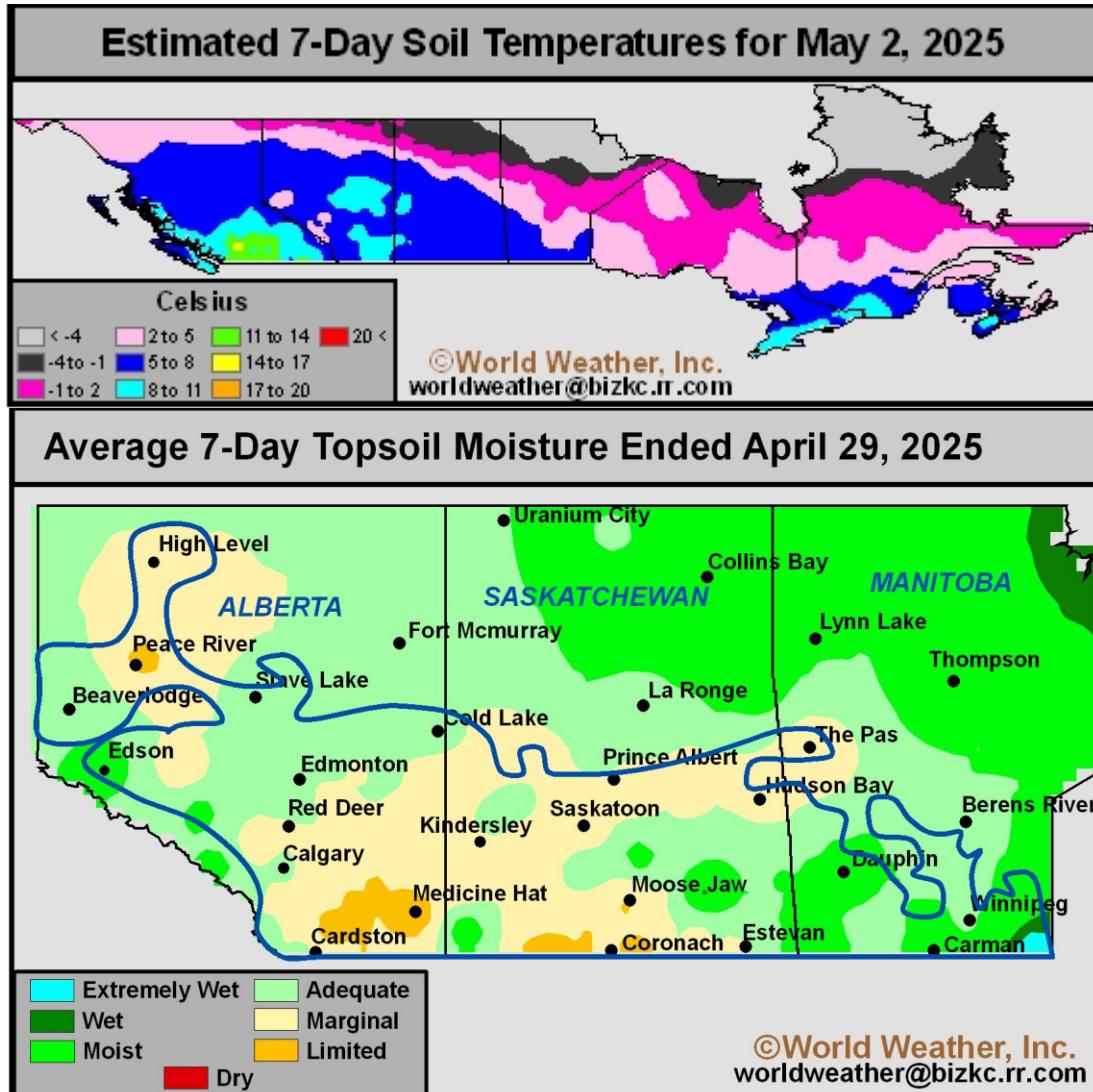
WEATHER OUTLOOK

Precipitation will be limited for a large section of the Prairies through the end of next week. A high-pressure ridge will promote dry weather today into Saturday morning. A disturbance and frontal boundary will help break down the ridge later this weekend into Monday that will bring scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms to much crop country. Moisture totals from this event will range from trace amounts to 0.40 inch with local amounts of 0.75 inch or slightly more in west-central and southwestern Alberta and pockets of southwestern Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan. Isolated thunderstorms could generate 1.00 inch or slightly more of rain as well, though these totals will be few and far between. The ridge will likely re-establish over western North America Tuesday and Wednesday, though a new disturbance will generate trace amounts to a few tenths of an inch of rain for northern Alberta, northeastern British Columbia, and neighboring locations.

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Other production areas in the Prairies will likely be dry. A disturbance or two could again generate light and erratic rain for a few locations later next week. [There is “potential” for a more active weather pattern May 10 – 16, but that potential will be better late this month.](#)

Despite the opportunities for rain, the bias for this next two weeks is for not enough rain to fall to counter evaporation brought on by the warm temperatures. Most of the Prairies will likely be drier at mid-month than they are today and that will lead to a little more concern about the long range outlook for those areas already a bit too dry.



In addition to the lack of significant rain, temperatures in the Prairies will often trend near to above normal through the end of next week. Some of the warmest conditions will occur today and Saturday as the ridge funnels warm air into the region. High temperatures will reach the 70s and low 80s Fahrenheit, though many areas in Manitoba will only warm to the 50s and 60s today. Portions of Peace River country will also only warm to the 50s and 60s Saturday. Cooler air will help drop highs to the 50s and 60s in Alberta, western Saskatchewan, and northeastern British Columbia Sunday while areas farther east again warm to the 70s and lower 80s. By Sunday, only central and southern Manitoba and

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southeastern Saskatchewan will warm to the 70s. Highs elsewhere will drop the 50s and 60s. Warmer air will return later next week with highs often reaching the 60s and 70s. Seasonable to seasonably warm weather will be most common May 10 – 16.

Net drying is slated for a large section of the Prairies through the end of next week despite the periods of erratic rainfall. The environment will be favorable for early-season planting, germination, and general fieldwork, especially with soil temperatures increasing significantly. Establishment conditions may remain less than ideal in the driest locations. However, the more active weather pattern later this month should offer at least “some” relief from the dryness even if rain fails to fix the moisture deficits. Establishment and early-season development conditions will slowly improve as long as the timely rain occurs.

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