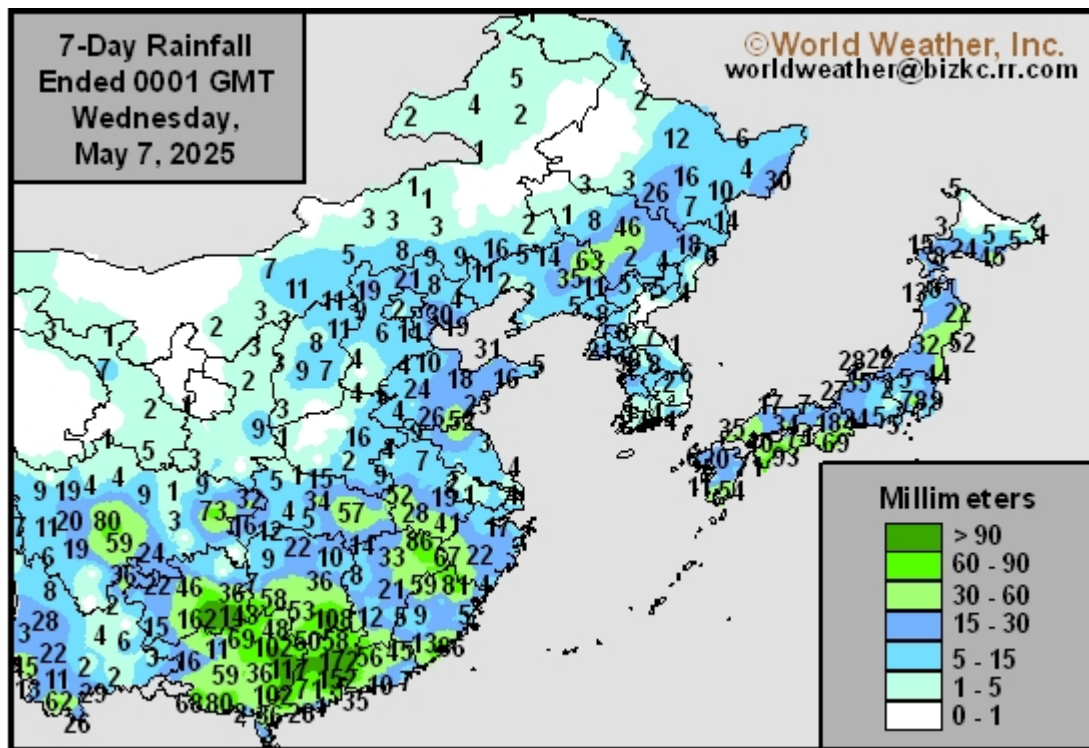


China's Driest Region May Shrink A Bit; Hotter Next Week

By Andrew Owen and Drew Lerner

Kansas City, May 7 (World Weather Inc.) – Drought conditions expanded a bit during this past week in China's east-central crop areas; including parts of the Yellow River Basin and North China Plain. Some of the expansion occurred because of hot temperatures last weekend that sent extreme readings to 104 Fahrenheit; however, cooling has since occurred bringing a little relief, although without rain the dryness will remain a concern. Weather in the next week to ten days will bring some important rain to a part of Hebei, Shandong and Liaoning which may reduce the overall size of the most seriously impacted drought region. However, dryness in the Yellow River Basin will prevail and another round of excessive heat is due into the region next week. In the meantime, rain will continue falling frequently and abundantly in southern China where crop conditions are rated favorably.

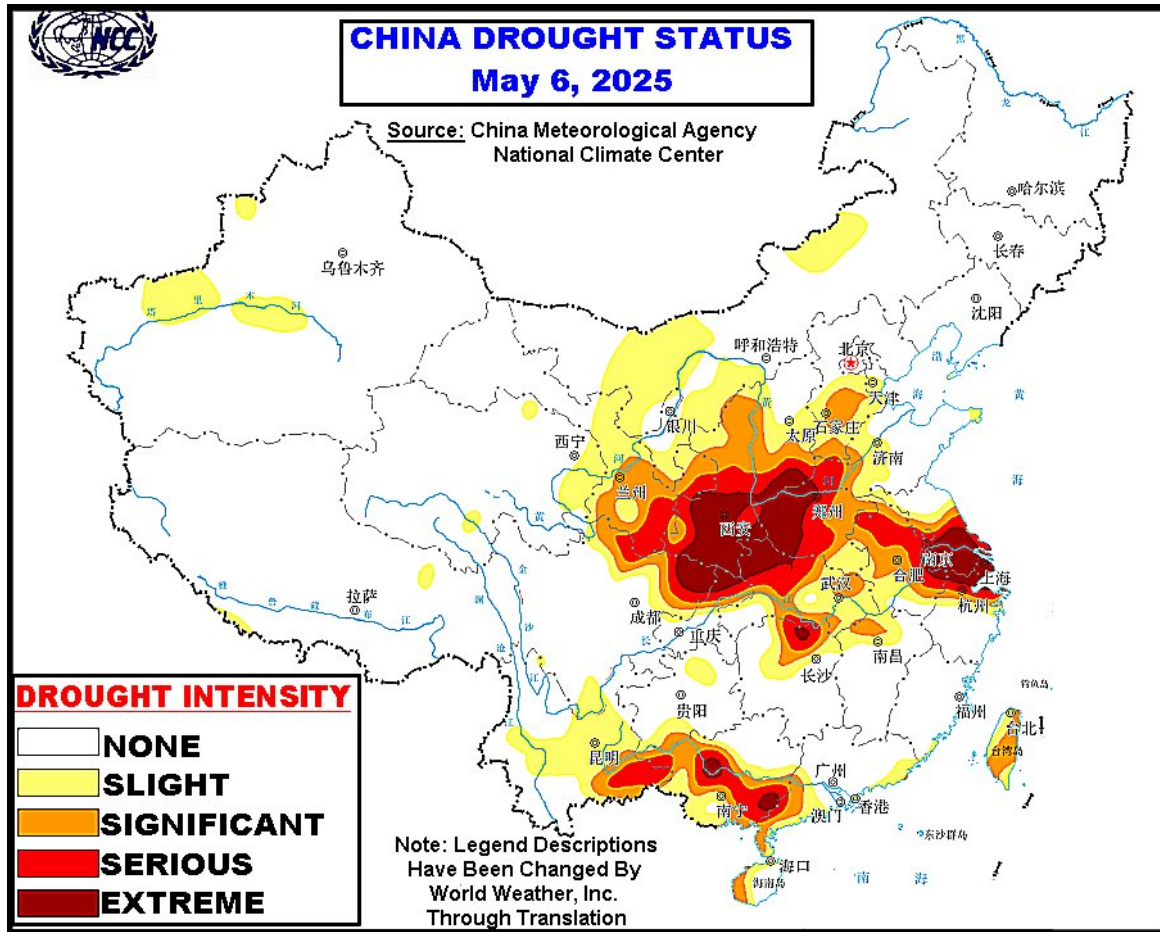
China's northeastern provinces received some welcome rain during the past week as did a part of the North China Plain. The moisture helped provide a little relief from dryness, although much more rain was needed in the North China Plain. The Yellow River Basin was left largely dry.



Rainfall during the week ended this morning ranged from 1.42 to 4.61 inches with local amounts to 6.77 inches in Guangdong, Guangxi, eastern Guizhou, and southern Hunan. Rain totals of 0.39 to 3.38 inches occurred in Fujian, Zhejiang, Jiangxi, southern Anhui, Hubei, northern Hunan, Sichuan, and Yunnan while Shandong, Hebei, Liaoning, southern Jilin, and southern Heilongjiang received 0.28 to 1.18 inches. A few other local amounts of up to 2.48 inches were noted in eastern Liaoning, southern Jilin, and southern

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Shandong while portions of Henan, Shaanxi, Shanxi, and Inner Mongolia received 0.12 to 0.63 inch of moisture. Little to no precipitation was noted elsewhere.



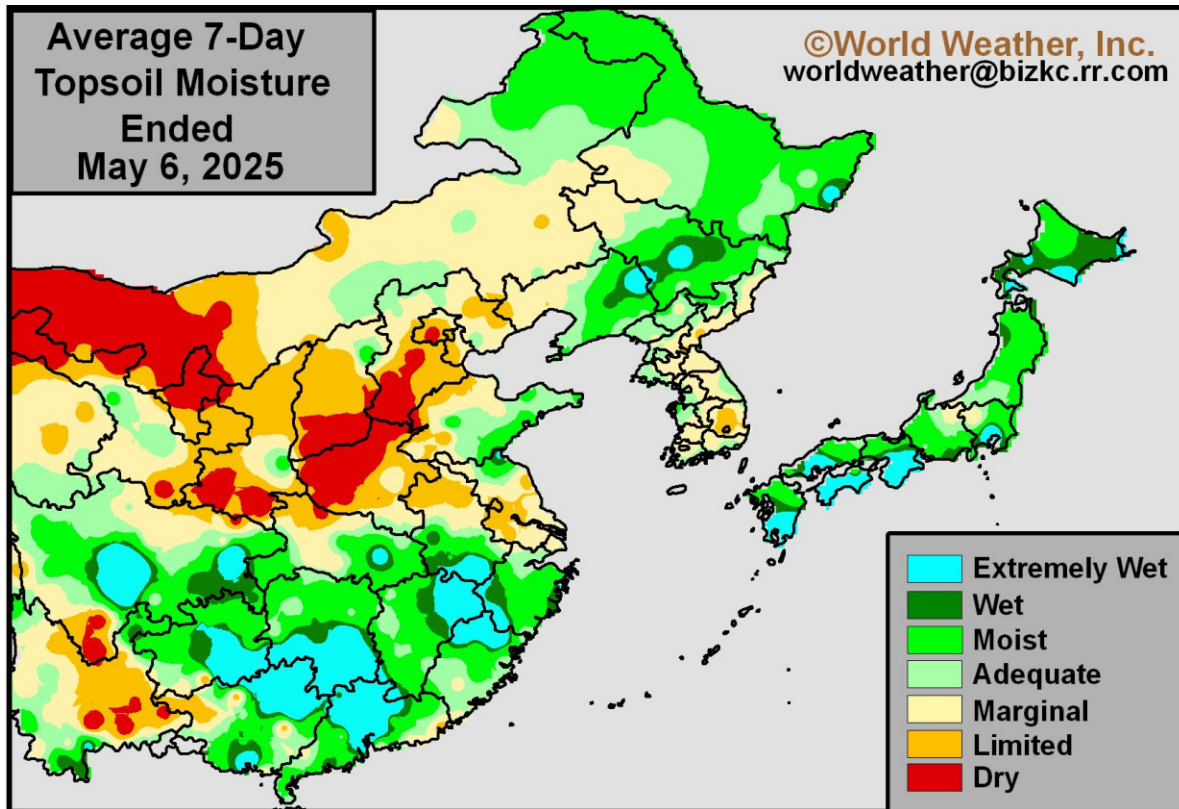
Drought remains most serious in the central Yellow River Basin and in a few areas to the southeast into Jiangsu. Some reduction in drought intensity was noted in Guangxi and immediate neighboring areas. Soil moisture Tuesday was rated adequate to excessive in much of far southern China and the Yangtze River Basin. while short to very short across the Yellow River Basin and immediate neighboring areas as well as in portions of Yunnan. Northeastern China had adequate or marginally adequate top and subsoil moisture.

Dryness in the North China Plain and Yellow River Basin has impacted unirrigated winter wheat stressing it during reproduction and filling; however, irrigation is used in a large part of the production region making it difficult to discern how much wheat in China has actually been harmed by the dryness. AI suggested that 70-85% of the wheat in China is irrigated and that fits relatively well with the assumptions World Weather, Inc. has had over the past 30 years. If the statistic is correct that only leaves 15-30% of the crop vulnerable to dryness and lower yields, but no data exists to suggest where the dryland crop is grown which makes it difficult to assess the impact of this year's dryness on production.

Henan is at the heart of this year's drought and it has produced 28-30% of the wheat in past years, but knowing where the crop is irrigated and where it is not is the only way to determine production losses and that information is just not readily available.

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Nonetheless, the central Yellow River Basin is driest and the region produces much of the wheat and some of that wheat is surely not irrigated. Dryness in those areas will lead to a cut in production especially with much of the region slated to be dry for another ten days to two weeks. Irrigation is not usually applied to summer crops at the same rate as that for winter wheat because summer crops usually benefit from the summer monsoon. The monsoon has not kicked in yet leaving some key winter, spring and summer crop areas in east-central China needing rain. In the meantime, planting and emergence conditions in the northeast part of China are nearly ideal as they should be in irrigated areas of east-central China.

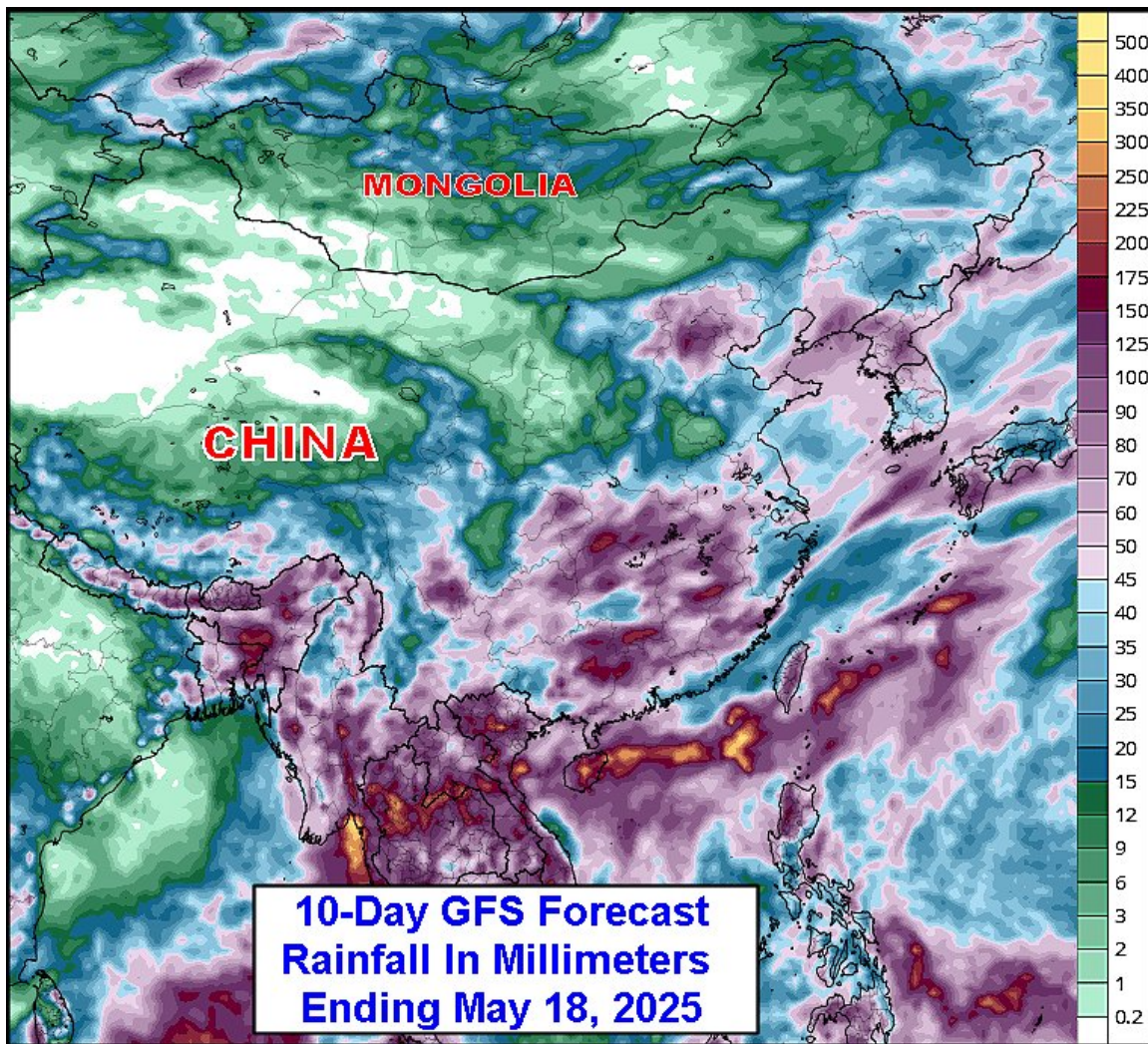


WEATHER OUTLOOK

The North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin will have a few opportunities for rain through the middle of next week. Disturbances will still generate erratic rainfall when tracking over the region through Friday morning. Light rain will also be possible Tuesday. Portions of Shandong, Hebei, northern sections of Anhui and Jiangsu, Henan, and southern Shaanxi will receive 0.50 to 2.00 inches of rain and locally greater amounts by next Wednesday morning. Shanxi and other locations in Shaanxi will receive light rain as well, though rainfall will be too light to impact long-term soil conditions. Periods of erratic rain will again occur May 15 – 21, though resulting rainfall will be too light to significantly improve the moisture profile. Temperatures will often trend above normal through the middle of next week. Daytime highs will peak to the 70s and 80s Fahrenheit with pockets warming to the 90s during periods of drier weather.

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Erratic rainfall through the middle of next week will be enough to marginally bolster soil moisture in portions of the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin. Resulting rainfall will still be too light to completely fix the moisture deficits in the main production areas. Late-season winter wheat development conditions will likely improve marginally. Summer crop establishment and early-season development conditions may also improve slightly as well. Much more rain will be needed later this month and early June to support ideal long-term crop prospects. Planting of the summer crops will advance swiftly around the periods of rain.



Areas near and south of the Yangtze River will see several waves of rain through the middle of next week. Rain will occur on a near daily basis with some of the most significant precipitation occurring through Saturday. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 1.50 to 5.00 inches with locally greater amounts in Guangdong, Guangxi, Hunan, Jiangxi, and Hubei. Drier pockets are also expected in Yunnan. The Yangtze River Basin and southern China will see a mix of rain and sunshine May 15 – 21.

Waves of rain will help bolster or keep soil moisture at adequate or excessive levels near and south of the Yangtze River in coming weeks. Localized flooding will be a

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concern, though crop and structural damage should be minimal. The environment will remain relatively good for the rice, corn, and sugarcane outside the driest locations in Yunnan.

Northern China will also have several opportunities for precipitation through the middle of next week. Disturbances will promote some of the most widespread precipitation through Saturday. Light and erratic rainfall will persist later this weekend and the first part of next week. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 0.50 to 2.00 inches with locally greater amounts. The region will again have a few opportunities for rain May 15 – 21. *Early-season corn, soybean, rice, and spring wheat planting and establishment conditions will remain favorable.*

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