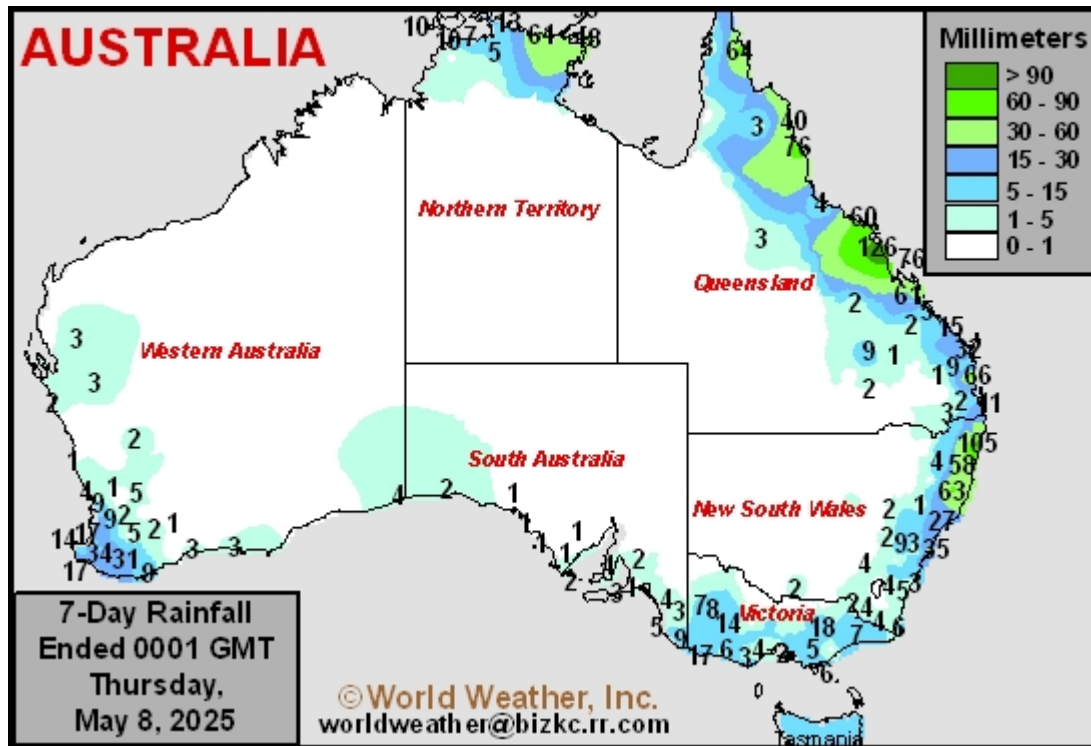


Australia Will Remain Dry; Planting Pace To Slow

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, May 8 (World Weather Inc.) – Precipitation was again limited for the main winter grain and oilseed areas in Australia during the past week. The ground continued to firm and a large section of crop country is too dry to support establishment and early-season growth. Producers in the driest locations will likely wait to plant a significant amount of crop until rain potentials increase. However, drier-than-usual conditions will prevail for at least the next ten days and some computer forecast models have suggested the dryness may linger through the second week of the forecast for Western Australia. Normal planting dates usually extend into June and there is still plenty of time for better rainfall to improve establishment conditions.

Portions of Victoria saw periods of light rain during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.12 to 0.55 inch. Extreme southern fringes of South Australia received up to 0.20 inch of rain as well. The extreme southwest corner of Western Australia reported 0.35 to 1.22 inches of rain, though much of the precipitation occurred outside the main production areas. Little to no rain was noted elsewhere.

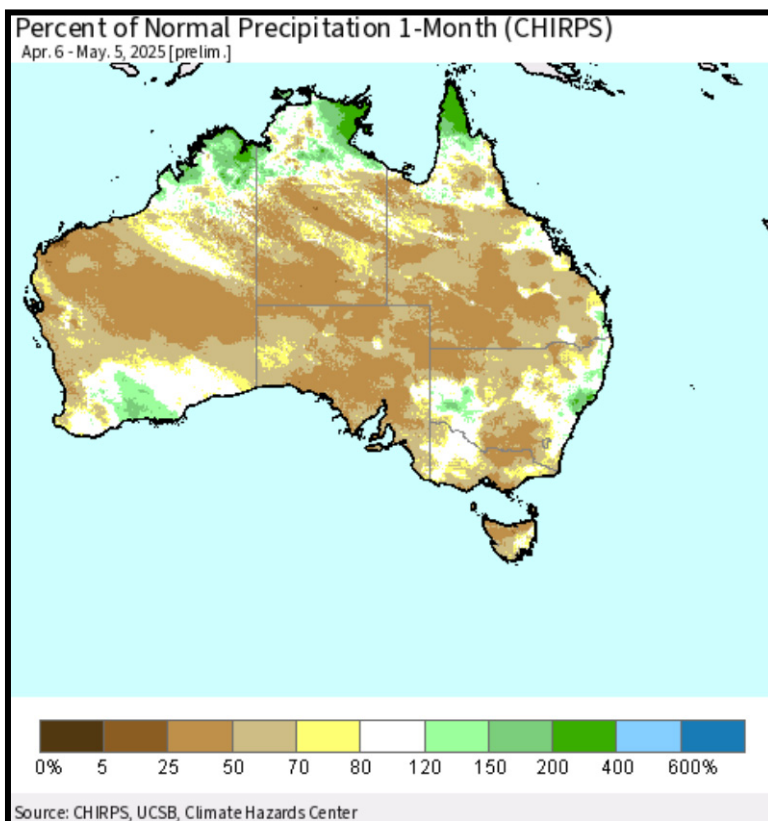
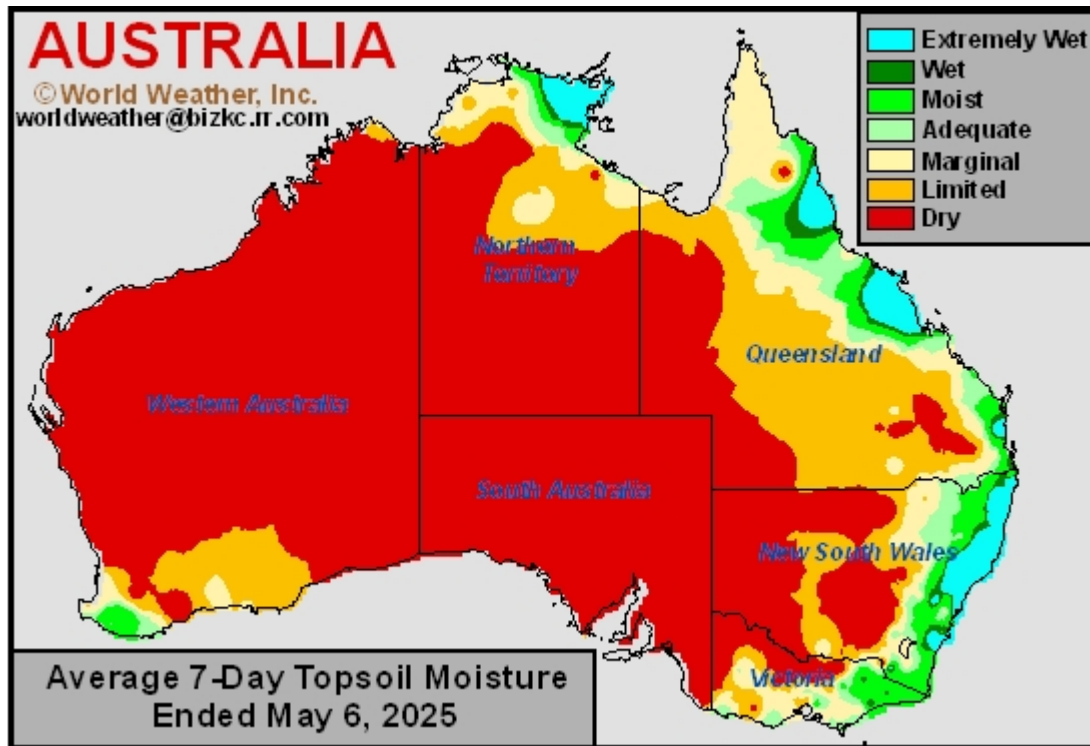


Several areas in southern Western Australia and portions of New South Wales and western Victoria actually received near or slightly above normal rainfall for the 30-day period ending May 5. Other production areas were drier than usual with precipitation ranging from 25-80% of normal.

The topsoil continues to firm across the main production areas in Australia with most having short or critically short moisture. Subsoil moisture remains at marginally

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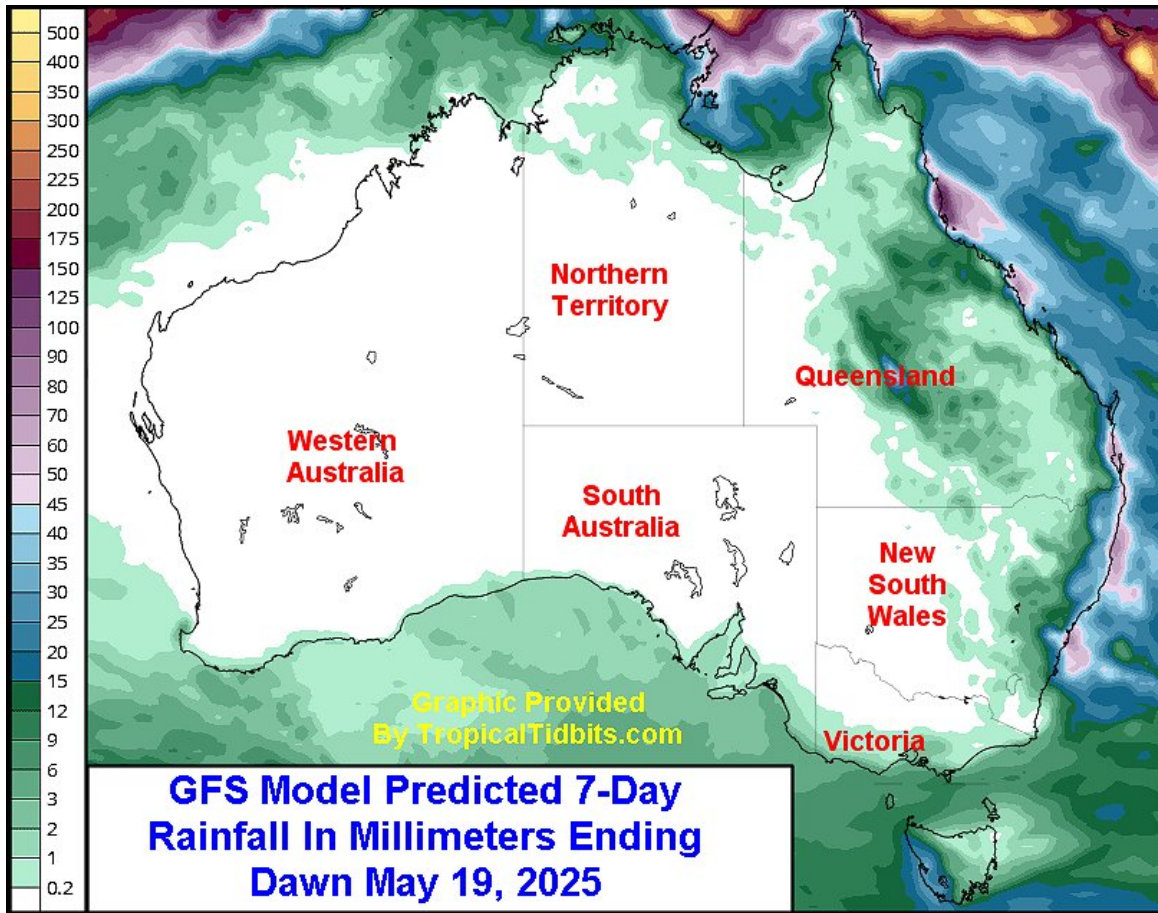
adequate to short levels, though many areas in South Australia, New South Wales, and Western Australia have a critical shortage of moisture further down in the soil as well.



Early-season planting of the winter wheat, barley, and canola begins late April or early May depending on the region and moisture profile. Planting conditions are less than favorable due to the recent drying trend. The need for significant rain is high in order to support more aggressive planting across the main production areas in eastern Australia, South Australia, and Western Australia. There is still plenty of time for better rain in the coming weeks with planting usually continuing into June. Producers may be waiting for better rain before putting a significant amount of crop in the ground.

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Drier-than-usual weather will prevail across the main production areas in Australia during the coming week. A few light showers will be possible in New South Wales and Queensland, though resulting rainfall will be rapidly lost to evaporation. Western Australia and South Australia into Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland will then have an opportunity or two for spotty rainfall May 16 – 22. However, resulting precipitation will be too light to impact long-term soil conditions.



Seasonable to seasonably warm weather is slated for Australia during the coming week. Daytime highs will peak to the 70s and 80s in Western Australia. Eastern Australia and South Australia will warm to the 60s and 70s most often with pockets occasionally warming to the 80s. Temperatures will then drop closer to normal May 16 – 22.

Aggressive drying will continue for much of Australia for at least the next seven days. Planting prospects will remain less than favorable to poor across the main production areas. Despite the potential for some spotty rain during the second week of the outlook, the environment will remain less than ideal for germination and establishment.

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