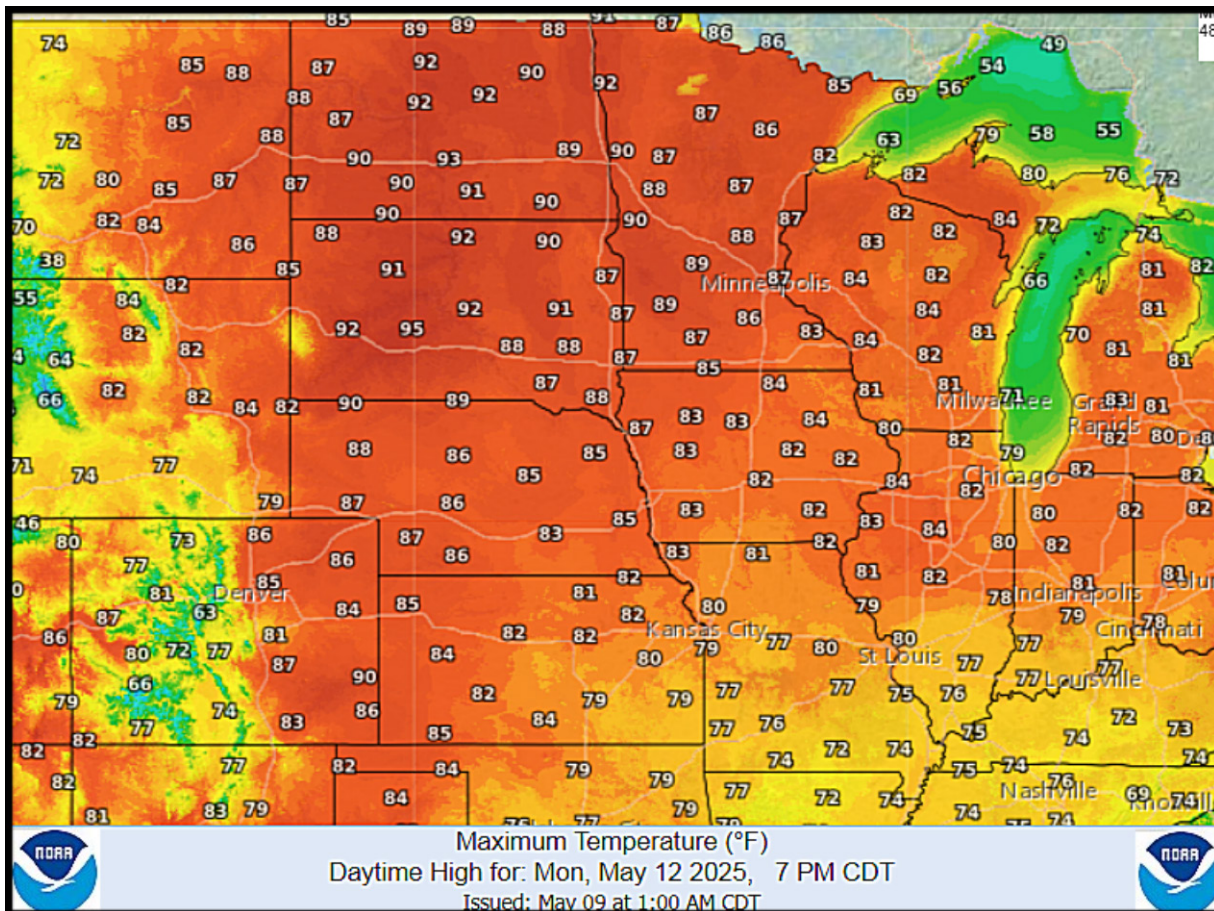


Nebraska, Northern Kansas to Michigan Driest Next 10 Days

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, May 9 (World Weather Inc.) – U.S. soil moisture is rated adequate to surplus in southern, central and eastern portions of the Midwest as well as the Delta, Tennessee River Basin and portions of the southern Plains. Drying has been and will continue to occur in the northwestern one-third of the Midwest including the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Kansas and will evolve in northern Illinois, northern Missouri and areas northeast to parts of Michigan and Wisconsin through early next week. *Drying in the northwestern Corn and Soybean Belt has generated greater interest because of the already firming condition of soil and the anticipation of excessive heat this weekend and early next week. Some relief may occur in a part of the upper Midwest next week, but areas from Nebraska and northern Kansas to Michigan may be in a net drying pattern for nearly ten days.*

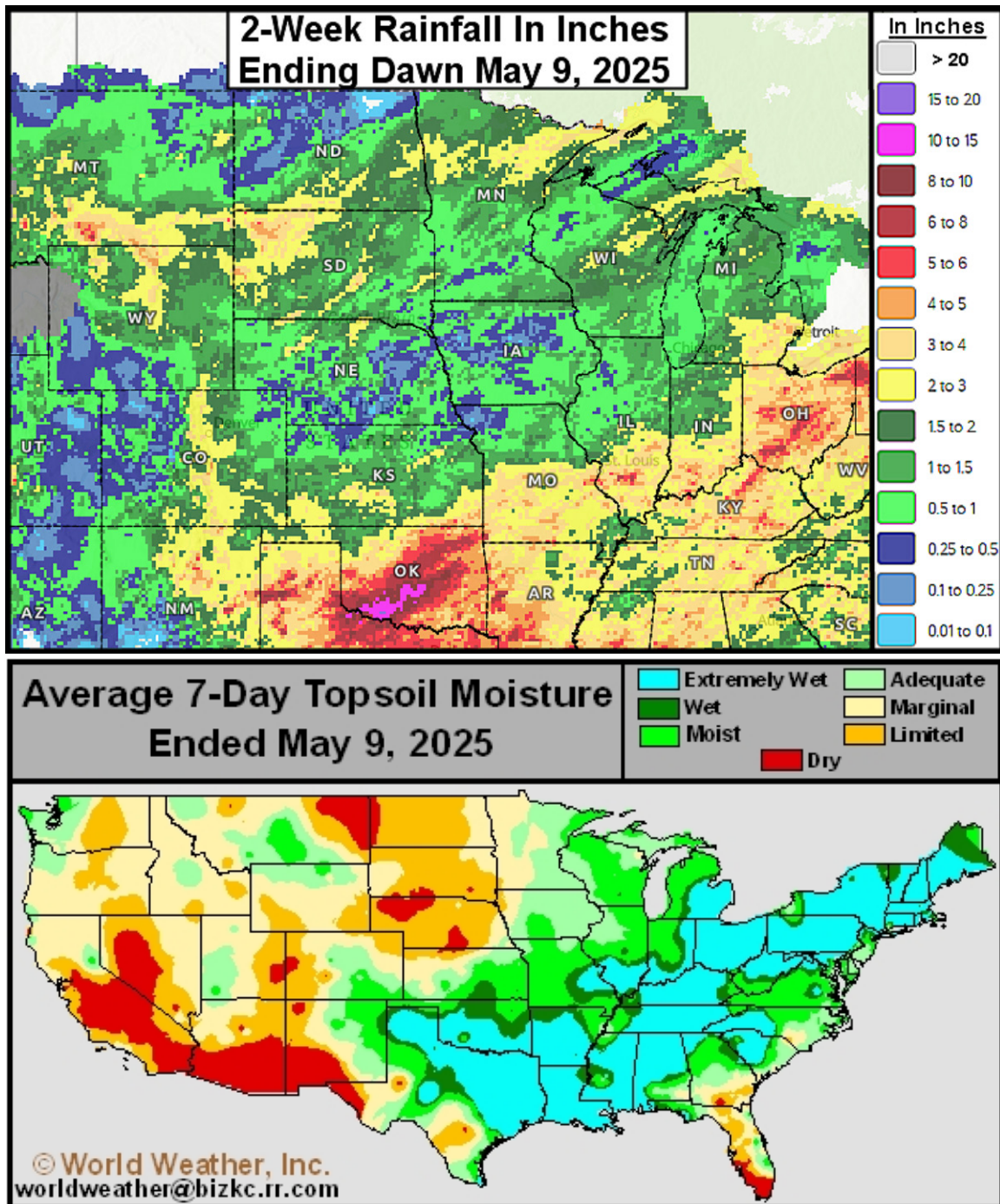


Dry or nearly dry conditions have dominated the past week in the eastern Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin and western Michigan as well as areas south into Nebraska, portions of Iowa, northern Missouri and the northwest half of Illinois. *Some of this region has only received a trace to 0.50 inch of rain over the past ten days.* Temperatures over this period of time were not exceptionally warm and that helped conserve soil moisture and maintain a

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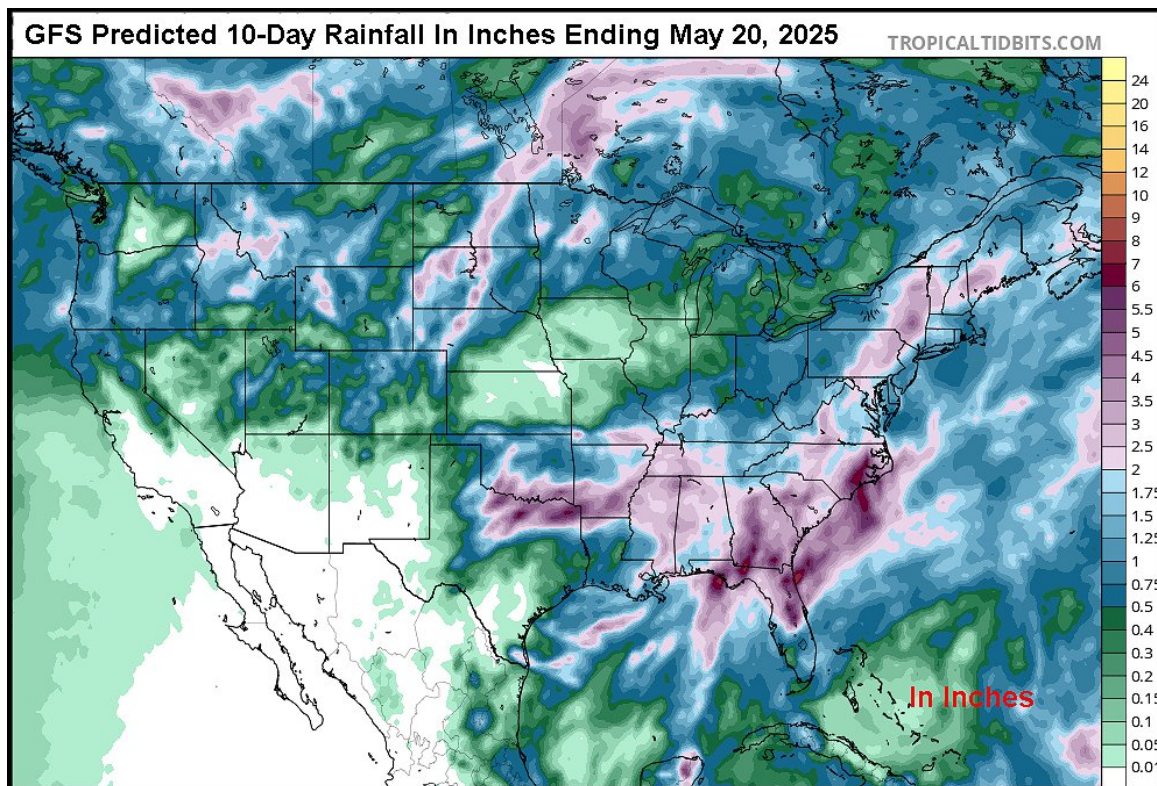
very good outlook for spring planting. All of that, though, is about to change as excessive heat begins to evolve.

Temperatures this weekend and early next week are predicted to rise through out the 80s and into the lower and middle 90s Fahrenheit in the northern Plains, upper Midwest and in some of the drier areas of Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri with 80s expected farther to the east into the Midwest. The warmer temperatures will last for three to five days and will be accompanied by no rain resulting in accelerated drying rates. Some of the drying will be enhanced by increasing wind speeds as well.



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Portions of Nebraska Iowa, northern Missouri, northwestern Illinois and southern Minnesota have received less than 0.50 inch of moisture over the past two weeks and the topsoil reflects some of that drying. The dryness will become more eye-opening early next week when the next soil moisture assessment is made. **The combination of restricted past rain, drier-biased soil conditions and the coming several days of drying and excessive heat will quickly deplete topsoil moisture resulting in more obvious crop stress for early season crops.** The drying will also raise some concern for producers who have not begun planting. The declining moisture profile may raise a little apprehension over the balance of planting and early season crop development because of the less than ideal weather outlook for the coming ten days.



Rain is expected to develop in the northern Plains Wednesday and Thursday with some of it lingering into Friday. the Dakota and Minnesota will be most impacted, although some rain may reach into western and north-central Nebraska. Some of the rain that falls in southern Minnesota and Wisconsin may not be enough to seriously improve soil moisture. The same is true for Michigan, northern Illinois and northeastern Indiana. Most of the west-central and southwestern Corn and Soybean production area may experience net drying which may support aggressive planting, but will also raise concern over plant emergence and establishment.

There is still plenty of time for improved rainfall to take place and most longer range computer forecast modeling does suggest after May 20 there will be a much better opportunity for rain in these drier areas. Nonetheless, sometimes the longer range forecasts do not hold up very well and that warrants a close watch on the precipitation pattern into late May.

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In the meantime, more rain is expected periodically in the Delta, Tennessee River basin and parts of Kentucky where there are still numerous fields dealing with standing water of muddy conditions preventing fieldwork from advancing. The odds are rising for some of this region to experience prevent plant conditions and other areas will have to switch from corn and other early season crops to cotton, sorghum or soybeans.

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