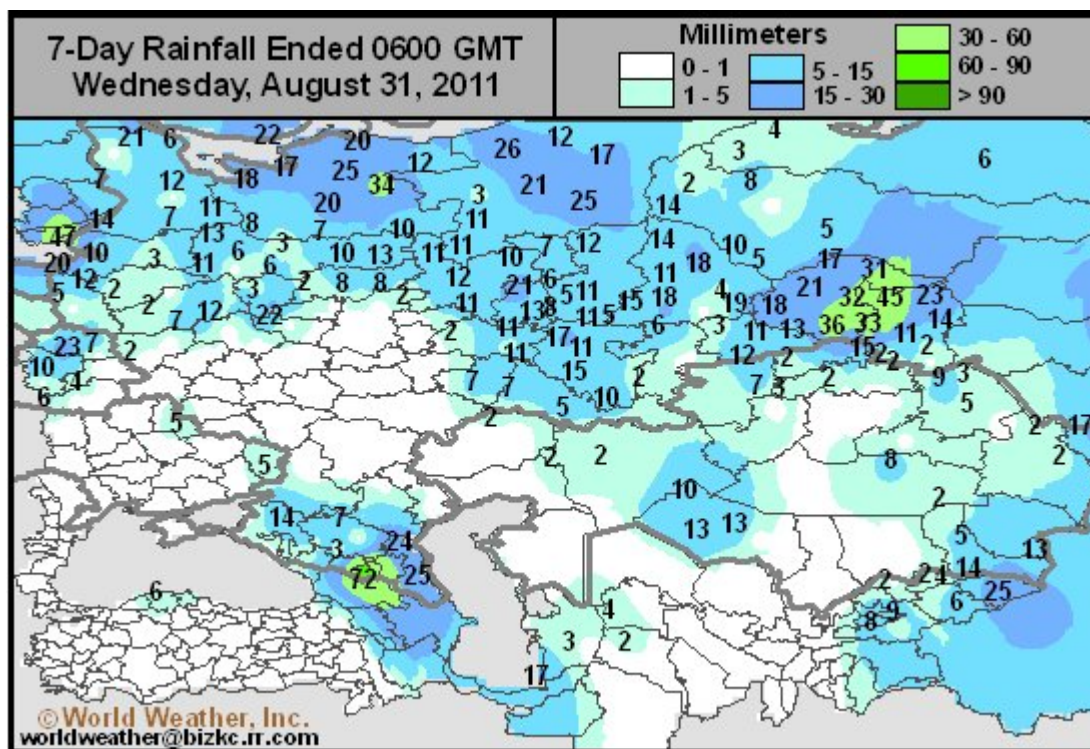


Russia, Ukraine Rain Welcome; Mild Weather May Limit Growth

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, May 9 (World Weather Inc.) – *Timely precipitation this year has helped ease concern for drought impacting winter grain and oilseeds for Russia, Ukraine, and neighboring locations. Development conditions improved in recent weeks and yield potentials have increased. Additional rain will further bolster soil moisture across the main production areas through the end of next week.* However, mild temperatures may limit aggressive growth for a while. *Frost and light freezes will also occur in parts of Belarus, the Baltic States, far western Russia and some northwestern Ukraine locations and could marginally damage crops.* Overall, the pattern should end up supporting long term crop development and production potential. The moisture will also be good for spring planting.

The main production areas in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, western and northern Kazakhstan, and the Baltic States all saw a mix of rain and sunshine during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.28 to 0.83 inch with local amounts up to 1.46 inches. Temperatures were relatively warm at times with highest readings in the 70s and lower 80s Fahrenheit. Lowest temperatures were still in the 30s and 40s.



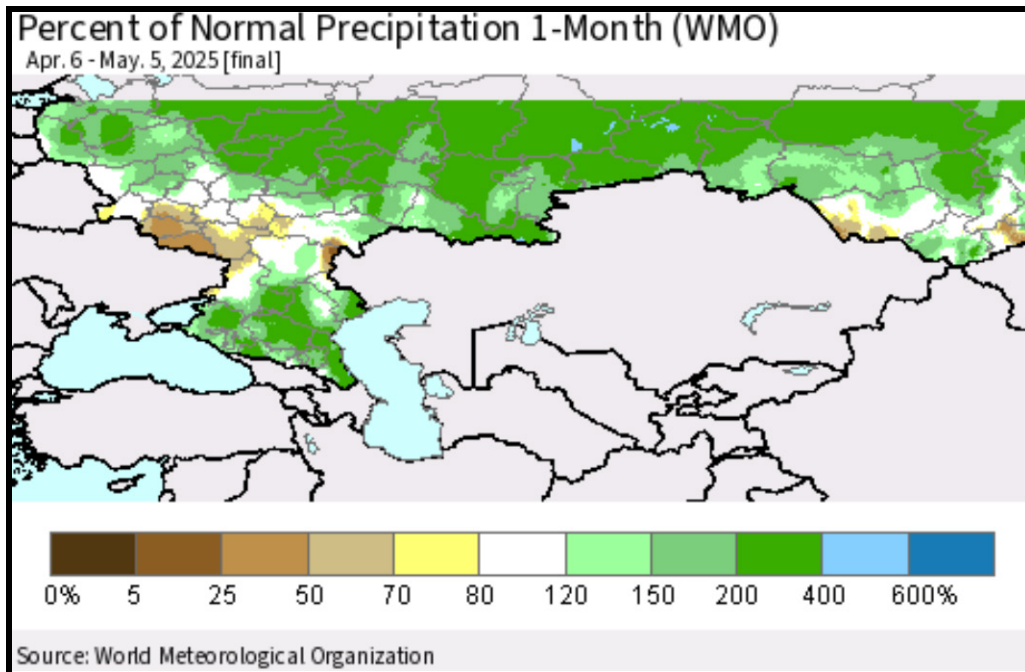
Ukraine and portions of Belarus into portions of southwestern Russia were drier than usual for the 30-day period ending May 5. Other locations in Russia and much of western and northern Kazakhstan received near to above normal rainfall during this time with pockets in Kazakhstan that were slightly drier than usual. Soil moisture was still rated

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adequate or marginally adequate in much of crop country despite several locations trending drier than usual in recent weeks.

Periods of precipitation late this winter and earlier this spring slowly improved conditions for winter wheat, barley, rye, and rapeseed in the main production areas of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, western Kazakhstan, and neighboring locations. Several areas entered last winter with a significant shortage of moisture, though there was enough rain earlier this year to improve production potentials. ***New tillering this spring resulting from periods of milder-than-usual weather with light precipitation should help crops yield better than feared last autumn. Periods of rain are still needed in coming weeks to maintain a good environment for late-season development.***

In the meantime, planting of the summer grains and oilseeds is ongoing in Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and neighboring locations. Germination and establishment conditions have been relatively good due to the periodic rain. The driest fields would still benefit from a little more significant rainfall to support ideal long-term conditions.

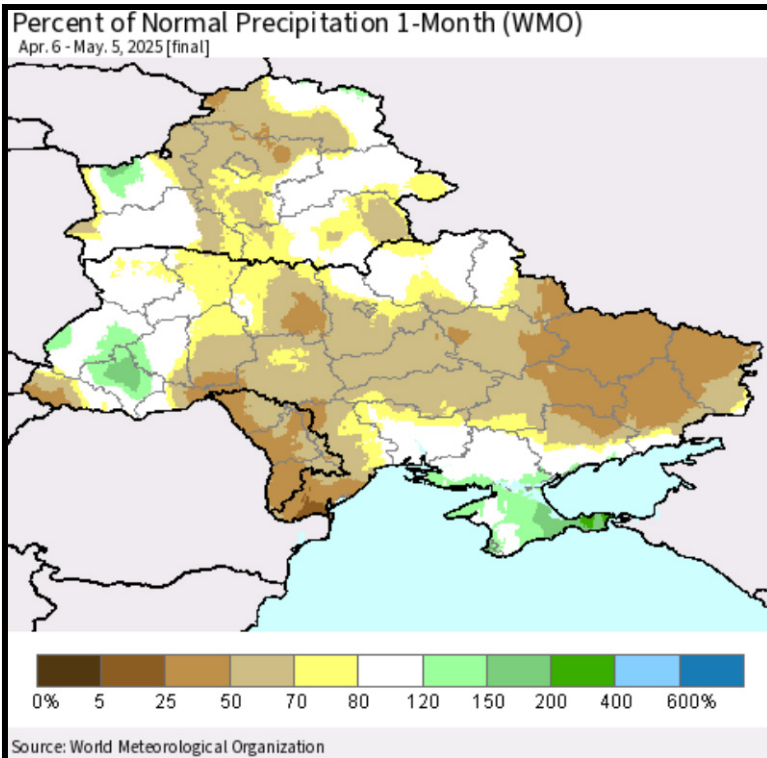


WEATHER OUTLOOK

Waves of rain are slated for much of crop country in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, western and northern Kazakhstan, and neighboring locations through the end of next week. An upper-level trough of low pressure will slowly meander around Eastern Europe that will promote erratic rainfall on a near daily basis. Moisture totals by next Friday morning will range from 0.50 to 2.00 inches with local amounts of 3.00 inches or slightly more in eastern and central Ukraine, Russia's 'Southern Region', and areas near and east of the Ural Mountains in Russia and northern Kazakhstan. Additional rain is slated for most locations May 17-23 as the trough slowly exits the region.

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The temperature profile will often trend cooler than usual for Russia, Ukraine, and neighboring locations through the end of next week due to the trough and rain. Kazakhstan will still warm to the 70s and 80s most often through the end of next week. Highs elsewhere will generally be in the 50s and 60s with pockets near the Kazakhstan border in Russia still



warm to the 70s at times. Low temperatures will be in the 30s and 40s most days, though Kazakhstan will only cool to the 50s at times. Pockets in Russia will occasionally cool to the upper 20s as well, though the coldest conditions will occur outside the main winter crop production areas. Seasonable to seasonably cool weather will likely prevail May 17-23.

Frost and freeze conditions have already occurred frequently this week from parts of Poland into the Baltic States, Belarus and northwestern Russia with some frost and light freezes also impacting northwestern Ukraine. This cold weather

has burned back new vegetative development and slowed crop growth this spring. The cool conditions will last for another five to seven days with gradual warming likely in the second week of the forecast. Most of the frost and freezes have not induced new crop damage, although damage may have occurred to a few crops in April when hard freezes impacted Ukraine rapeseed after a period of aggressive early season growth.

Rainfall in coming weeks will bolster or keep soil moisture to adequate and excessive levels in a large section of crop country in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and western and northern Kazakhstan. The outlook for the winter grain and oilseeds will remain relatively favorable. Planting and establishment conditions for the summer grain and oilseeds will also remain generally good. The main concern will be the cooler than usual weather. Development rates will likely be lowered due to the lack of significant daytime heating. Frost and light freezes may also damage a minor amount of winter crops. Overall production losses should be minimal, though the need for warmer weather will increase significantly later this month.

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