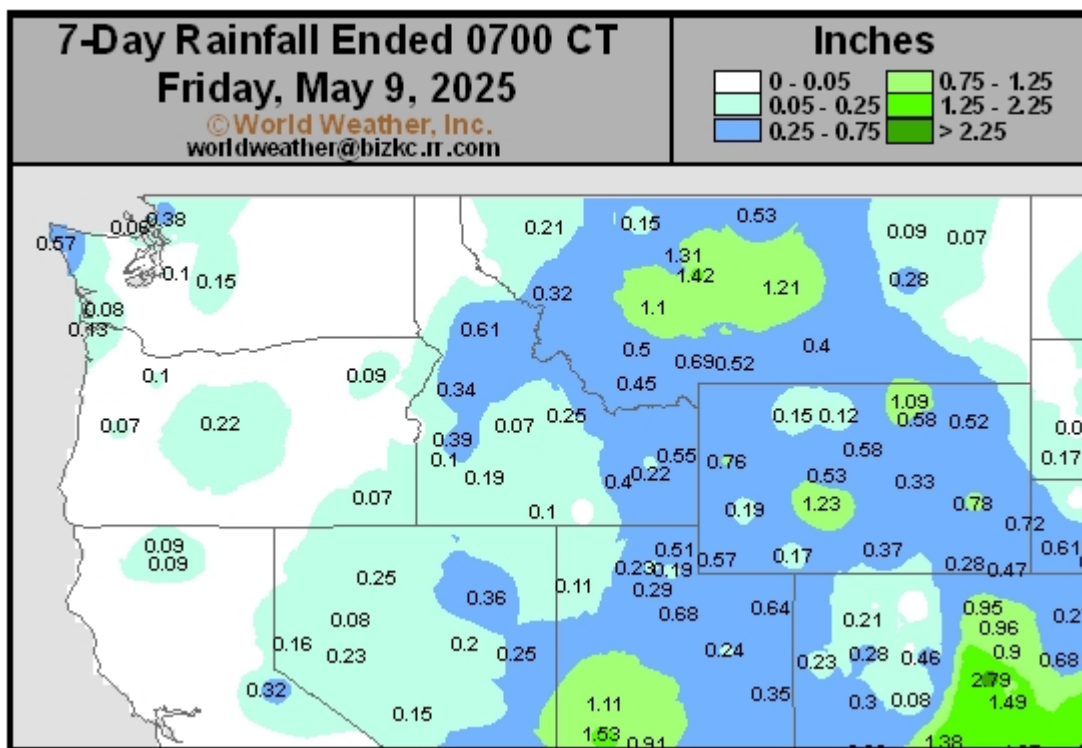


U.S. Pacific Northwest Dryland Crops Need Rain

By Scarlett Waters

Kansas City, May 9 (World Weather Inc.) – Recent warm and dry weather in Washington and northern Oregon has reduced soil moisture and raised some unirrigated winter crop stress. The need for significant moisture in dryland production areas is steadily rising because of decreasing soil moisture while crops are in the joint to boot stage. A few crops in the driest area have begun to head and that makes the urgency for rain much greater since dryness would likely cut into yields. Dry conditions are expected to continue in central Washington and in the Columbia River Basin over the coming week to ten days and there may be a couple of very warm days this weekend. Cooling is likely next week, but the potential for significant rain remains very low suggesting crop stress will continue to rise.

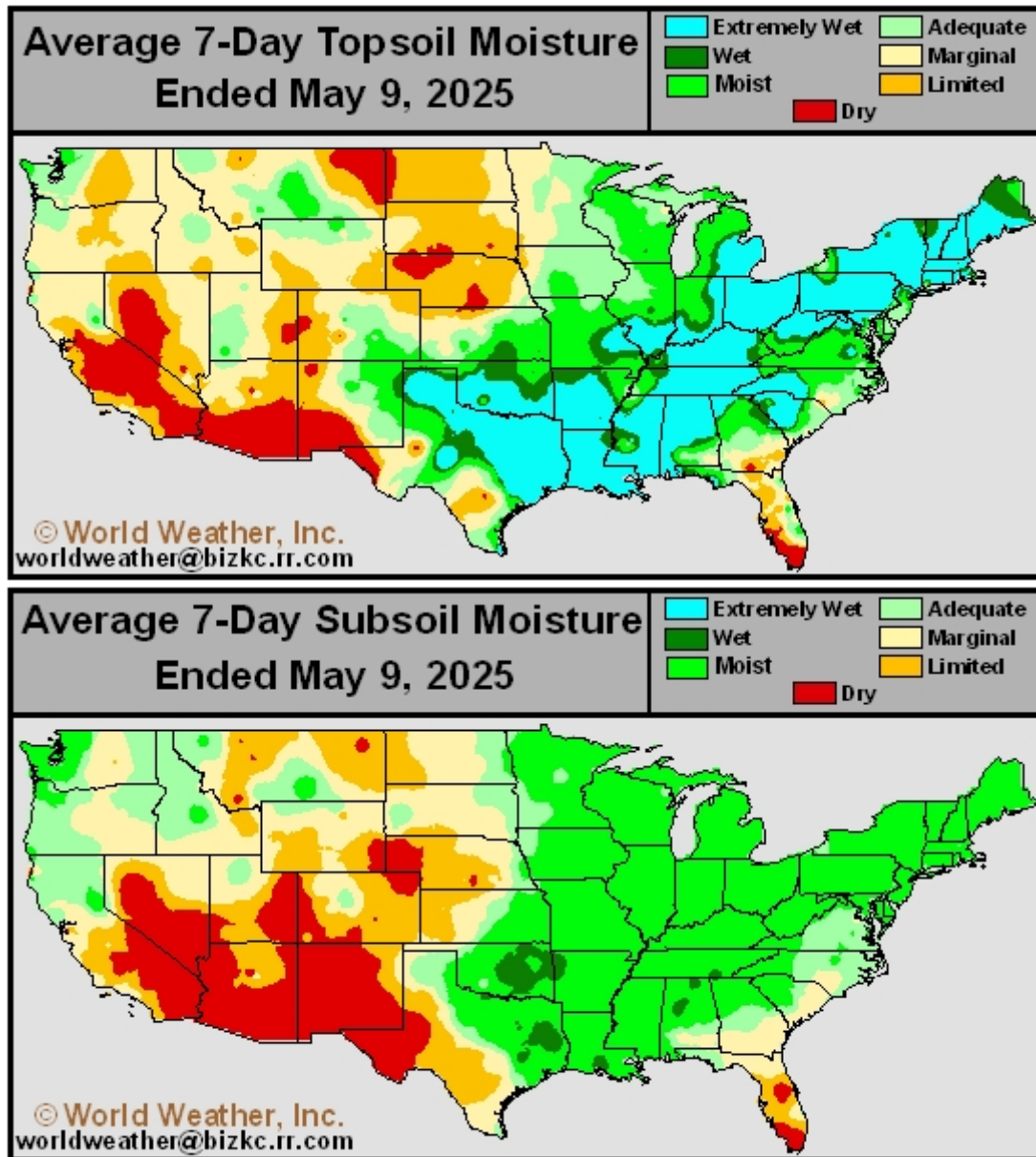


In the past 7 days, dry conditions have occurred across much of Washington's crop area as well as north-central Oregon. Recent above normal high temperatures in the 70s and 80s Fahrenheit have also contributed to increased evaporation rates in the region. Irrigated crops have sufficient water supply to support winter and spring crops with reservoir levels close to 50% of average and additional snow remains in the mountains. However, unirrigated crops have lost their moisture reserve with topsoil moisture now rated short to very short and subsoil moisture marginally adequate to short. Winter wheat is expected to begin reproduction in the coming weeks and significant rain and/or irrigation water will be needed to aid in supporting the best potential yields.

Very warm temperatures will occur today and Saturday with afternoon readings getting into the 80s Fahrenheit; however, some cooling is likely Sunday into next week

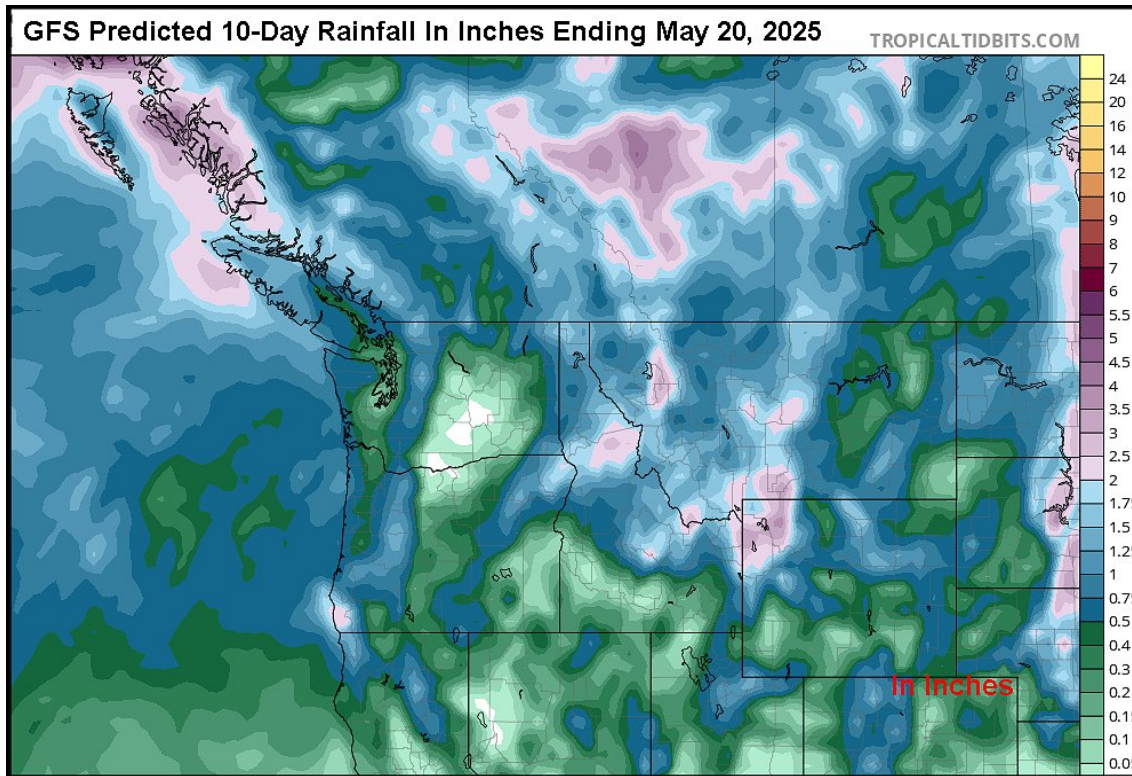
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reducing the heat and the accompanying stress on crops. Rain is still unlikely which will maintain concern for future crop development.



In the next 10-days, dry conditions are expected to continue in central Washington, the Columbia River Basin, the lower Snake River Valley and eastern Oregon. Much warmer than normal daytime highs are forecast to occur this weekend, with mid-70s to mid-80s expected in Washington and northern Oregon, and low 80s to low 90s in the Snake River Valley. Near-normal to cooler-biased temperatures are expected to return next week into the following week. If this forecast verifies, much more precipitation will be needed across the crop region in the coming weeks to support unirrigated crops, such as reproducing winter wheat. Most spring and summer crops are irrigated and should develop normally, despite the drier weather bias.

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