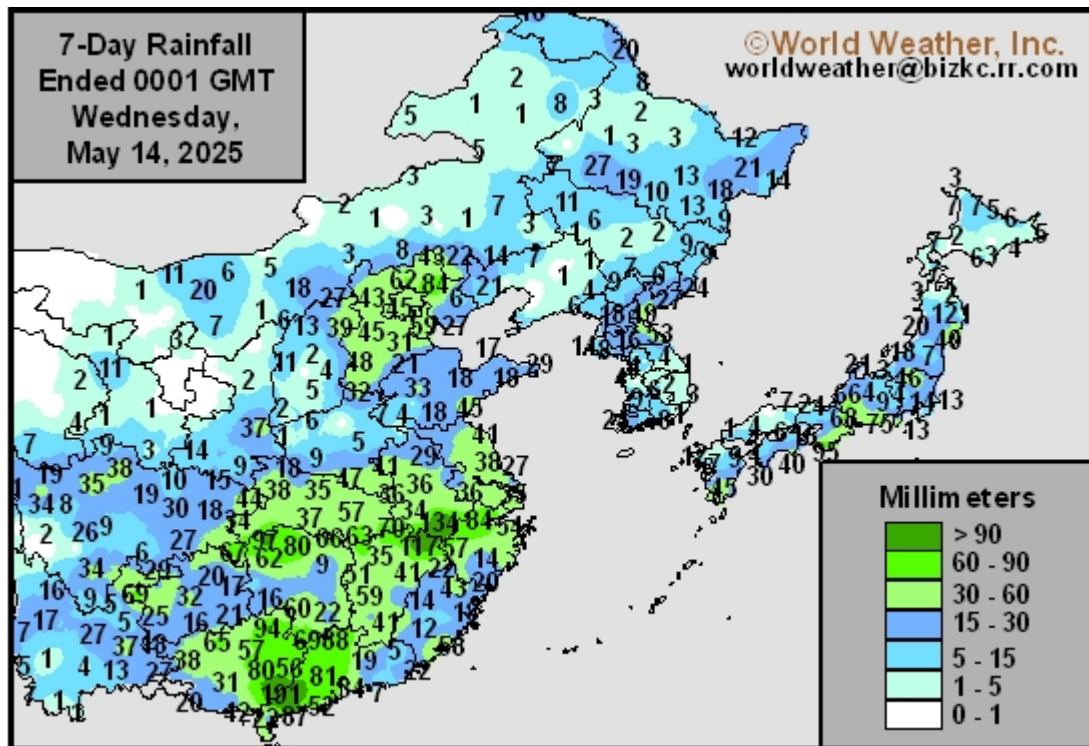


North China Plain To Dry Down As Temperatures Heat Up

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, May 14 (World Weather Inc.) – Several areas in China's North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin received rain during the past week easing long term dryness. The area of most serious dryness shrank by about 40% from the previous week; however, the trend will now go the other way with dryness expanding again in this coming week as limited rain and warmer temperatures return. The change may intensify crop moisture stress in unirrigated fields especially for spring and summer crops. Wheat is filling and maturing with harvesting getting under way soon. Wheat production may have been negatively impact by spring dryness this year, but mostly in unirrigated fields. In the meantime, favorable weather is impacting the Northeast Provinces while some heavier rain evolves in the Yangtze River Basin resulting in some potential for flash flooding.

Guangxi and western Guangdong into Hunan, Jiangxi, Hubei, Anhui, Jiangsu, and northern Zhejiang received some of the most significant rain in China during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.87 to 3.82 inches with local amounts up to 7.50 inches in southwestern Guangdong, northern Jiangxi, and southern Anhui. Fujian, southern Zhejiang, Guizhou, Sichuan, Yunnan, southern Henan, Shandong, Hebei, and pockets in southern Shaanxi and northern Shanxi received 0.50 to 2.72 inches of rain. A few locations in Heilongjiang received 0.39 to 1.06 inches of moisture. Other production areas in northern China and the central Yellow River Basin received trace amounts to 0.71 inch of moisture.

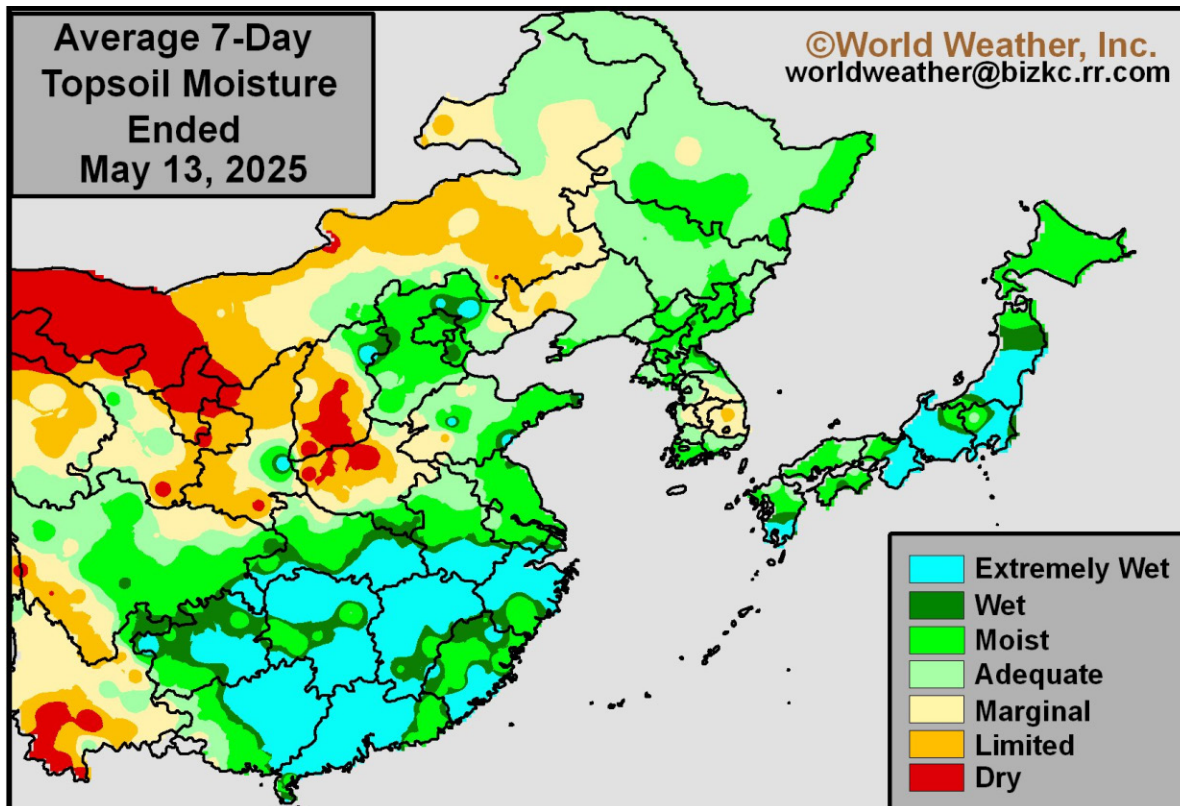


Recent rainfall helped bolster topsoil moisture in portions of the North China Plain in recent days. Topsoil moisture is rated marginally adequate to adequate in Hebei and

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Shandong as well as Jiangsu and the same is true for Heilongjiang, Jilin and southeastern Liaoning. In contrast, topsoil moisture is rated short to very short in portions of Shanxi, Henan, Shaanxi and neighboring areas. The Yangtze River Basin and areas south to the South China Sea coast were saturated with moisture while Yunnan stayed quite dry.

Subsoil moisture is still rated short to very short across much of the Yellow River Basin and North China Plain with a few areas of marginally adequate moisture. Both the Northeast Provinces and areas near and south of the Yangtze River have adequate subsoil moisture.



Precipitation was welcome in the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin. Recently-planted coarse grains, oilseeds, cotton, and other crops may have established a little better than earlier this month, though much more rain is needed to support ideal long-term crop conditions. Establishment and early-season development conditions remained less than ideal to poor in the fields that missed out on the heavier rain. Winter wheat filling, maturation and any early season harvesting may have slowed in the wettest fields.

Areas near and south of the Yangtze River received enough rain to maintain a relatively good environment for rice, corn, and sugarcane growth. Production potentials slowly improved this month due to the timely rain. Winter rapeseed harvesting may have otherwise advanced slowly in the wettest locations. Planting and establishment conditions also remained favorable for much of Northeast China due to timely rain.

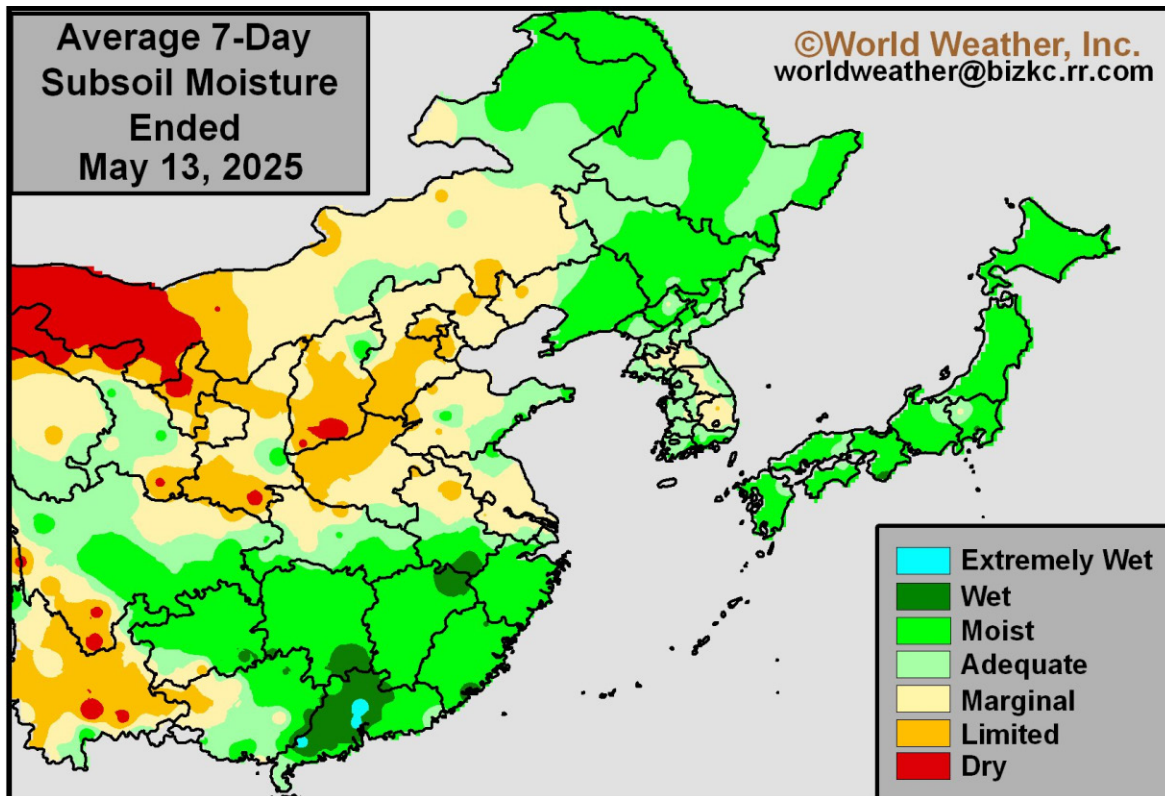
WEATHER OUTLOOK

Drier- and warmer-than-normal weather will return to the **North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin** through the middle of next week. Little rain is expected and

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any rain that does occur will be lost to evaporation. Daytime highs will often peak in the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit as well, which will promote aggressive drying. There is potential for some erratic rainfall May 22-28, though not enough will fall to fix the dryness.

The environment will again deteriorate for the summer coarse grains, oilseeds, cotton, and other crops across the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin in the coming week. The ground will remain too dry for ideal growth and the need for abundant rain will remain high late this month into early June. Wheat maturation and eventual harvesting will advance with few disruptions.



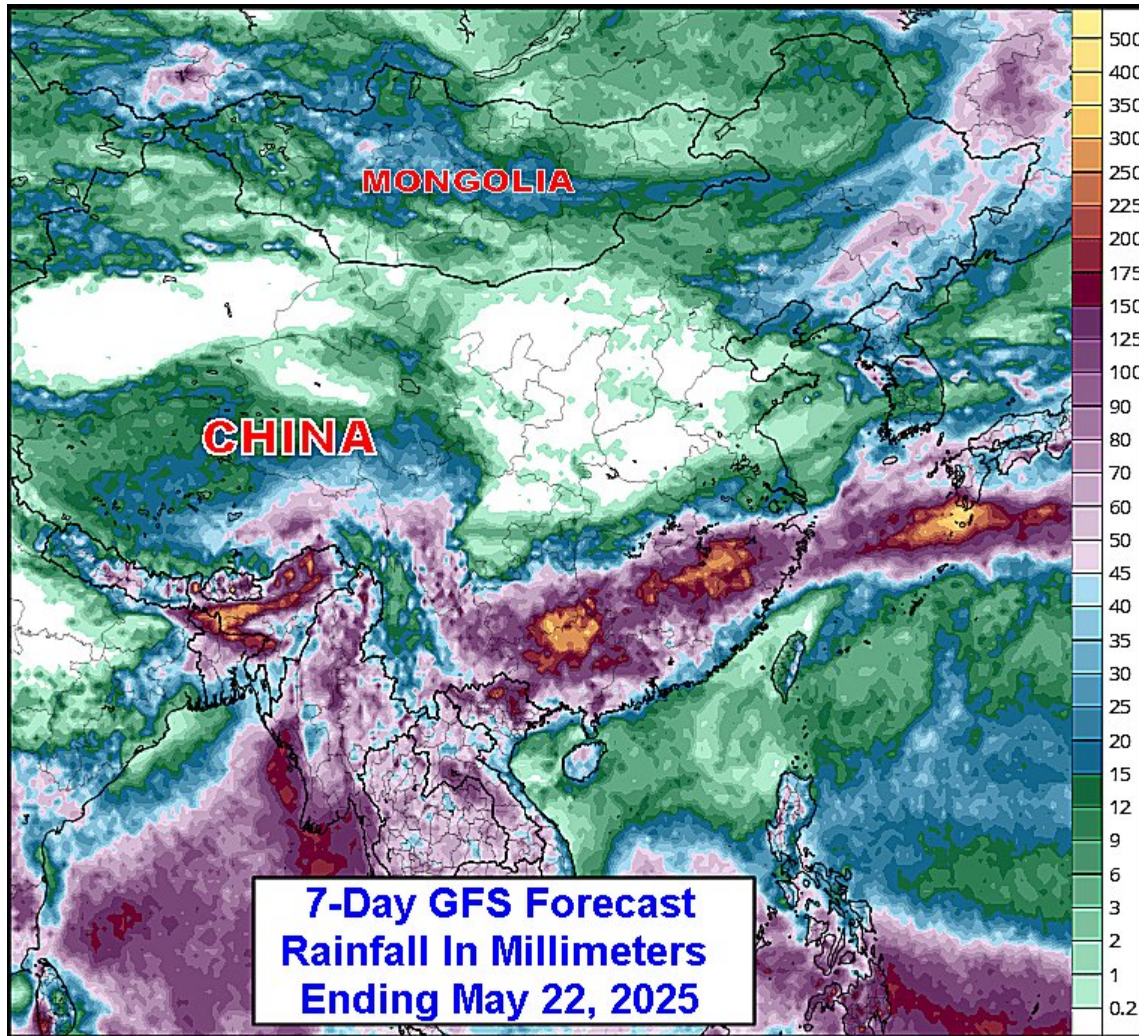
Areas near and south of the Yangtze River will remain in a wet weather bias through the middle of next week. Waves of rain will occur on a near daily basis with periods of significant rain expected during the next few days and again at the beginning of next week. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 1.50 to 5.00 inches with local amounts of 8.00 inches or more from Guangxi, Hunan, and western Guangdong into Jiangxi, Zhejiang, and northern Fujian. Other locations will receive 0.50 to 3.00 inches of rain with drier pockets in Hubei, eastern Sichuan, and southern sections of Anhui and Jiangsu. The region will again have several opportunities for rain May 22 – 28.

Rainfall in the coming weeks will keep soil moisture at adequate to excessive levels for southern China and the Yangtze River Basin. Localized flooding will be a concern and could promote minor crop and structural damages. The environment will otherwise remain favorable for the rice, corn, and sugarcane.

Northeast China will also have several opportunities for precipitation through the middle of next week. Disturbances will generate erratic precipitation on a near daily basis.

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Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 0.50 to 3.00 inches with drier pockets in Inner Mongolia. The region will then see a mix of precipitation and sunshine May 22 – 28. Planting may be sluggish at times due to the precipitation, though most producers should be able to plant between rain events. Establishment and early-season development conditions will remain favorable.



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