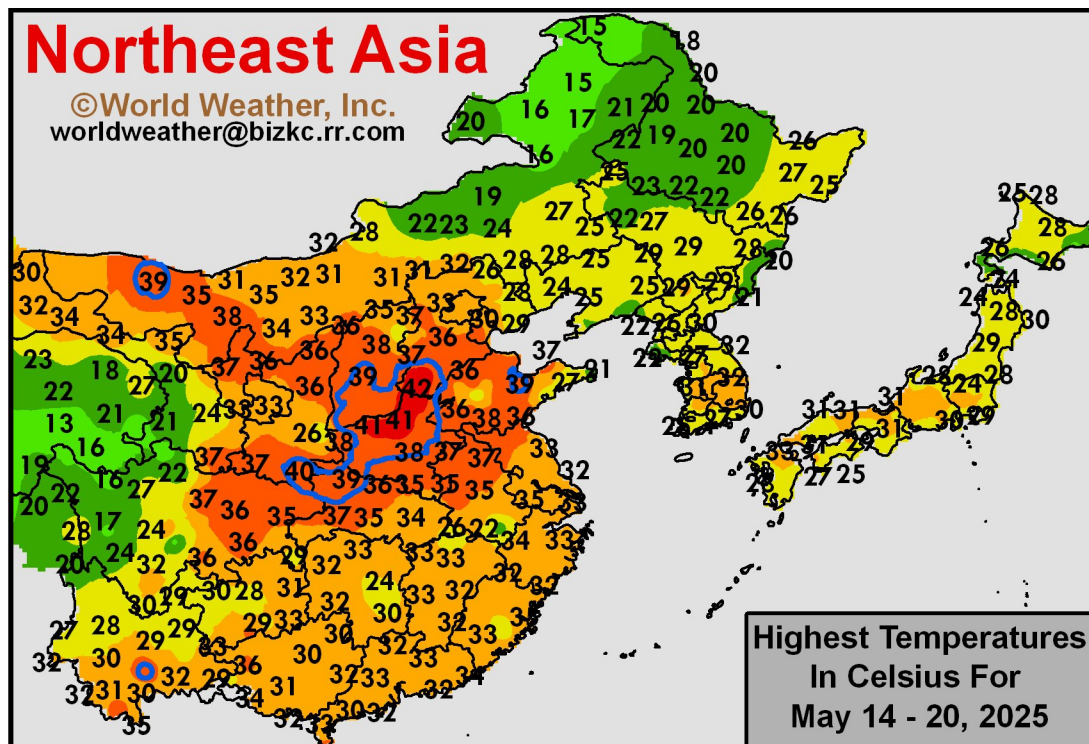


North China Plain Will Not See Much Relief From Dryness

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, May 21 (World Weather Inc.) – *Drier- and warmer-than-usual weather prevailed across China's North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin during the past week. The ground remains too dry to support favorable planting and establishment for unirrigated summer coarse grains, oilseeds, cotton, and other crops.*

A couple of weak weather disturbances will produce a few bouts of spotty rain through the middle part of next week; though, resulting rainfall will be too light to significantly improve the moisture profile. Concern about the dryness and its potential impact on production will remain through early June and the situation will need to be closely monitored even though there is plenty of time for improved rainfall. In the meantime, areas near and south of the Yangtze River will receive frequent rain through the middle of next week possibly resulting in localized flooding and minor crop damage.



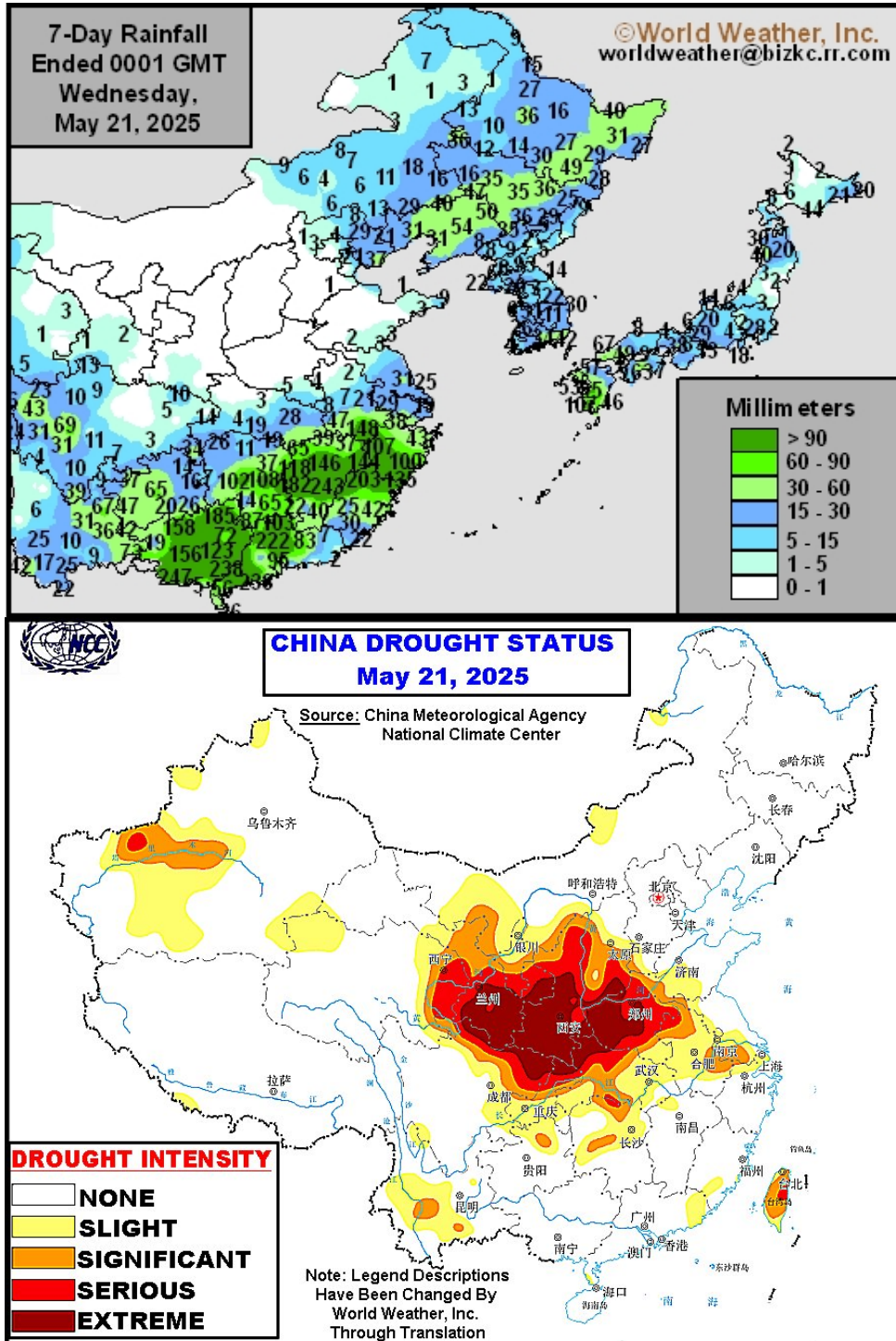
Very warm to hot temperatures occurred across a part of east-central China during the past week. Not every day was oppressively hot. In fact, the hottest temperatures noted above were mostly confined to Monday at which time readings of 96 to 108 Fahrenheit resulted.

The heat was just one part of the stressful week that has passed for unirrigated summer crops. The region was also dry and it was dry for the entire week. The combination of heat and dryness for the seven days ending this morning resulted in a big expansion of the driest areas. A much larger region of east-central China has short to very short topsoil moisture today and drought remains very much entrenched on the Yellow River Basin.

In the meantime, rain fell in both the Northeast Provinces and in the Yangtze River Basin and areas south to the South China Sea coast. Rainfall in Guangxi, Guangdong, and

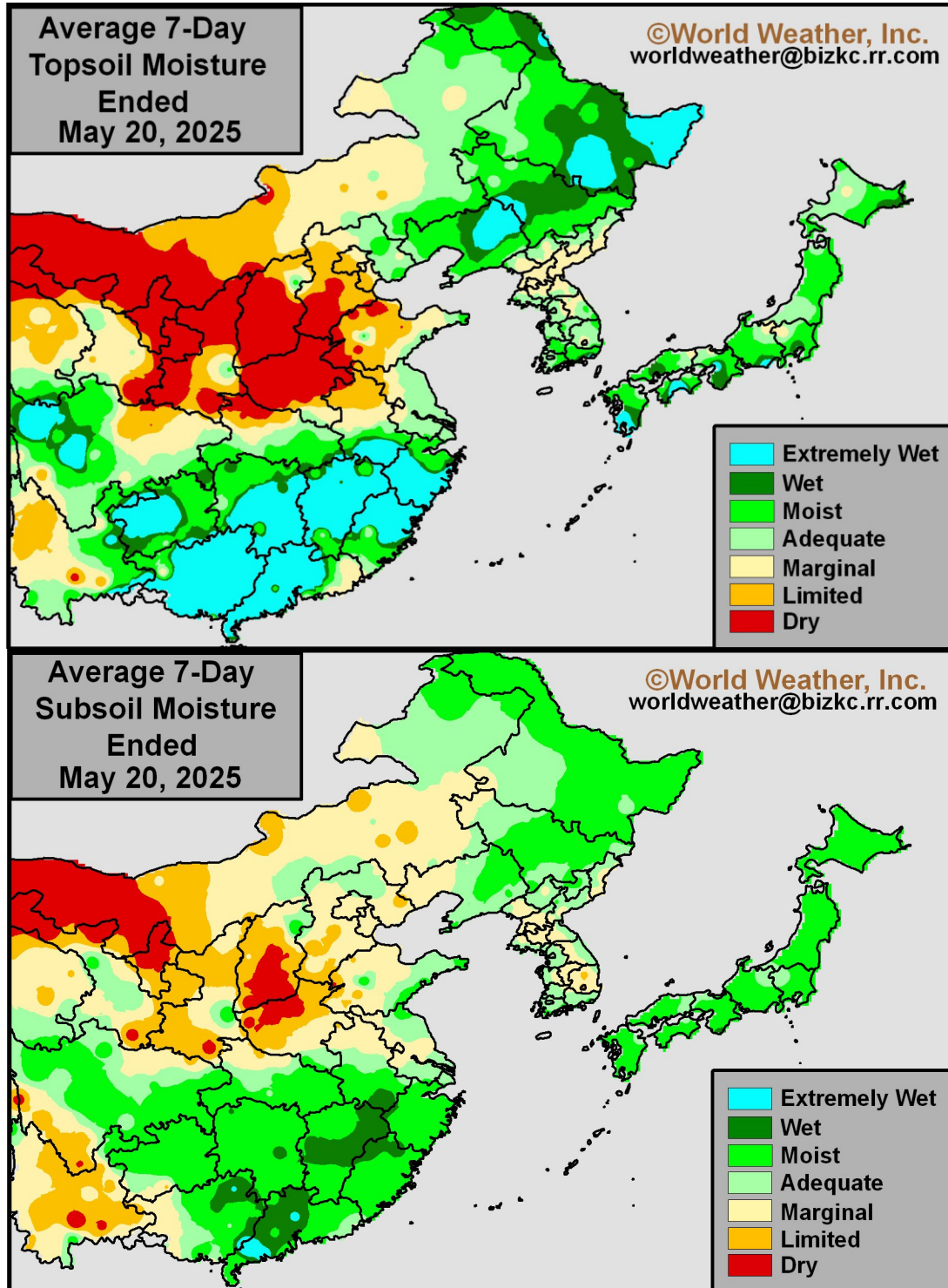
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from southern and central Hunan into Jiangxi, Zhejiang, southern Anhui, and northern Fujian ranged from 3.00 to 9.75 inches. Yunnan, Guizhou, northern Hunan, southern Fujian, central and southern Jiangsu, Liaoning, Jilin, central and southern Heilongjiang, northeastern Hebei, and portions of Hubei and Sichuan received 0.50 to 2.50 inches of rain while northern Heilongjiang and portions of Inner Mongolia received up to 0.71 inch of moisture.



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Most of the areas reporting rain during the past week were not nearly as hot as east-central China. Highs near and south of the Yangtze River were often in the 80s and 90s with several areas only warming to the 70s during periods of more significant rain. Northeast China saw milder conditions in recent days with highs only reaching the 60s and 70s with pockets in the 50s.



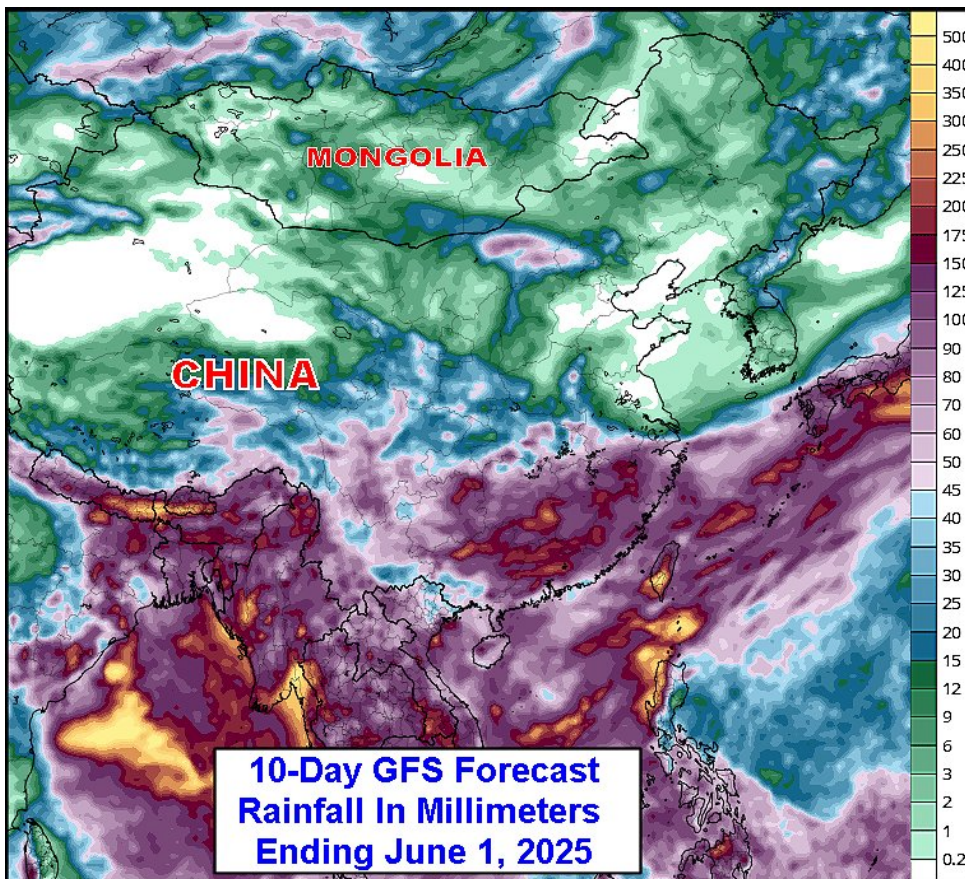
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The moisture profile remains short or critically short for much of the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin. Many areas in central Inner Mongolia have also dried down in recent days. Other production areas have adequate to excessive amounts of moisture. Localized flooding was possible in areas that received the greatest amount of rain in southern China.

Ongoing dryness in the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin continues to promote less than favorable to poor conditions for summer coarse grain, oilseed, cotton, and other crop planting and establishment. Abundant rain is not only needed to improve germination and establishment, but also to support better long-term production potentials. Winter wheat filling, maturation and harvesting have advanced swiftly due to the lack of rain and production may have been reduced in unirrigated fields. The dryness may be a bigger threat to unirrigated summer crops which are still being planted and beginning development. There is sufficient time for a weather change to occur and save production, but conditions must change soon.

In the meantime, areas near and south of the Yangtze River have ample moisture to support aggressive establishment and growth for the rice, corn, sugarcane, and other crops. Development rates may be a little uneven due to dryness earlier in the growing season for portions of southwestern China. Winter rapeseed harvesting likely advanced around the rain.

Northeast China has ample moisture to support aggressive planting and establishment for the rice, corn, soybeans, and wheat. Minor planting delays were possible in areas that received the greatest amount of rain during the past week.



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WEATHER OUTLOOK

North China Plain and Central Yellow River Basin

Drier-than-normal conditions will prevail for the North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin through the middle of next week. Periods of light rain will still occur today and Thursday as a disturbance passes over the region. Light rain will also be possible over the weekend. Portions of Shaanxi, Shanxi, and Henan will receive 0.25 to 1.50 inches of rain by next Wednesday morning. Other areas will either miss out on the rain or not receive enough to counter evaporation. Daytime highs will reach the 70s and 80s most often with portions of the North China Plain still warming to the 90s today and again next week. These areas will have a few opportunities for spotty rain May 29 – June, though not enough to fix the moisture deficits.

The North China Plain and central Yellow River Basin will remain too dry to support a good outlook for the summer coarse grains, oilseeds, and cotton in the coming weeks unless greater rain falls. The rain expected in this coming week will be welcome; though, crops will continue to establish and develop unevenly or poorly. Significant rain will be needed later in June to reduce concerns for production impacts.

Areas Near and South of Yangtze River

Areas near and south of the Yangtze River will have several opportunities for rain through the middle of next week. Waves of rain will occur on a daily basis with periods of significant rain occurring later today into early Friday. Another disturbance will promote significant rain at the beginning of next week. Moisture totals by next Wednesday morning will range from 2.00 to 6.00 inches in most locations with local amounts of 9.00 inches or more from Guangxi and Guizhou into Hunan, Jiangxi, northern Guangdong, Fujian, and Zhejiang. Additional rain is expected May 29-June 4, though rain totals will likely be lower or much lower than the first week of the outlook.

Southern China and the Yangtze River will have ample moisture to support new growth in the coming weeks. However, localized flooding will be a concern and may damage a minor amount of the rice, corn, and sugarcane. Overall losses should be minimal and the reduction in rain early in June should be welcome in the wettest locations. Late season winter rapeseed harvesting may be sluggish during the wettest periods.

Northern China

Northern China will generally trend drier than usual through the middle of next week. Disturbances will still generate light and erratic rainfall when tracking near or into the region on a near daily basis. Portions of southern Jilin, southern Heilongjiang, and central Inner Mongolia will receive 0.25 to 1.50 inches of rain with local amounts of 2.50 inches or more in central Inner Mongolia by next Wednesday morning. Other areas will not receive enough rain to impact long-term soil conditions. The region will then see a mix of rain and sunshine May 28 – June 4.

The reduction in rain will help support a good environment for aggressive planting and fieldwork in much of northern China through the middle of next week. Most locations will have ample moisture to support good establishment and early-season development as well.

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