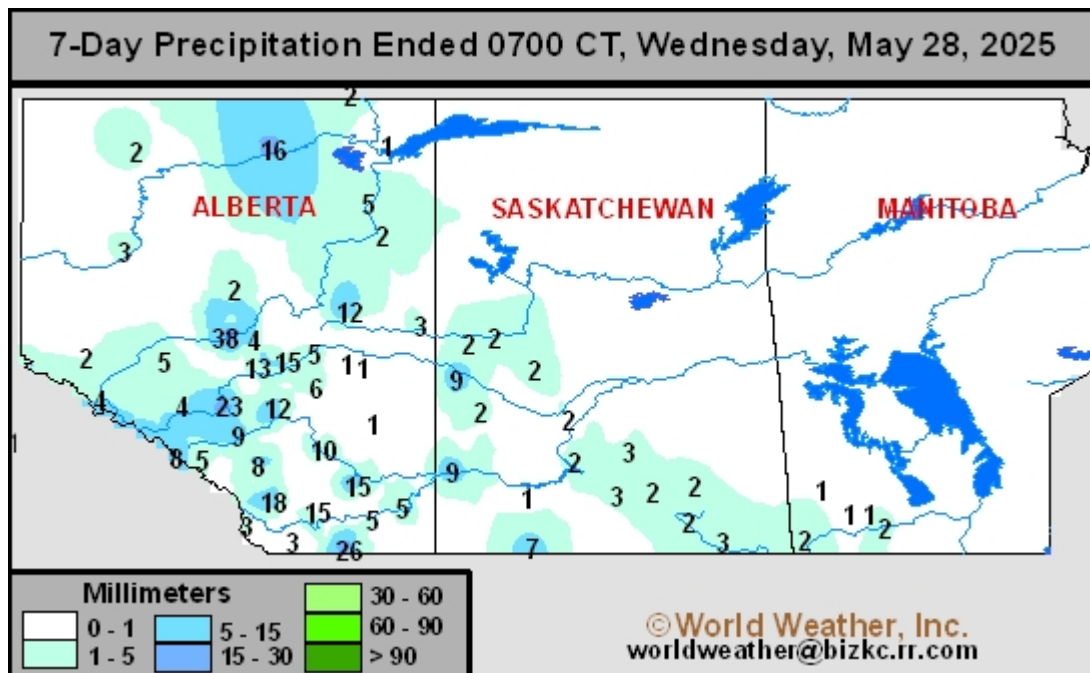


Canadian Prairies Topsoil Being Depleted Of Moisture

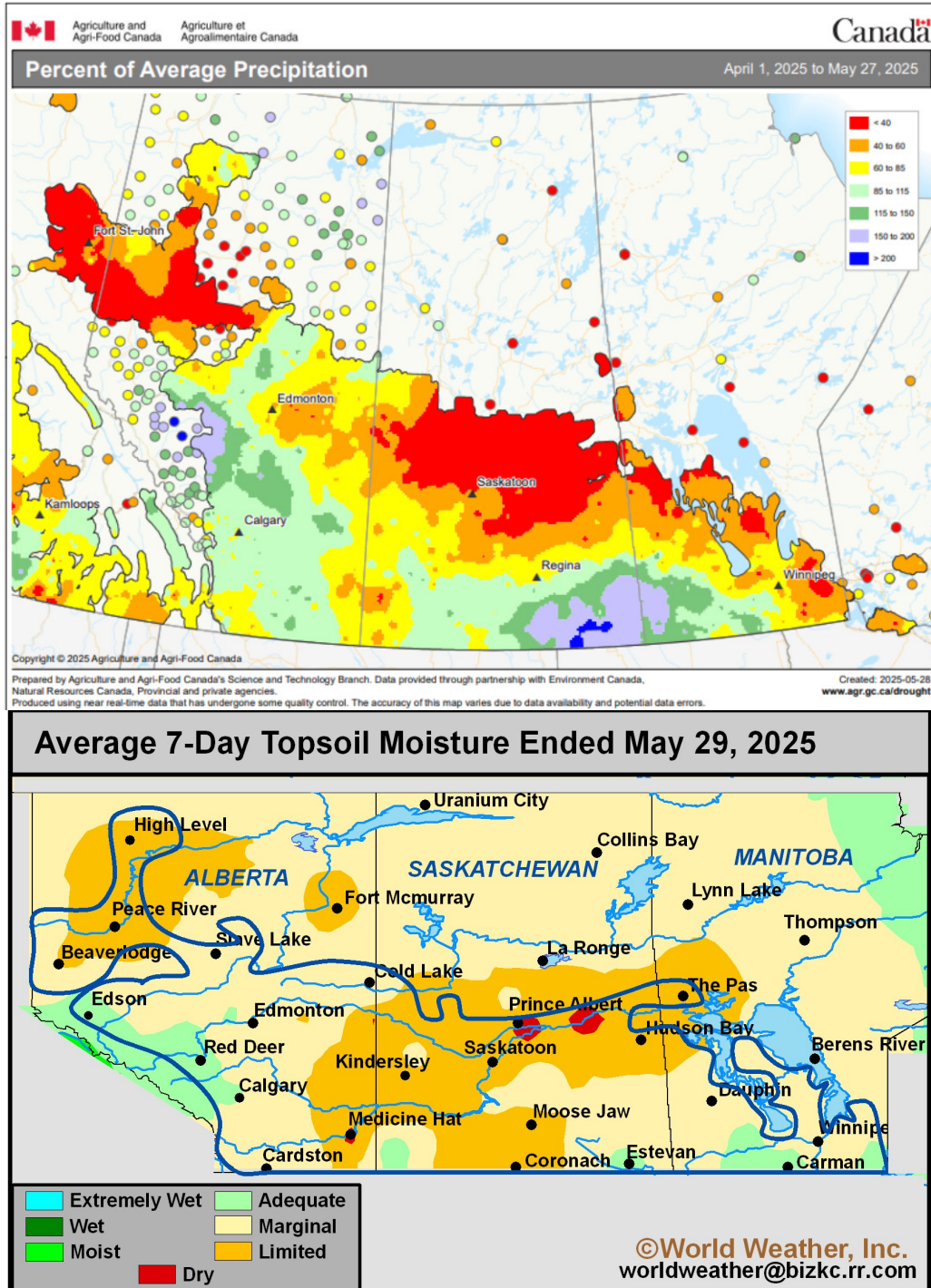
By Andrew Owen and Drew Lerner

Kansas City, May 29 (World Weather Inc.) – Planting conditions in Canada’s Prairies advanced swiftly this year due to some timely rainfall and lingering moisture from melting snow. Crops emerged and established relatively well in several areas while others have struggled to emerge and establish. The relatively good fortune is reaching an end – at least for now – as moisture in the topsoil becomes depleted. Much warmer temperatures in the coming few days will play a big part in accelerating crop moisture stress especially from eastern Alberta through western and northern Saskatchewan to northwestern Manitoba where the ground was already quite dry. Portions of the Peace River region have also been quite dry since late last summer. These areas are all very important canola and wheat production areas and the prospects for limited rain and more heat in this coming week will raise the concern for these crops and others much higher. Rain prospects are not very great for the coming ten days and a short term bout of very warm weather will be followed by some cooling.



The precipitation pattern varied significantly across the Canadian Prairies in recent weeks. A large portion of southern Saskatchewan outside the extreme southwest corner, southwestern and extreme south-central Manitoba, and portions of southern west-central, and north-central Alberta received near to above normal rainfall early from April 1 – May 27. Pockets in west-central Alberta and southeastern Saskatchewan received over two times normal rainfall during this time. Other production areas in the Prairies were drier much drier than usual. Northern Saskatchewan, southeastern into northwestern Manitoba, and several areas in Alberta and northeastern British Columbia’s Peace River country received less than 60% of normal precipitation during this time. More importantly, precipitation in the most recent week was quite limited as it will be in this coming week and temperatures will be notably warmer for a few days accelerating the drying trend.

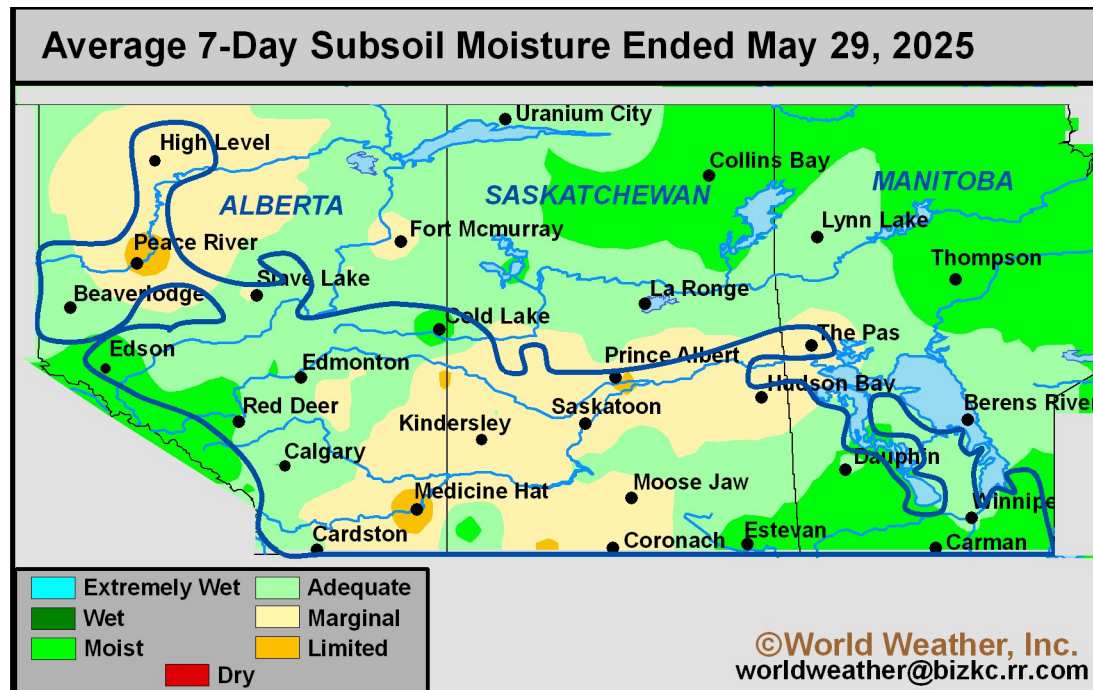
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The temperature profile from April 29 – May 26 was generally near or slightly above normal for a large section of the Prairies. There were brief periods where daytime highs warmed well into the 80s or even lower 90s Fahrenheit; though, no extended period of much warmer than normal conditions were noted. [A similar situation is anticipated over this coming week with another short term bout of very warm weather expected followed by some cooling.](#)

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Topsoil moisture is rated short to very short across most of the Prairies while the subsoil was rated with marginally adequate to slightly short moisture with a few exceptions. Subsoil moisture is still rated quite favorably in southern Manitoba and far southeastern Saskatchewan as well as in areas near the front range of the Rocky Mountains. This moisture profile might not be a big issue for established crops, but many crops in the Prairies still have short root systems due to recent emergence and the need for rain is rising daily to stimulate enough crop development to tap into more favorable subsoil moisture.



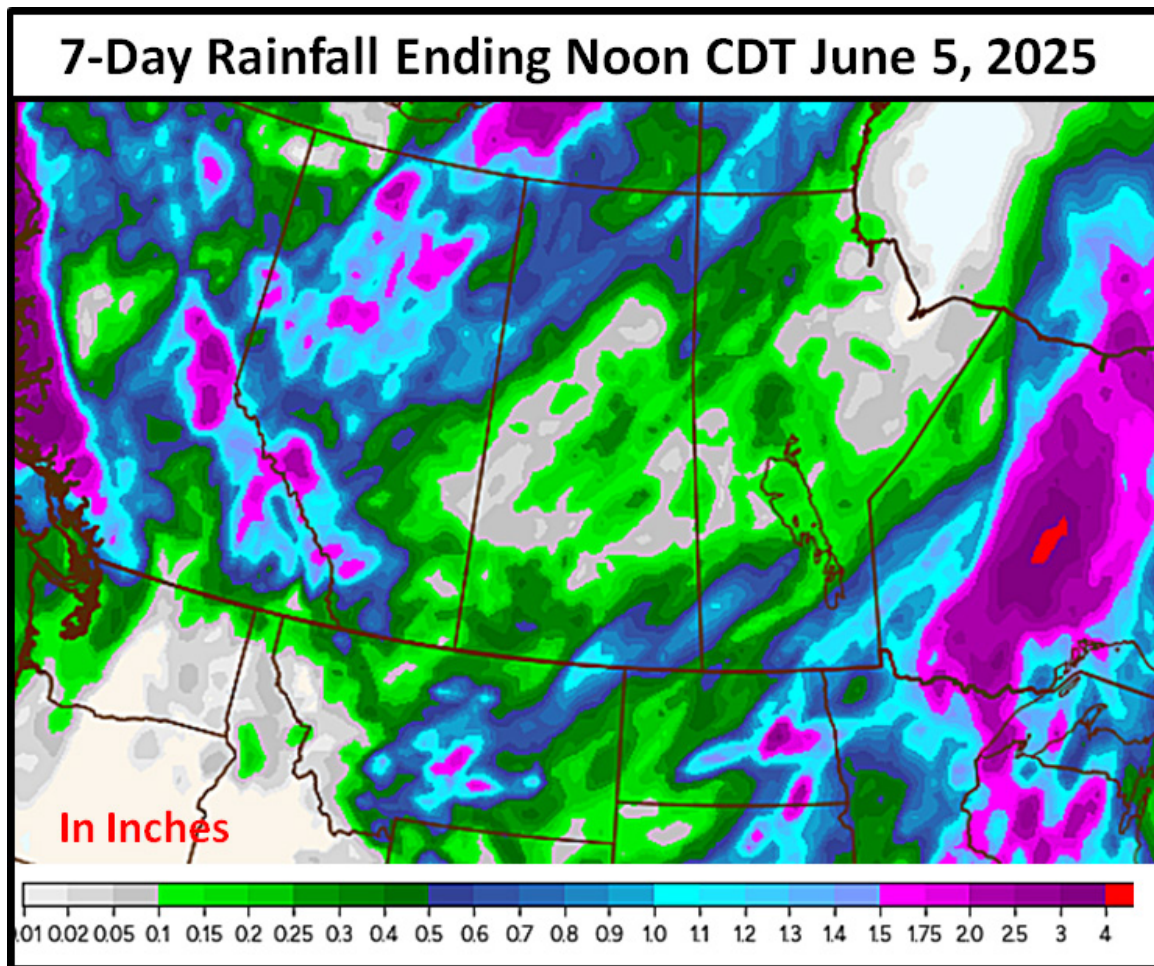
Planting is ongoing across the Prairies despite several areas facing severe moisture deficits. As of May 27, planting was 85% finished in Manitoba, well ahead of 64% last year and 69% for the previous five-year average. As of May 19, Saskatchewan had 72% of the crops in the ground, ahead of 60% for the previous five-year average. Planting in Alberta was 73.1% as of May 20, up from 59.1% for the previous five-year average.

The need for significant rain is high for a large section of the Prairies. While the moisture profile was more favorable overall heading into spring compared to recent years, moderate drought or abnormally dry conditions were still prevalent in portions of crop country. With drier-or much-drier-than-normal weather noted since the beginning of April for a large section of crop country, drought or abnormally dry conditions have spread and intensified. Crops germinated and established unevenly or poorly and some light to moderate rain must fall soon to induce better root development so that crops can develop off of the greater subsoil moisture. Any light rain event that comes along in the next ten days will help this situation, but the Prairies really need a general soaking of rain especially in western and northern Saskatchewan, northwestern Manitoba and eastern Alberta as well as in the Peace River Region.

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WEATHER OUTLOOK

Precipitation will again vary across the Prairies during the coming week. A disturbance will initially bring scattered showers and thunderstorms to Alberta, northeastern British Columbia, and western fringes of Saskatchewan today. A few light showers will linger Friday before the next system brings rain to Alberta and northeastern British Columbia Saturday. Erratic rainfall will then spread across the Prairies Sunday and Monday as the disturbance and associated frontal boundary advances farther over the region. Light and erratic rainfall will prevail Tuesday and Wednesday. The western half of Alberta into northeastern British Columbia will receive 0.40 to 1.50 inches of rain with local amounts over 2.00 inches by next Thursday morning. Other locations will receive trace amounts to 0.40 inch of rain with locally greater amounts in southern sections of Saskatchewan and Manitoba. A series of disturbances will continue to advance near or into the Prairies June 6-12 that will offer some erratic rainfall to a large section of the Prairies.



A weak high-pressure ridge will help funnel warm air into the Prairies at times through the end of the weekend. Highs will often peak well into the 70s and 80s Fahrenheit with pockets in Alberta and northern Saskatchewan warming to the lower 90s today and again Saturday. However, cooler air will spread into Peace River country Saturday and several areas in the western half of the Prairies Sunday, dropping highs to the 60s and 70s

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with pockets in the upper 50s. More seasonable temperatures are slated for much of the Prairies next week with highs settling to the 60s and 70s. Temperatures will trend near or slightly above normal June 6 – 12.

Precipitation in western Alberta and northeastern British Columbia will be enough to keep soil moisture near current levels by this time next week. The environment will be generally good for establishment and early-season development outside the driest pockets. Net drying is slated for most other production areas in the Prairies. Establishment and development conditions will remain less than ideal for a large section of crop country outside areas that were wetter than usual earlier this spring.

Rainfall during the second week of the forecast period will be unable to reverse the drying trend as well. The overall outlook for the Prairies will be less than ideal and the need for significant rain will remain high later in June to avoid any further production cuts.

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