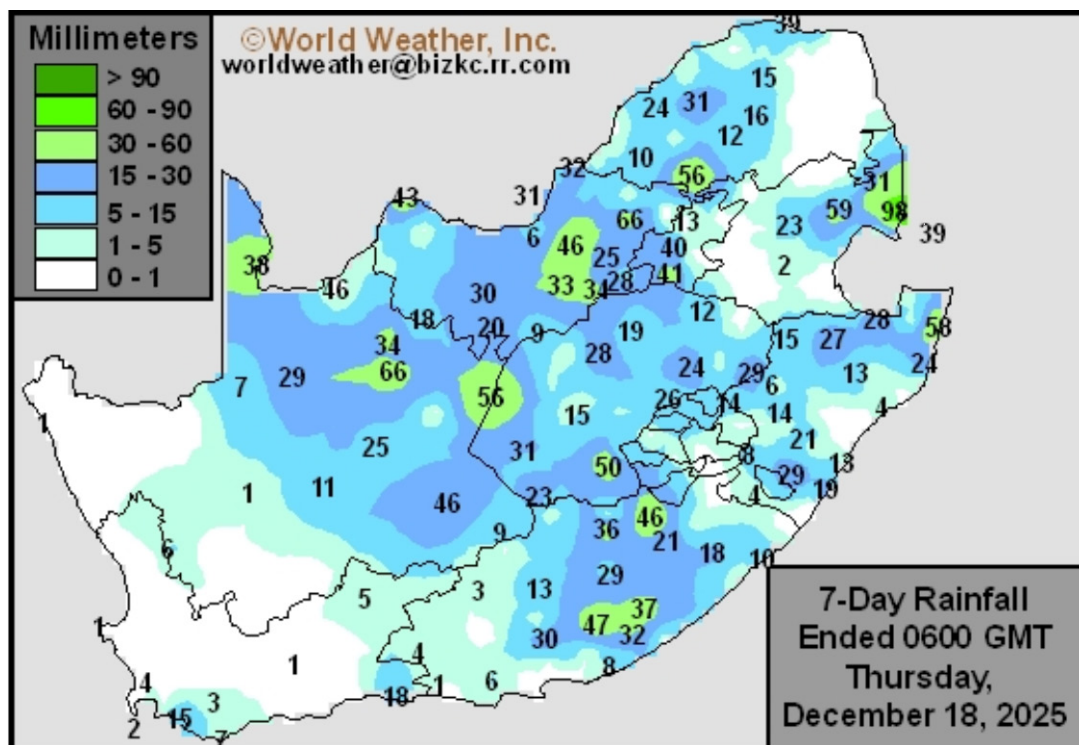


South Africa To Receive More Rain; Crop Prospects Good

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, December 18 (World Weather Inc.) – *Most of South Africa's summer crop region saw a good mix of rain and sunshine during the past week. The rain helped support relatively good establishment and early-season development in the coarse grain, oilseed, and cotton areas. Periods of drier weather allowed for continued planting as well.* South Africa will have several opportunities for erratic rainfall for at least the next seven days as well. Additional rain will help bolster or keep soil moisture at adequate to excessive levels. Establishment and development conditions will remain favorable in much of the country.

South Africa's main crop areas saw a good mix of rain and sunshine during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.47 to 2.60 inches from much of Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and Gauteng into Free State, North West, and portions of Eastern Cape and the eastern half of Northern Cape. A few locations in southern Western Cape received 0.28 to 0.71 inch of rain. Other areas in western South Africa received little to no precipitation.

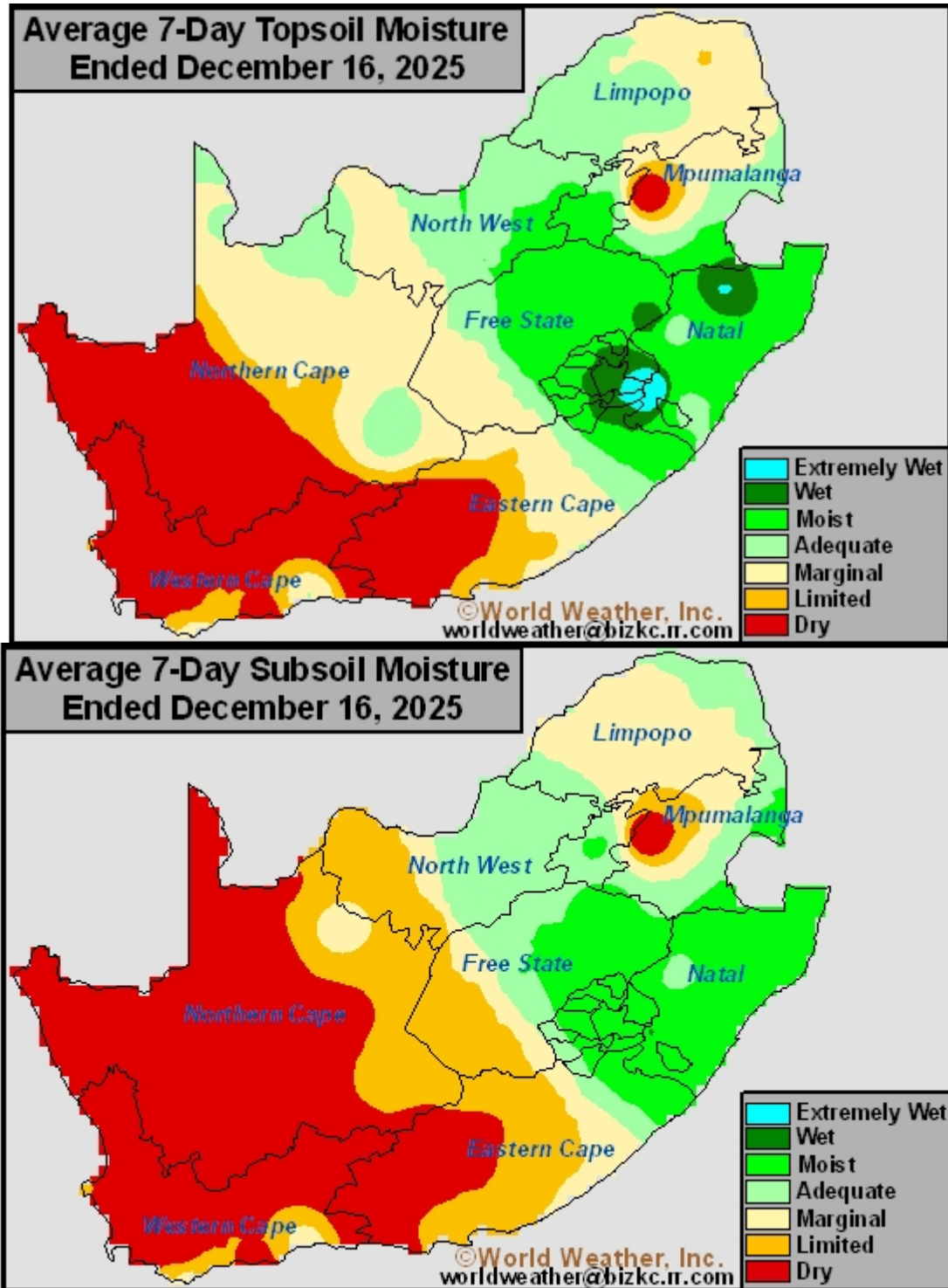


Eastern and central portions of South Africa generally have adequate soil moisture due to timely rain in recent weeks. However, portions of western Free State and North West into eastern Northern Cape still have a shortage of moisture in the subsoil. A more notable dryness bias is prevalent in Western South Africa which is quite normal for this time of year.

Timely rain in recent weeks helped improve or maintain a good environment for coarse grain, oilseed, and cotton establishment and early-season growth. Planting is ongoing

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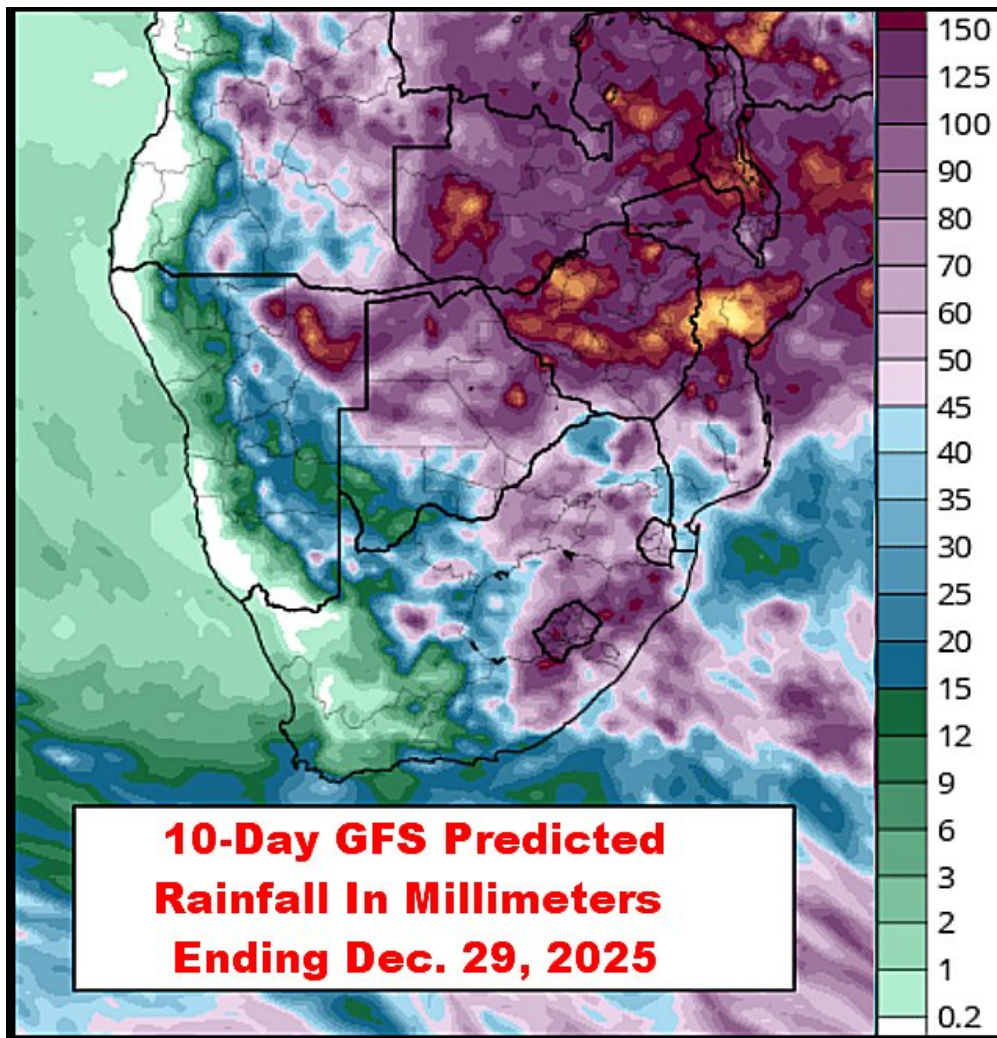
and likely advanced around the periods of rain. Areas that received the greatest amount of precipitation in recent weeks may have experienced sluggish planting conditions at times and periods of drier weather would be welcome. Late-season winter crop harvesting may have also been delayed due to the periods of rain in Northern Cape and Free State. Quality impacts were likely minimal.



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WEATHER OUTLOOK

South Africa will have several opportunities for rain during the coming week. Light rain will initially be scattered across eastern South Africa today. A slow-moving disturbance will then bring scattered showers into the country Friday that will continue on a frequent basis this weekend into the middle of next week. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range from 0.75 to 4.00 inches from Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and Gauteng into much of Free State, North West, and the eastern two-thirds of Eastern Cape. Western Eastern Cape into eastern Northern Cape will receive 0.25 to 1.50 inches of rain and locally more. A few locations in Western Cape and western Northern Cape will receive 0.25 to 0.50 inch of rain, though most areas will either be dry or not receive enough rain to counter evaporation. Alternating periods of rain and sunshine will persist for much of South Africa December 26 – January 1. However, rain totals will likely be lower compared to the first week of the outlook.



The temperature profile will trend near to slightly above normal in South Africa during the coming week. Daytime highs will peak to the 70s and 80s Fahrenheit with a few exceptions. Portions of western South Africa will often warm to the 90s due to the lack of

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rain and cloudiness. Several areas in eastern and central South Africa will also only warm to the 60s during periods of more significant rain. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s with pockets in eastern and southern South Africa occasionally cooling to the 40s.

Seasonable to seasonably warm weather will prevail December 26 – January 1.

Rainfall in the coming week will be enough to bolster or keep soil moisture at adequate or excessive levels in the main production areas of South Africa. Establishment and early-season development conditions will be relatively good outside areas dealing with excess moisture. Precipitation should be spread out enough over time and area to limit flood potentials. Planting and general fieldwork may advance slowly due to the high frequency of rain. Planting conditions may improve with the potential for drier weather during the last days of December.

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