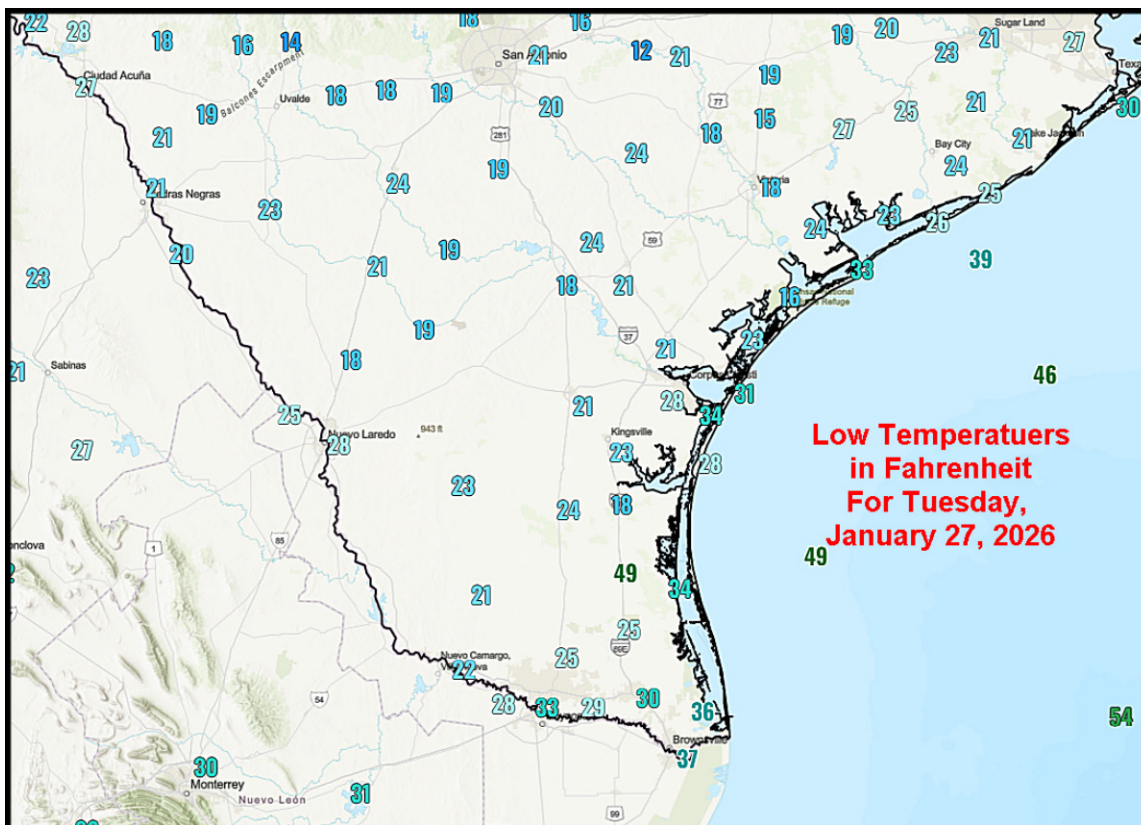


Freezes Impact South Texas, Louisiana Citrus And Sugarcane

By Drew Lerner

Kansas City, January 27 (World Weather Inc.) – *Frost and freezes reached into northeastern Mexico, southern Texas and along most of the Louisiana and Florida Panhandle coasts this morning as a great culmination to the past several days of unusually intense winter weather in the central and eastern United States. Damage to citrus and sugarcane was suspected in both Texas and Louisiana, although the impact should not be tremendous unless poor weather occurs during the spring and summer.*

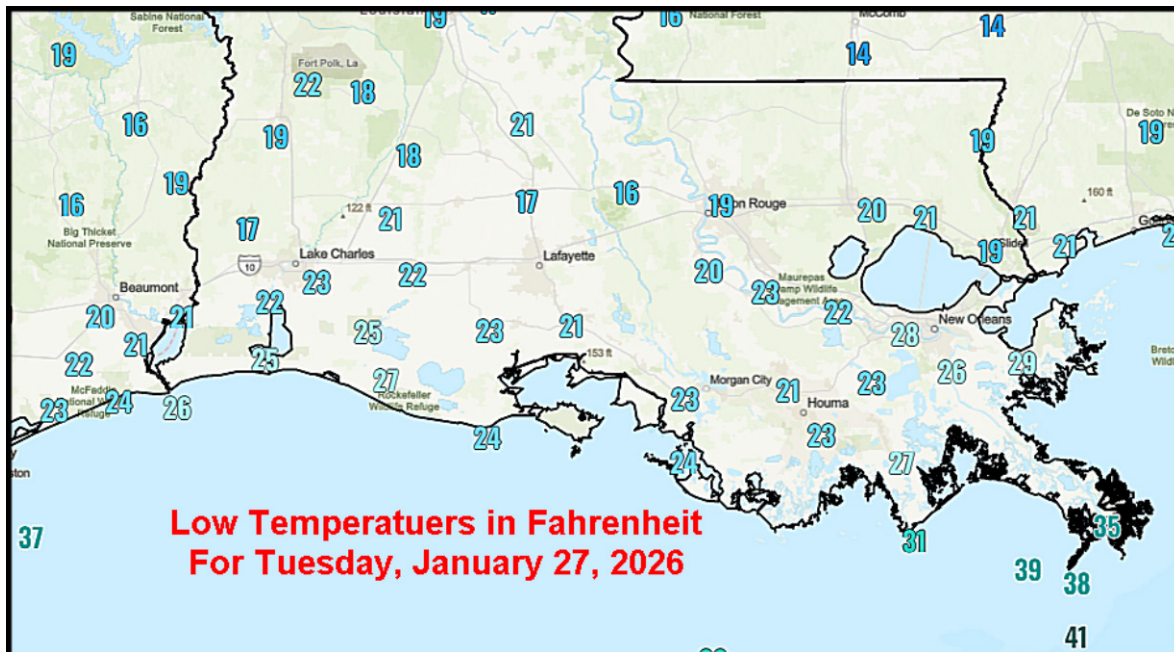
Low temperatures this morning slipped into the 20s Fahrenheit in both southern Texas and Louisiana. Some of the coldest temperatures reached 20 in southern Louisiana where the sugarcane is produced. Lowest temperatures in far southern Texas slipped to a few upper teens and lower to middle 20s. Such temperatures were cold enough to induce plant damage in both locations; although how serious the impact was will be determined over the next few weeks.



Some fruit and vegetable crops were damaged in the cold weather in Texas especially since temperatures during much of last week and during the early weekend were in the 70s and lower 80s Fahrenheit. Frequent bouts of 70- and 80-degree high temperatures have occurred this entire month. The only exception was January 12-13 when highs were limited to the 50s and 60s. *The shock of hard freezes after no winter hardening against cold temperatures has likely resulted in some significant impacts on all kinds of*

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crops; including sugarcane and citrus crops. The freezes reported in southern Texas Monday morning and those of today were the only freezes this winter so far.



The situation in **Louisiana** has been much different. Frequent bouts of freezes have occurred since October. This week's event may be the fifth of the cold season; although temperatures today were the coldest recorded so far this year. Sugarcane in Louisiana has been nipped multiple times by cold and may not be very far advanced. The crop is certainly not as advanced as that in Texas where it has been very warm to hot most of this month. Nonetheless, leaf burning because of the freeze today will likely be significant enough to set back the crop again.

Freezes during the winter are not usually fatal to sugarcane; however, it does injure the crop and weather conditions in the following weeks and months need to be nearly ideal for production potentials to fully recover.

Last year's record snow in Louisiana followed by single digit Fahrenheit low temperatures did not permanently harm the crop because the deep snow that preceded the cold insulated the crop from the damaging properties that such temperatures would have on the subtropical crop. This year's freeze comes without snow cover to protect the plants; although, temperatures have not been nearly as cold as those of last year.

Both the Texas and Louisiana sugarcane crops should recover if there is timely rain in the next few weeks and no more extreme heat. Hot and dry weather after a significant freeze can have long lasting impact on damaged crops resulting in lower yield.

CITRUS

There is concern about Texas citrus possibly being harmed by the bitter cold this morning; although not much information has been available so far today. The crops was likely irrigated overnight helping to protect unharvested fruit and blossom buds from

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permanent damage. *Some of the temperatures in citrus areas got a little too cold for irrigation systems to fully protect the crop and some negative impact is possible.*

Texas citrus and other fruit and vegetable crops are produced mostly as fresh fruit; however, any serious damage to citrus production could impact the frozen fruit concentrate business in Florida.

World Weather, Inc. does not believe *losses in Texas will be very great and the impact on orange juice futures should be low.* *With that said, though, it is important to note that Florida citrus areas may be threatened with damaging freezes next week.*

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