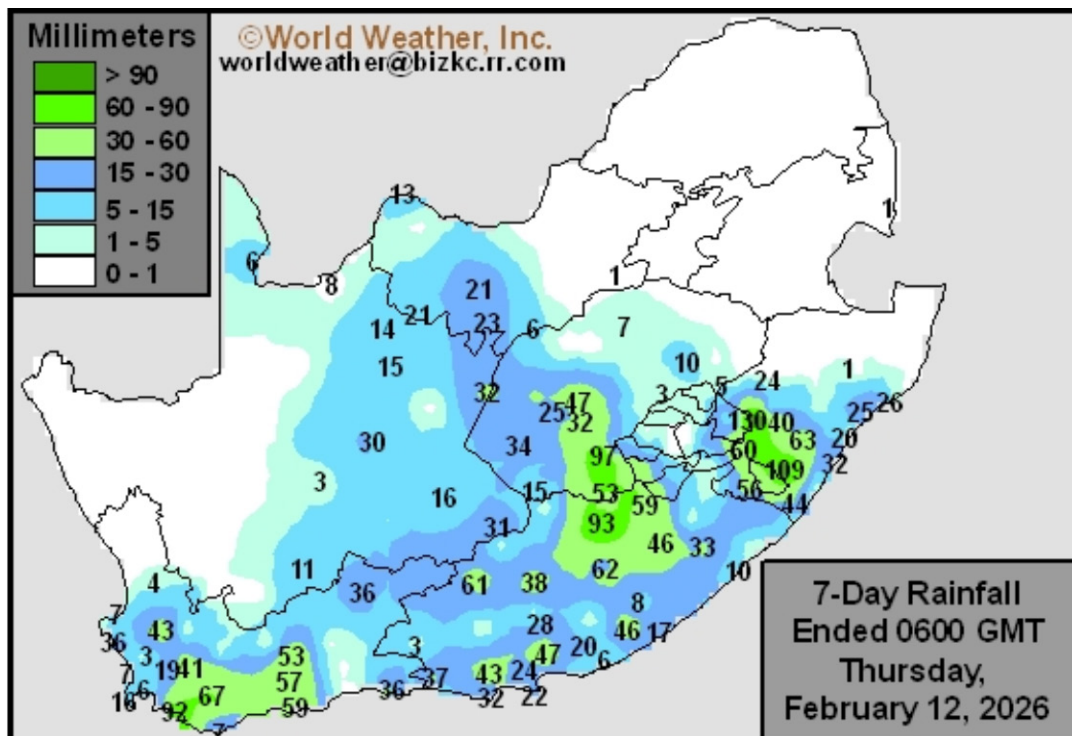


Western South Africa Dryness Expanding Across The North

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, February 12 (World Weather Inc.) – Rainfall in South Africa favored the south during the past week with some rain also noted in portions of central South Africa. Many of the previously dry areas in Northern Cape and western sections of Free State and North West received some needed rain that helped to temporarily improve coarse grain, oilseed, and cotton conditions; though more rain was still needed. Several other areas in eastern South Africa dried down; though, subsoil moisture was still sufficient to maintain relatively favorable crop conditions. Precipitation will often be scattered across South Africa during the coming week with more widespread rain slated for the eastern production areas. The overall environment will remain generally favorable for the main crop region, but there will be an ongoing need for greater rain in the west and north.

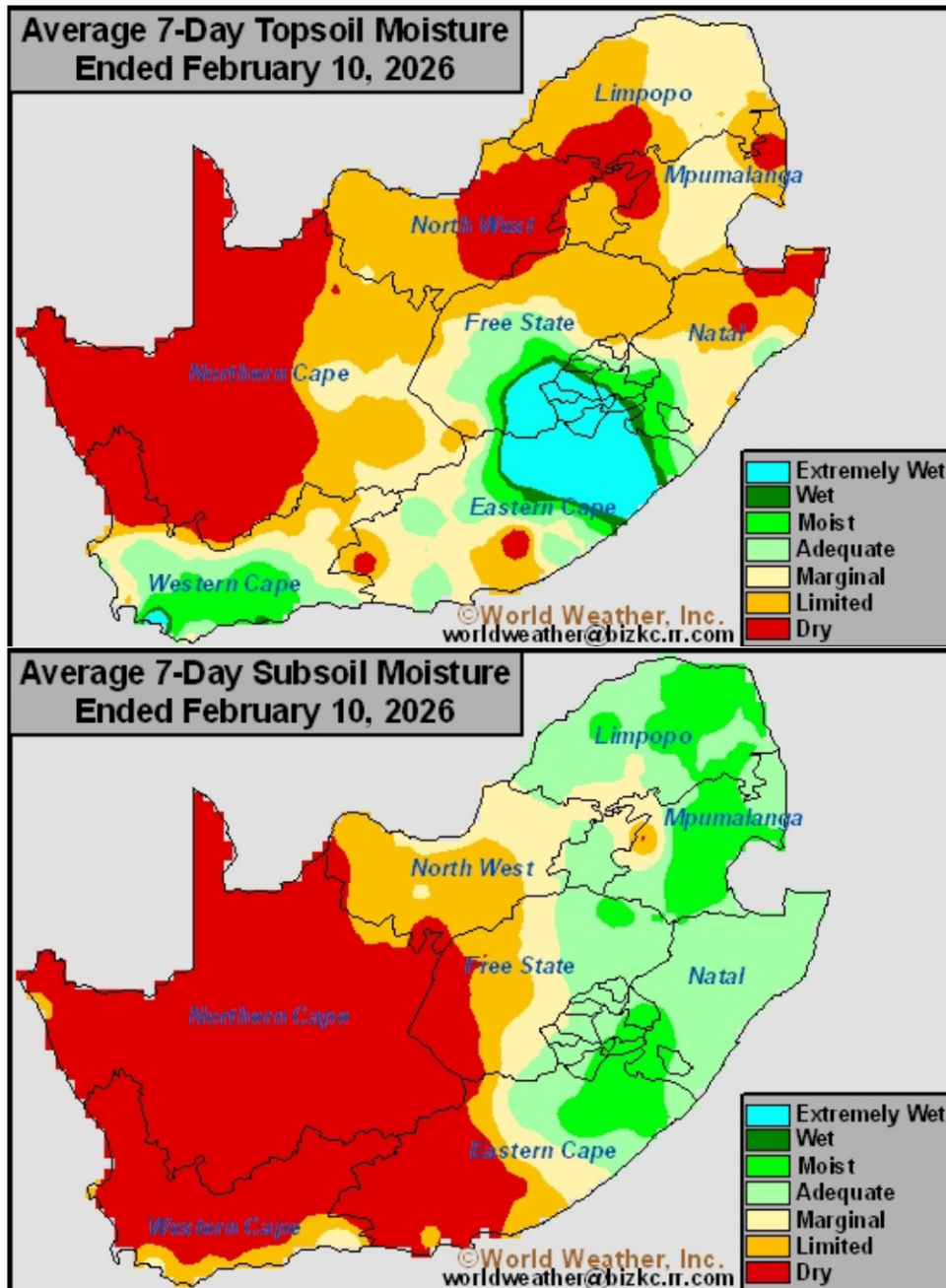
Rainfall favored Eastern Cape, Western Cape, the southern half of Natal, and southwestern Free State during the past week. These areas received anywhere from 0.50 to 3.82 inches of rain with local amounts up to 5.12 inches in Natal. Other areas in western Free State into the eastern half of Northern Cape and portions of western North West received 0.43 to 1.85 inches of rain. Pockets in eastern Free State received up to 0.39 inch of rain while little to no rain was noted elsewhere.



The periods of rain helped bolster soil moisture for southern South Africa, along with portions of Free State, eastern Northern Cape, and western North West. However, rainfall was too light to completely fix dryness that evolved earlier in the growing season for western sections of South Africa's production region. The remaining areas in eastern South

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Africa saw a significant decrease in topsoil moisture while subsoil moisture was still rated favorably.



Recent rainfall in western sections of Free State and North West into Northern Cape was welcome to improve topsoil moisture briefly. However, more rain was needed to support dryland crops. Areas farther east also had enough moisture to maintain aggressive growth despite some drying. The need for timely rain otherwise remains high in the coming weeks across the main production areas to maintain ideal late-season development.

Waves of erratic rain are slated for much of South Africa during the coming week. Some of the most widespread and significant rain will occur through Saturday despite

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Tropical Cyclone Gezani tracking nearby over the Mozambique Channel. Light and erratic rain will persist Sunday into the middle of next week. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range from 0.75 to 3.00 inches in Natal, Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape, southern Limpopo, and neighboring areas. The remaining locations will receive 0.25 to 1.50 inches of rain with drier pockets in Western Cape and western Northern Cape. Alternating periods of spotty rain and sunshine will continue for much of South Africa February 20 – 26.

The temperature profile will be near to slightly above normal for South Africa during the coming week. Daytime highs will peak to the 70s and 80s Fahrenheit. Many areas in western and northern South Africa will also warm to the 90s, most notably later this weekend and next week. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s with pockets only cooling to the 70s at times. Seasonable to seasonably warm weather will prevail February 20 – 26.

The combination of timely rain, adequate moisture, and warm daytime temperatures will maintain relatively favorable coarse grain, oilseed, and cotton conditions for much of South Africa. A few locations in the western and northern production areas may remain a little dry for ideal growth.

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