

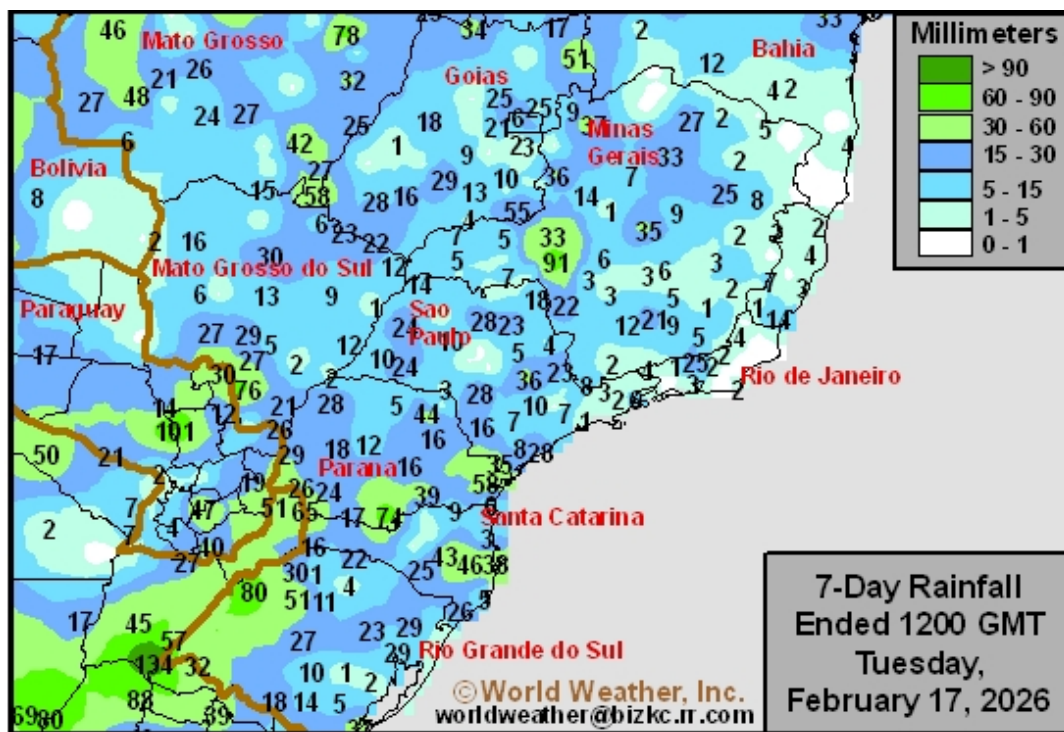
Center West, Center South Brazil Drying Improves Fieldwork

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, February 17 (World Weather Inc.) – A much-needed break from rain occurred from Mato Grosso to southern Minas Gerais and Sao Paulo, Brazil during the latter part of last week through Monday allowing the topsoil to firm beneficially for faster crop maturation and harvest progress in early soybean, first season corn, dry bean and other early season crops. Safrinha corn and cotton planting should have advanced favorably as well.

Some of the driest areas in center-west and center-south Brazil need more rain in coming weeks to ensure favorable conditions for the safrinha corn. Brazil's main production areas will see rain resume during the coming week. Harvesting and safrinha corn planting will advance around the periods of rain while the moisture is good for ongoing summer crop development and for the establishment of previously planted Safrinha corn and cotton.

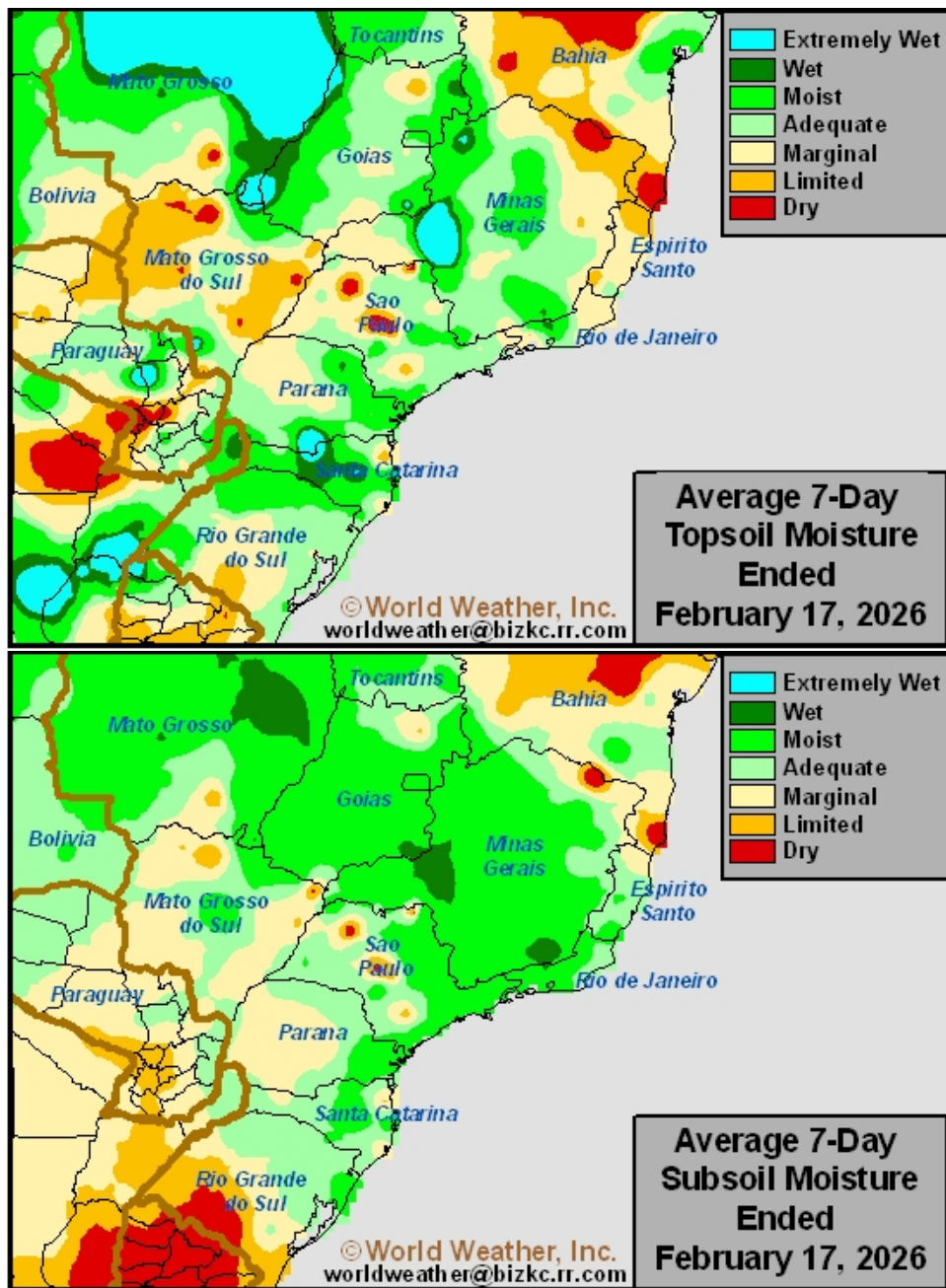
The main production areas in Brazil saw a mix of erratic rain and sunshine during the past week. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 0.20 to 1.50 inches with local amounts up to 3.57 inches in Mato Grosso, western Minas Gerais, southern Mato Grosso do Sul, Parana, and western Rio Grande do Sul. Portions of eastern and southern Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Espirito Santo, and southeastern Bahia also only received trace amounts to 0.20 inch of rain.



Soil conditions that were too wet last week from southern Minas Gerais and Sao Paulo into Mato Grosso began to firm up during the weekend as drier and warmer biased conditions evolved. Some of those conditions prevailed Monday and were expected to linger into mid-week this week. To the south of this region some of the recent drying led to

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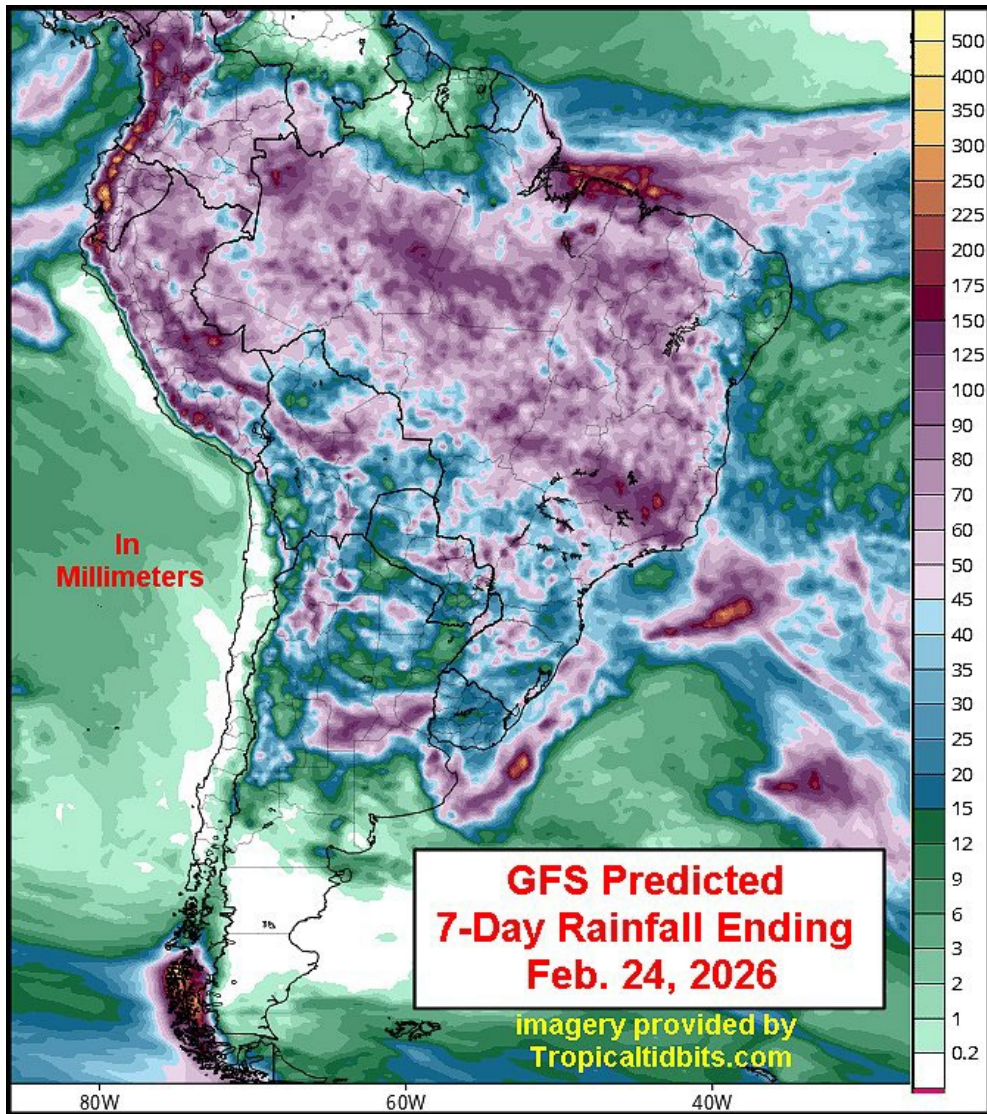
firmer soil in parts of Mato Grosso do Sul and a few areas in both Parana and Sao Paulo. Dryness in these latter areas should be relieved by rain expected in this coming week.



Harvesting continued for much of Brazil during the past week. As of February 14, soybean harvesting was 24.7% complete, down slightly from the previous five-year average according to CONAB. First-season corn harvesting was 14.9% finished compared to 18.2% for the previous five-year average. Dry bean harvesting was 53.1% complete while only 3.2% of the rice had been harvested. Yield potentials remain favorable for much of the country this season.

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Safrinha corn planting is also expanding in Brazil as more of the soybeans come out of the ground. As of February 14, safrinha corn planting was 32.2% finished, down from 38.6% for the previous five-year average according to CONAB. The main production areas generally have ample moisture to support favorable establishment and early-season development, though the driest fields would welcome increased rainfall. There will still be a need for significant rain in the coming weeks as more of the corn goes into the ground. Portions of Mato Grosso do Sul, Parana, and neighboring areas may not have enough moisture to support ideal long-term production potentials and the need for timely rain in the near future will be critical to ensure favorable growth.



WEATHER OUTLOOK

Waves of rain are slated for the main production areas in Brazil during the coming week. Some of the most widespread rain will not occur until this weekend and early next week as disturbances track into the country. Moisture totals by next Tuesday morning will range from 0.75 to 3.50 inches with several areas in Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo

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receiving 4.50 inches or slightly more of rain. Much of Brazil will again see a mix of rain and sunshine February 25 – March 3, though overall rain totals may be slightly lower compared to the first week of the outlook.

Temperatures will trend near to above normal for much of Brazil during the coming week. Daytime highs will peak to the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit most often with portions of southern and center-south Brazil only warming to the 70s during periods of more significant rain. Low temperatures will be in the 60s and 70s with pockets in southern Brazil cooling to the 50s. Seasonable to seasonably warm weather will persist February 25 – March 3.

Harvesting, safrinha corn planting, and general fieldwork will advance around periods of rain during the coming week. No major quality impacts are expected, even in areas that receive the greatest amount of rain. Yield potentials will remain relatively favorable for the soybeans, first-season corn, and other crops. Establishment and early-season development conditions will also improve or remain favorable for the Safrinha corn and cotton, at least in the short-term. The need for rain will remain high later in March.

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