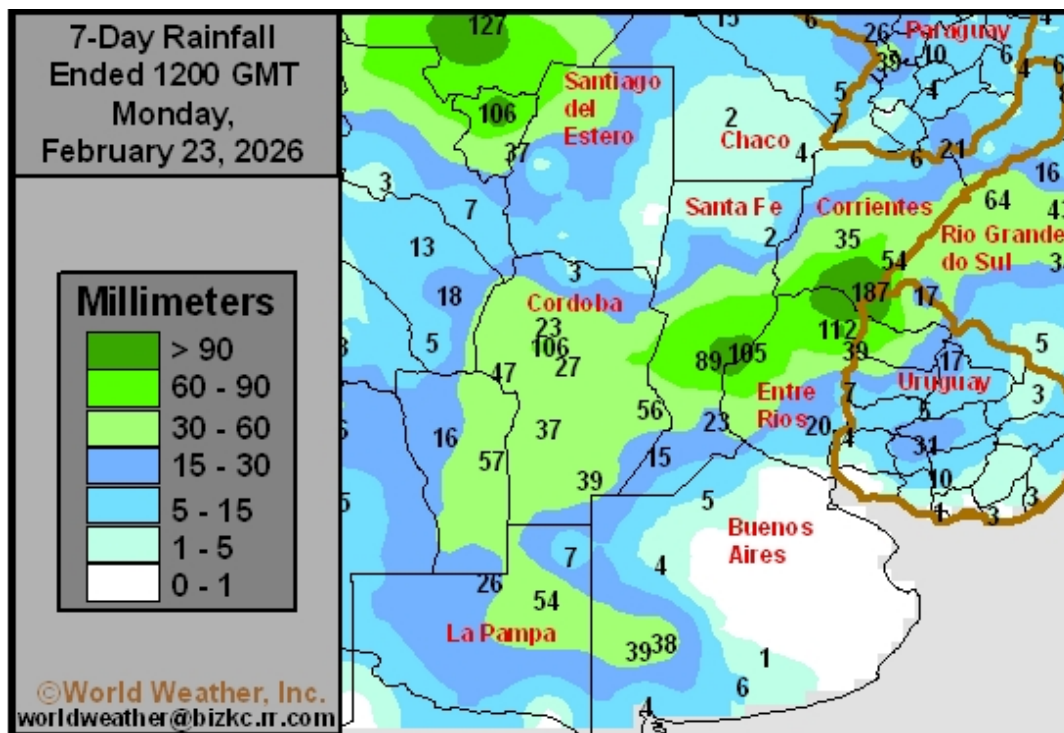


Argentina Rain Well-Timed For Most Crops; Buenos Aires Dry

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, February 24 (World Weather Inc.) – Despite a lack of significant rain and periods of warmer than usual weather in January, conditions in the heart of Argentina's coarse grain, oilseed, cotton production areas improved recently. A large part of Buenos Aires is still considered too dry, although a short-term bout of improved conditions occurred during mid-month. A portion of northeastern Argentina is also becoming too dry again as well. Sunseed and rice are already being harvested in some locations and additional rain may be too late for the early-planted crops. Alternating periods of erratic rain and sunshine are slated for crop country this week. Resulting rainfall will be too light to significantly bolster soil moisture in many areas; however, late-season development conditions will remain relatively favorable outside the driest areas in Buenos Aires and northeastern Argentina.

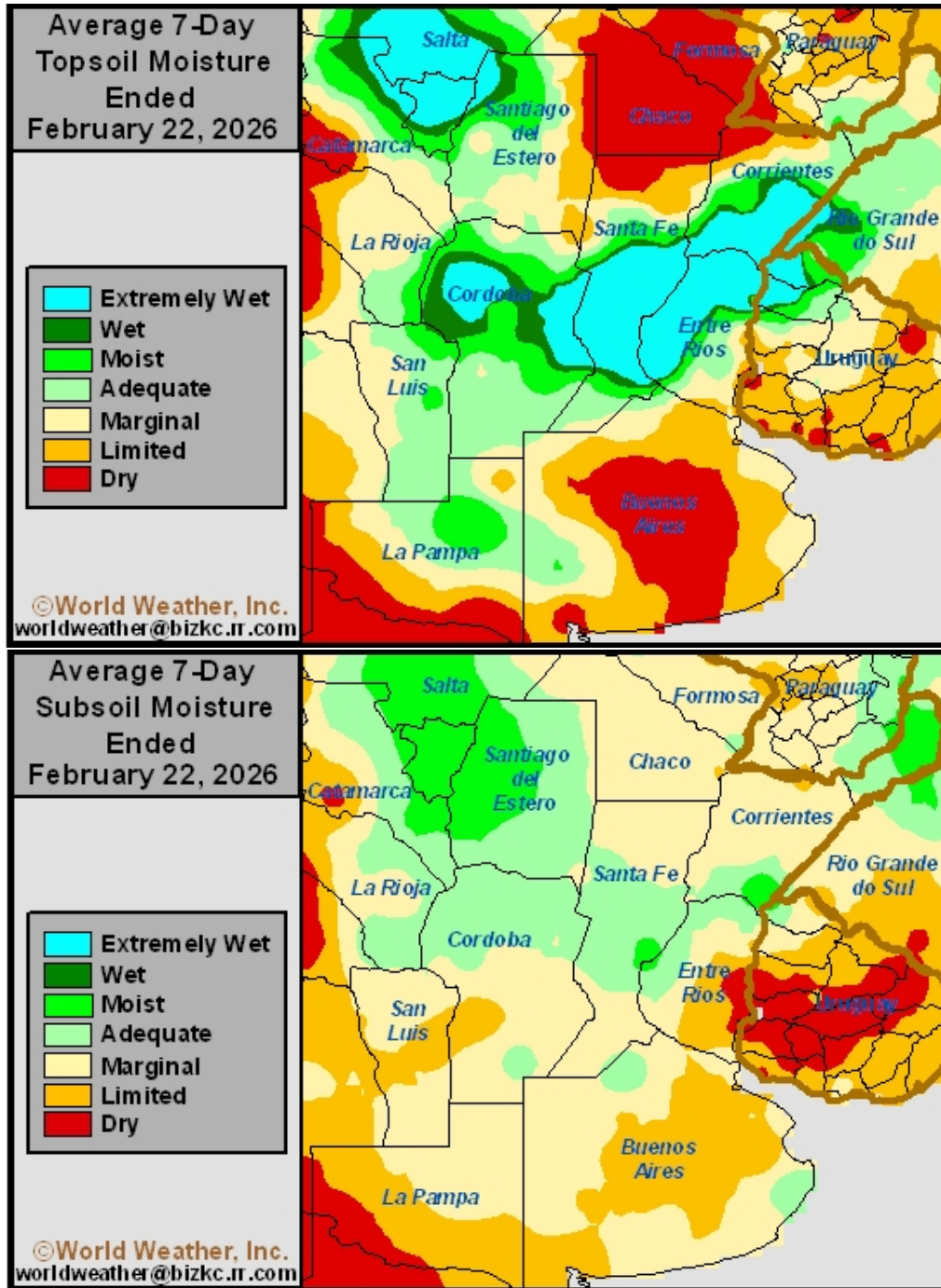
Rainfall varied significantly across the main production areas in Argentina during the past week. Cordoba, San Luis, southwestern Buenos Aires, and La Pampa into central Santa Fe, northern Entre Rios, and southern Corrientes received 0.67 to 4.41 inches of rain for the seven-day period ending this morning. Southern sections of Santa Fe and Entre Rios received 0.59 to 0.91 inch of rain. Northern Argentina and a few other areas in western and southern Buenos Aires received up to 0.28 inch of rain. The remaining locations in Buenos Aires were mostly dry.



Northeastern Argentina and several areas in Buenos Aires still have a shortage of moisture due to the lack of significant rain during the past week. Other locations received enough rain to bolster or keep soil moisture at adequate or excessive levels.

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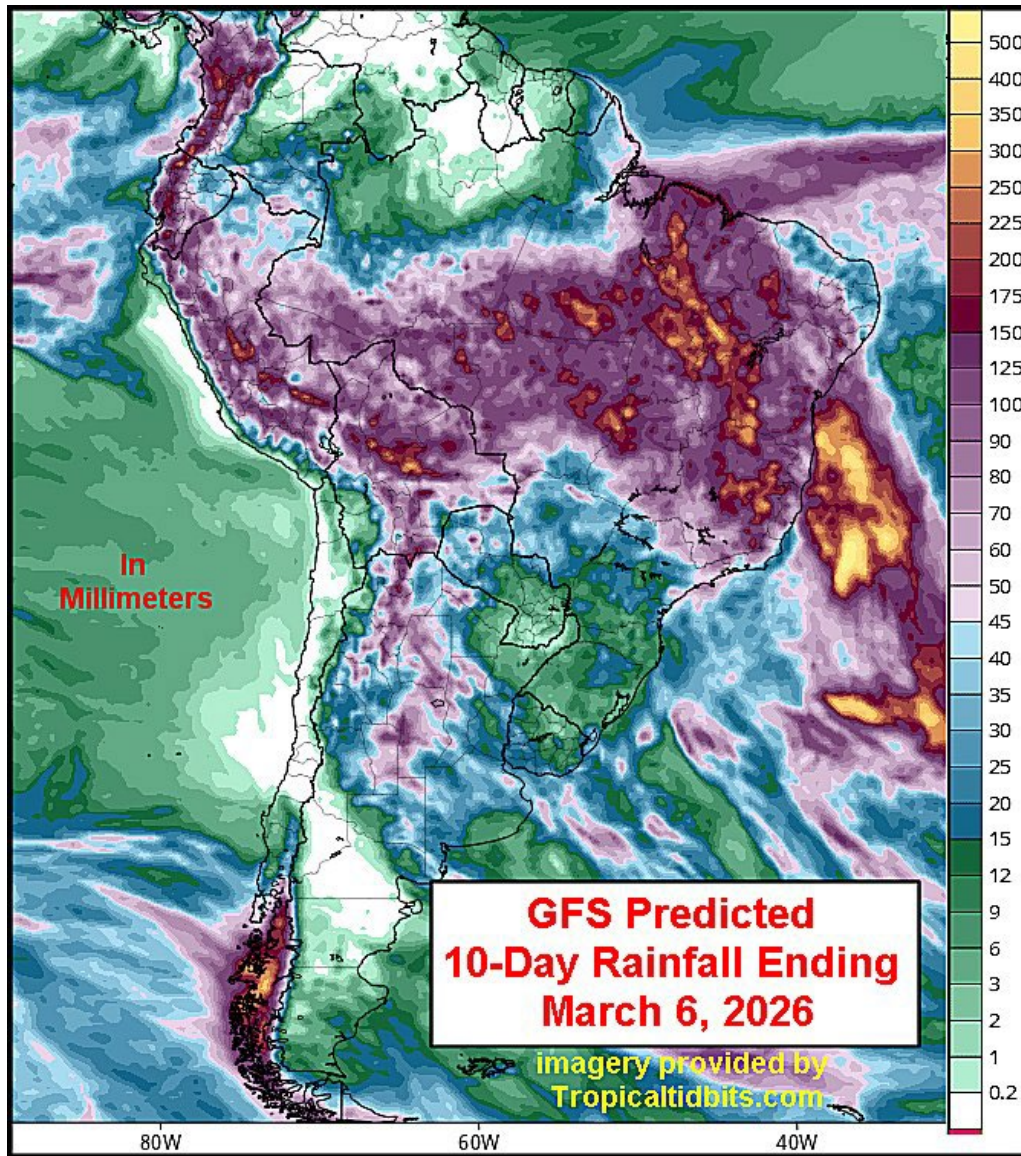
Argentina received enough rain in recent weeks to improve late-season coarse grains, oilseed, cotton, and other crop development. Significant drying was noted in January and early February due to a lack of rain and periods of hotter than normal weather. Recent rainfall was enough to reverse the drying trend in most locations. Yield potentials remain relatively favorable, despite the adverse conditions in January. Some of the driest areas in northeastern Argentina and Buenos Aires would still benefit from rain to support late-season growth.



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According to the Argentina Ag Minister, harvesting is underway for the earliest-planted crops. As of February 19, sunseed harvesting was 38% complete, up from 19% from this time last year. Rice harvesting was 11% complete, down from 25% this time last year.

Rainfall during the past week may have slowed early-season harvesting and general fieldwork in portions of central and western Argentina. No major quality impacts were suspected.



WEATHER OUTLOOK

Eastern Argentina is unlikely to get much significant moisture in the coming week to ten days. The remainder of the nation will see alternating periods of erratic rain and sunshine.

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Outside a few spotty showers, much of Argentina will be dry today. Scattered showers will evolve Tuesday into Thursday, primarily in northern and central Argentina. A disturbance will then generate erratic rainfall for several locations Friday and this weekend. Moisture totals by next Monday morning will range from 0.50 to 2.00 inches with drier pockets in Cordoba, southern Santiago del Estero, La Pampa, Formosa, and neighboring areas. Other locations will receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of rain with locally greater amounts. Rain potentials will likely increase for much of Argentina March 3-9.

Temperatures will trend near to above normal in Argentina this week. The southern half of crop country will warm to the 70s and 80s Fahrenheit with pockets occasionally warming to the lower 90s. Areas farther north will warm to the 80s and 90s most days. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s in the southern half of Argentina and the 60s and 70s farther to the north. Seasonable to seasonably warm weather will persist March 3 – 9.

Northeastern Argentina and several areas in Buenos Aires will remain too dry for ideal late-season growth. Some crop moisture stress will continue this week and concern about yield potentials may resume; though, no major production impacts are expected, especially if the rain during the second week verifies. Other locations will receive enough rain or have enough moisture to maintain relatively favorable late-season development. Maturation and harvesting of the earliest-planted crops will advance swiftly around the erratic rain.

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