

The Canadian Agriculture Weather Prognosticator

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April 3, 2026

World Weather To Watch

- El Nino is still predicted to evolve later this year; SE Asia and India will be first to feel its impact which may be a few months from now
- U.S. drought in Midwest and Delta regions is being eased by waves of rain in early April
- U.S. hard red winter wheat production may be down this year due to adverse weather
- Autumn planting of wheat in Australia, Argentina and South Africa should go well; though, El Nino could have some negative impact on Australia and South Africa production in the spring.
- China's southern rapeseed area may become too wet
- India's late winter/early spring weather has been better than expected
- North Africa and Europe winter crops in good condition

Late Season Snow Brings A Shot Of Moisture

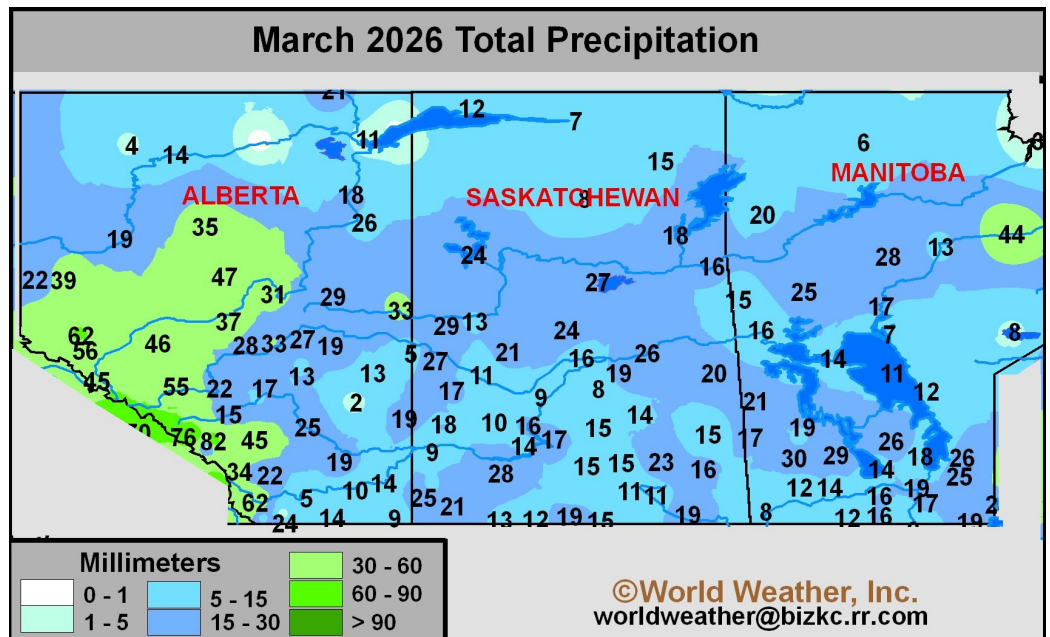
March precipitation in the Prairies was not terrible, but it was (again) well below normal in portions of Manitoba and easternmost Saskatchewan as well as in southeastern Alberta and neighboring areas of southwestern Saskatchewan. Moisture totals were often less than 16 millimeters in the heart of the Prairies, though there were some exceptions.

The most impressive precipitation during the month was noted in two areas. The first was the Slave Lake region and from the eastern slopes of the Swan Hills into the Edmonton, Edson, and Cold Lake areas where totals for the month were above and well above normal. A small tongue of above normal precipitation also occurred from the Rocky Mountain Front Range area through Calgary to near and east of Red Deer.

The second most impressive region of precipitation occurred in the last week of

the month as a snowstorm evolved across portions of central Saskatchewan. This late season snow event produced 5 to 20 centimeters of snow from portions of west-central Saskatchewan through the Lake Diefenbaker area to west-central and southwestern Manitoba and east-central and southeastern Saskatchewan.

Today's (April 3) snow cover chart shows impressive depths of snow on the ground in east-central Saskatchewan between Regina and Saskatoon and then east through the Highway Five and Highway 16 corridors to the Dauphin and Neepawa areas of Manitoba where modeled depths ranged from 12 to more than 20 inches (30-45cm). Some significant snow is also suspected of being on the ground farther to the southeast into the Portage La Prairie and Winnipeg areas of Manitoba. Less deep snow was noted in southeastern Saskatchewan and southwestern Manitoba where depths ranged



Late Season Snow Brings A Shot of Moisture (from page 1)

upwards to 6 inches (15cm). Most other areas in northern parts of the Prairies and into the Peace River region has between 4 and 8 inches of snow on the ground as do areas near the front range of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta.

In contrast, there is not much snow present today in the Red Deer area west northwest toward the Rocky Mountain House region or to the east into a small part of west-central Saskatchewan. Snow fell Thursday the far southwestern part of Saskatchewan and neighboring areas of Alberta ending lengthy period without snow.

The late March snow event in central into southeastern Saskatchewan was a good wet snow event. Some of the moisture from that snow event either has already or soon will reach into the topsoil since some areas do not have much frost in the ground. The bottom line is that “some” producers will have a little more moisture in the topsoil for planting because of the late month precipitation event.

Unfortunately, there are many more areas that did not get much pre-

cipitation during March and failed to get much of the snow event that benefited portions of the Prairies.

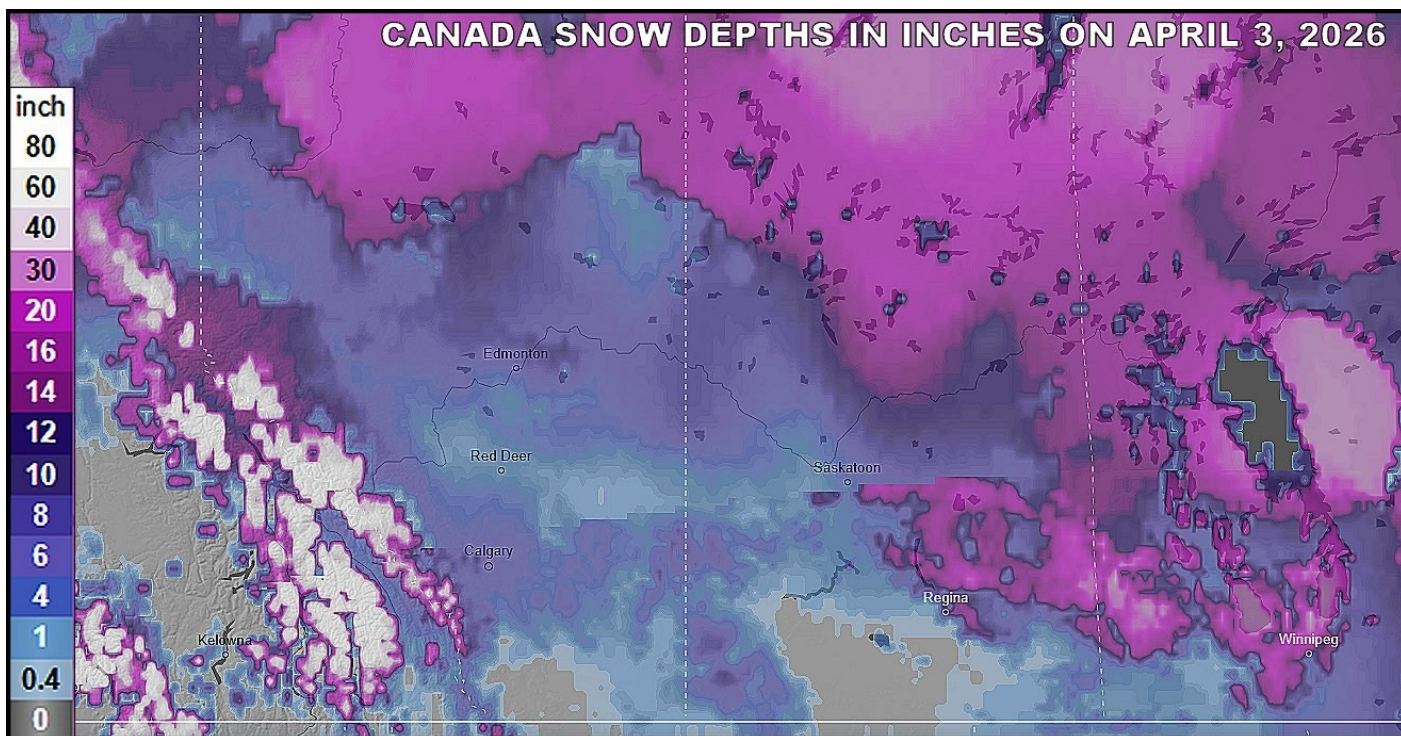
Weather conditions have quieted down once again and restricted precipitation is predicted for much of the central and eastern portions of the Prairies until mid-week next week. Daily high temperatures in the positive and negative single digits will help melt some of the snow gradually which raises the potential for at least some of the moisture to reach into the ground for improved planting conditions.

Much of the coming week to ten days will not bring much additional precipitation to the snow free areas noted above and warmer temperatures expected later this month will likely open up the fields as more of today’s snow cover is allowed to melt away. The melting pace is expected to be gradual during the forecast period because of nighttime freezes and that is nearly ideal for getting as much moisture into the soil as possible.

A storm system due across the

Prairies during mid-week next week will be a quick moving event and may favor western and northern portions of the Prairies. The system will likely add more depth to some of the significantly buried areas across northern parts of the Prairies. That could lead to some planting delay later in the spring if there is not enough warmth to begin melting some of the snow pack soon. There are not many areas in that kind of a predicament. Sufficient warming is expected later in April and especially in May to induce significant snow melt and get the ground warm enough to support planting. That process will begin in the south first, obviously.

Snow depths in the Rocky Mountains have been sufficient this season to support some runoff into irrigated areas of southern Alberta; however, this year’s warm weather has already melted some of the snowpack and water supply may decline earlier than usual this year since the snowpack is likely to be lighter than usual because of warm weather coming early and causing snow to melt periodically through March.



April, May Precipitation Often Light; Warm In May

The unsettled weather of March has already passed and there may only be one opportunity for significant precipitation early this month and that occurs next week. The southern Prairies will remain driest. The Peace River Region has a fair chance of getting some greater than usual precipitation briefly during the month.

Some areas west of Highway Two in Alberta may also get some timely precipitation in early April while most other areas that get significant moisture will be around the perimeter of the production region and rarely in the heart of the region.

Late April weather should warm in the west while staying a little milder than usual in the east. That contrast in airmass temperatures might help stimulate some precipitation, although a flux of moisture will

be required. Early indications suggest the only moisture flux into the Prairies will be through the Peace Country where precipitation may continue periodically. Some of the northwestern Alberta precipitation should advance across northern and eastern parts of the Prairies. However, as the moisture shifts east it will diminish leaving many areas with below normal precipitation during the month.

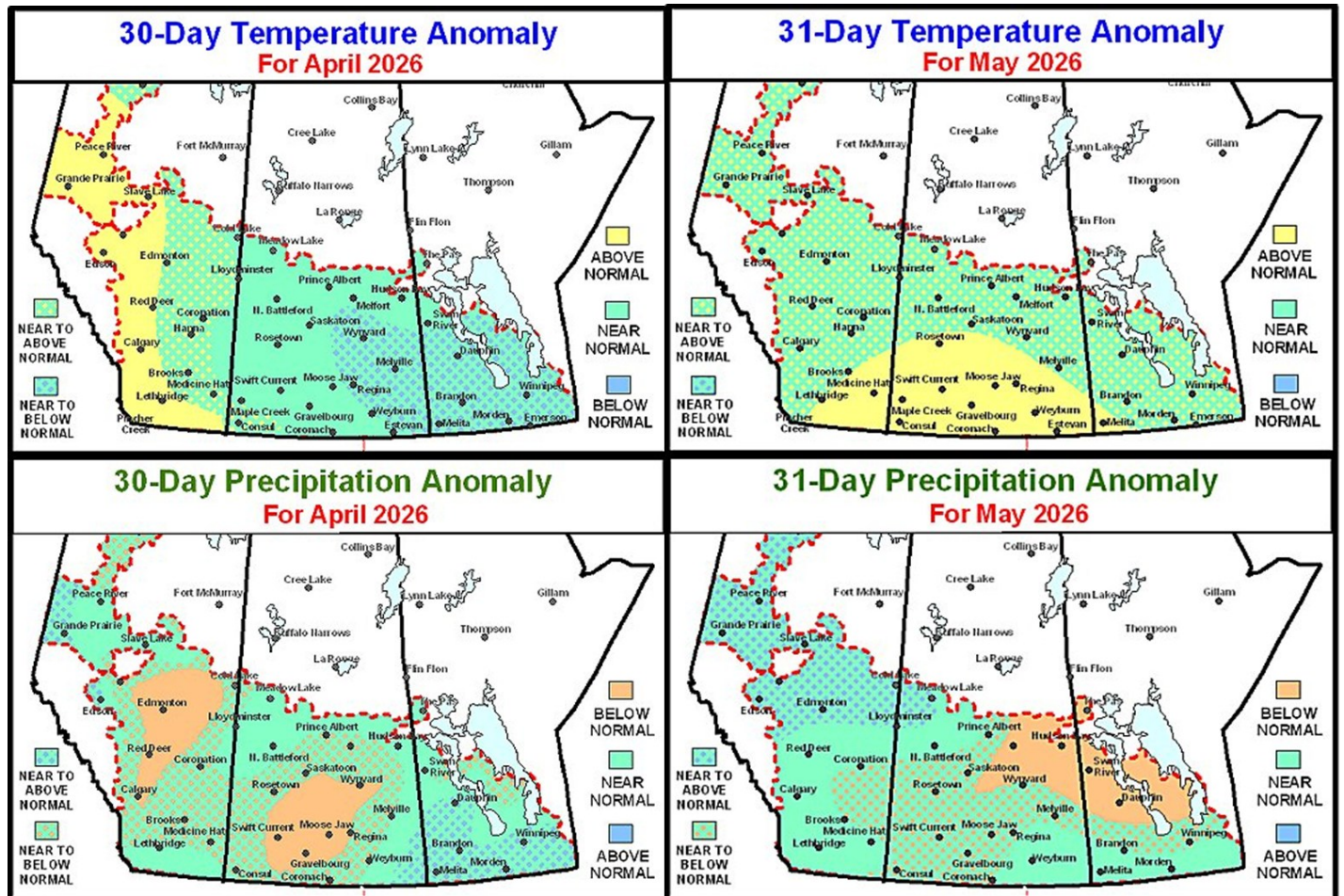
Temperatures in April will start out near to below normal, but the west should trend warmer as the second half of the month progresses leaving the monthly averages a little warmer than usual in the western Prairies and slightly cooler biased in the east.

The wetter bias noted in southern Manitoba may have a tough time verifying. This week's two storm systems moving through the northern U.S.

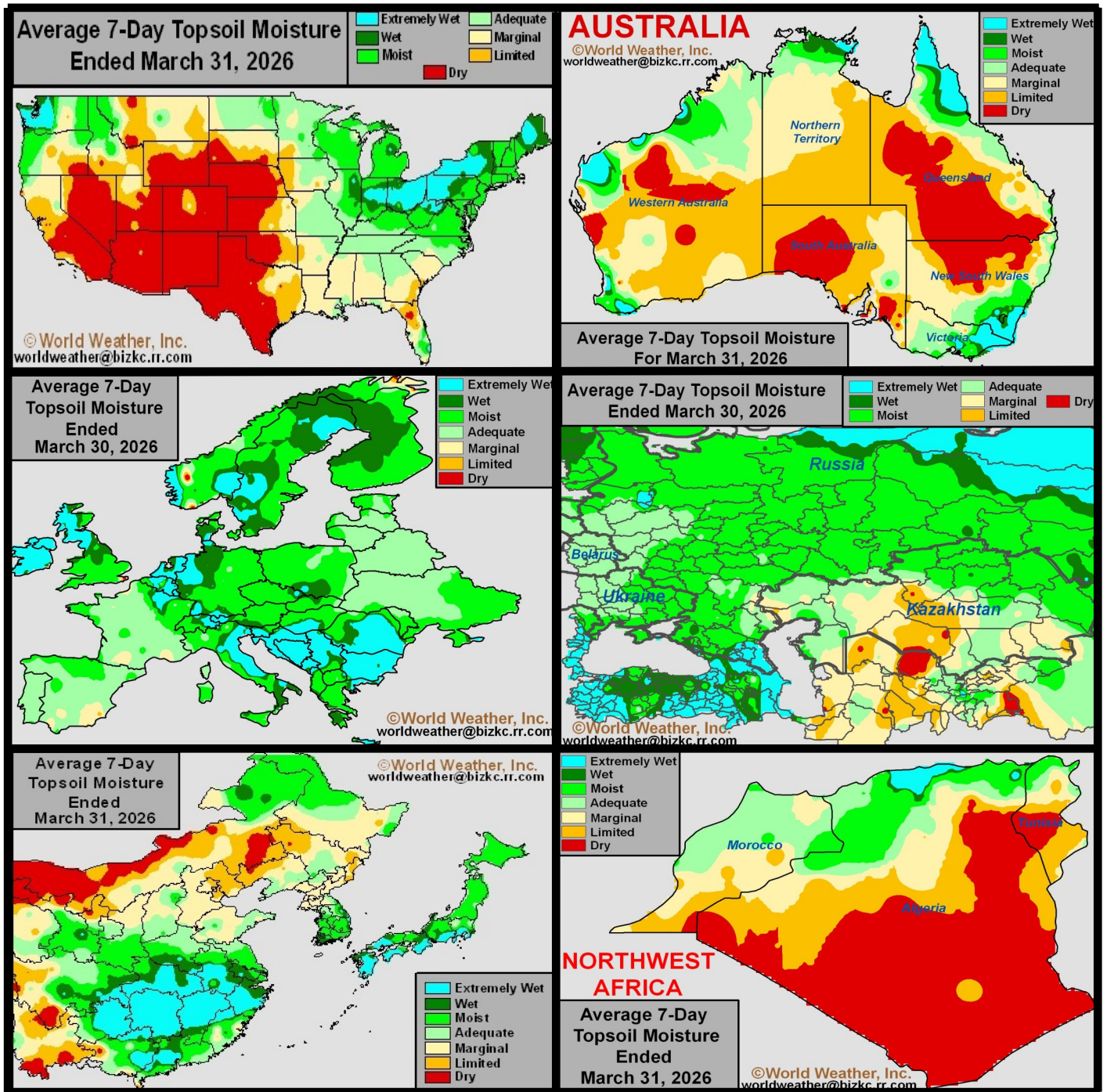
Prairies were originally thought to move into southeastern Manitoba to help ease recent dryness, but less of that moisture is now expected in the region. Manitoba should have another chance for rain/snow late this month.

May will start out cold and dry in the east and warm in the west, but as the month progresses warming is likely throughout the Prairies and if that occurs there should be a boost in atmospheric moisture so that rain/snow potentials will increase when disturbances show up later in the month.

Early indications suggest May will be wettest in the Peace River region and across northern and western Alberta to the far northwest of Saskatchewan. Improved rainfall is likely in eastern and southern Alberta and western and southern Saskatchewan. The driest conditions are likely in NE



Selected Weather Images From Around The World



U.S. weather is becoming quite dry in the southern and west-central Plains and southwestern states and no relief is likely until late this month and more likely in May. Abundant rain in the Midwest in this coming week will soak the ground and delay spring fieldwork for a little while. Eastern Australia dryness is expediting summer crop maturation and harvesting. Rain will be needed soon in all winter crop areas in Australia to support autumn planting late this month into June. Europe and the western Former Soviet Union continue to experience favorable soil moisture for approaching spring fieldwork and early season winter crop development. China's rapeseed area is becoming too wet and needs some short-term drier and warmer weather, but that is unlikely—at least for a while. Northern wheat areas in China would benefit from moisture later this month. North Africa has been drying down recently; though frequent winter precipitation should have crops well established and poised for good yields. Timely rain is needed.

Peace Country Drought Fails To Abate

Drought began in the Peace River region during the late summer and autumn of 2024. There have been a few precipitation events since that time; though, none have seriously dented the event especially on the British Columbia side of the Alberta/BC border. It has been rather amazing and quite sad to see how dry it has been over the past 18 months and the impact on dryland agriculture has been significant.

Snow and some rain fell significantly last October with a little more occurring early in the cold season, but it was not enough to seriously break the drought and every month since January 2025 has been at least 50% below the normal precipitation in a part of the production region. Again, most of the severity of drought has been near and west of the British Columbia border and many areas have reported less than 40% of normal precipitation month after month.

Some of the moisture deficits accumulated in the past year have varied from 400 to 550 millimeters or 15.70 to 21.65 inches. That is nothing short of amazing, though there are some areas in the heart of the Prairies that have been getting along on much less moisture than that and still are producing favorable crops. The climate in the Peace River region is different from that in the Prairies and rain is normally much more abundant.

Producers in the region struggled with dryness all of last year as did other parts of western Canada in the previous few years. Fires broke out throughout British Columbia and northern Alberta with a few reaching into some crop areas.

Needless to say, producers in the region are ready for a break in the pattern, but being ready has been the case for well over a year and, yet, nothing has come along to seriously change the situation.

Weather patterns this year are not

going to start off very well for the region. There is a small disturbance that will pass through the Peace River Region early next week that could produce some snow for a little while, but, like so many systems in the past, the precipitation will favor the Alberta portion of the Peace River System. Some snow is likely throughout the drought-stricken region; though, moisture totals will vary from 0.20 to 0.70 inch with the lighter amounts on the BC side of the border.

There will be some crop areas in the Alberta portion of the Peace River Region that might get up to one inch of moisture, though that is more likely in the easternmost parts of the river basin. After that system passes it may be dry in the region again for a while.

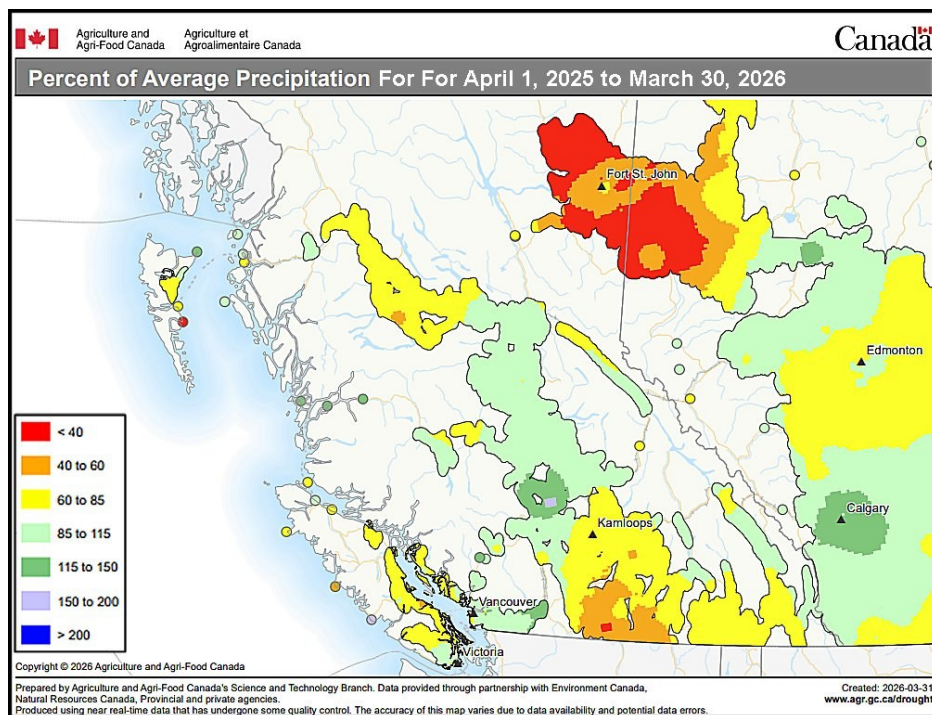
Another chance for snow and rain may evolve in the Peace Country in late April, but the impact it has on the region is predicted to be low once again. There is some potential that in May the blocking ridge of high pressure responsible for the poor rainfall may shift to the east of the BC/Alberta border which could raise the potential for some improved pre-

cipitation. The official forecast suggests greater than usual rain is possible in May; though confidence is not very high.

Most of the long range weather indicators suggest there will be some potential for significant rain for brief periods of time during the summer, as well, and that could be enough to raise crops, despite the potential for spring and summer precipitation to be lighter than usual again.

Not all hope is lost, though. Producers in the Peace Country only need a few timely rain events that are well timed and some seasonably mild temperatures to induce a favorable crop. Those requirements are not out of the realm of possibilities; though the odds do favor a warmer than usual temperature bias for much of the growing season this year. That makes the timeliness of rain extremely important.

The bottom line for the Peace River Region in 2026 is not ideal, but there should be a little more precipitation that is better timed this year relative to that of last year to provide some hope for greater production.



Northeastern Prairies Spring Planting May Be Slow

Significant snow remains on the ground across portions of far northern and eastern sections of the Prairies. Some of the most recent snow accumulations in east-central and Saskatchewan and central Manitoba have reached a relatively significant level raising a little concern over soil moisture and soil temperatures for early season planting.

There is also a significant amount of snow lingering in the north-central and northeastern parts of Saskatchewan as well as a few areas near the tree line in northern Alberta. Each of these significantly buried areas of snow will need to be closely monitored for possible delays in field access during the spring especially if some new precipitation events of significance evolve and temperatures are cooler biased.

Planting in many of the snow covered areas in the north does not come until May and some producers can and will plant in June as well. That leaves plenty of time for snow melt to take place and for the ground to firm in areas where it may become too wet when the snow melt season arrives.

Temperatures will be sufficiently warm in northern Alberta and north-central and northwestern Saskatchewan during the spring to sufficiently melt the snow and set the stage for favorable planting conditions.

Northeastern and east-central parts of the Prairies should end up doing okay with planting this spring,

but temperatures will not be nearly as warm as they will be farther to the west. That may slow the snow-melt season. However, the pattern should not promote heavy precipitation events which will be good while trying to get the snow cover to disappear.

The drier and cooler northwesterly flow pattern aloft this spring is a bit of a concern because the upper air wind flow may prevail out of the

begins to firm up because there is a potential for at least parts of the region to trend drier than usual during the heart of summer.

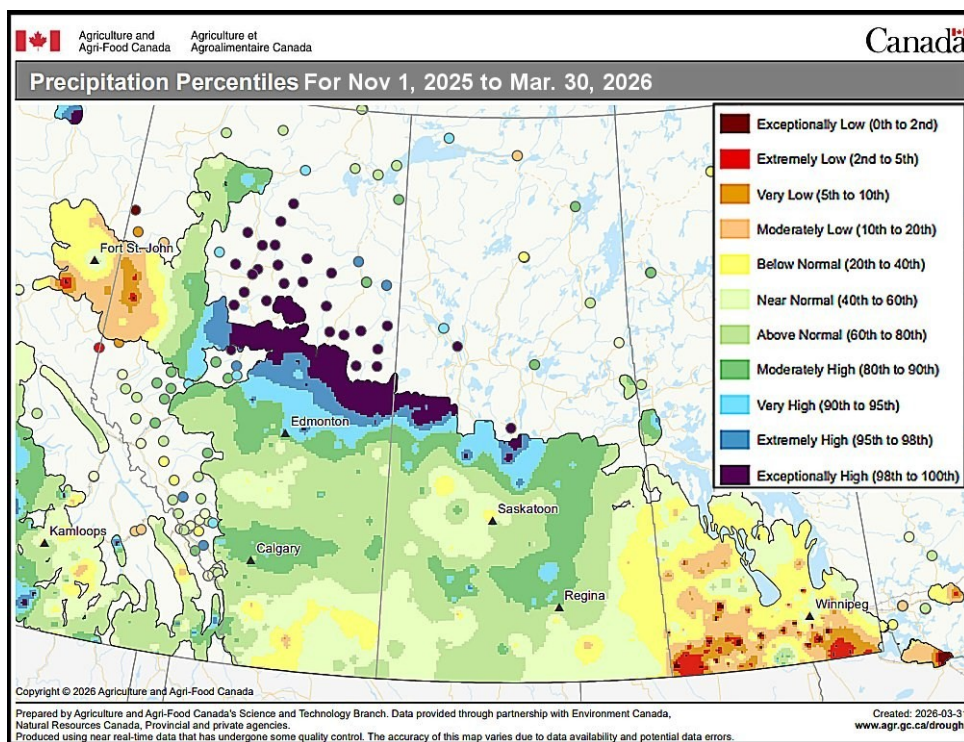
If that is the trend for this season there may be some concern over the success of some crops. That concern would be heightened if there were no timely rain events slated for the region. World Weather, Inc. believes that there will be a few opportunities for rain, though amounts will be

lighter than usual. There is also some potential for short term bouts of warmer than usual weather and that combined with the lighter than usual precipitation could lead to some crop moisture stress.

The best news for the northeastern one-third of the Prairies is that there should not be any prolonged warmer than usual weather during the summer this

year. That should give crops a chance to take advantage of moisture resulting from the spring snow melt and from moisture that is deeper in the ground from last autumn's precipitation events.

The situation must be closely monitored since any prolonged warmer than usual temperature regime would accelerate drying and deplete soil moisture at the wrong time of the year. There are mixed signals about spring weather this year leaving the potential for timely precipitation to take place, despite the drier than usual bias.



northwest during much of the growing season. Such a wind flow pattern would keep temperatures from becoming excessively warm, but they might also limit precipitation.

World Weather, Inc. believes the northeastern Prairies will have a better than average chance of being a little drier than usual during the summer. Planting conditions in the spring could be slowed by wet and cool fields while the summer may trend drier than usual. That suggests farmers will need to take full advantage of the moisture profile after the snow melts and when the ground

SW Prairies Drought May Have A Tough Time Breaking

Outside of last year, the south-western Prairies have come into spring with either notable dryness or some level of drought every year since 2020 and dryness was prevalent in 2019 as well. Last year's lack of drought on March 30 helped set the stage for a better year, but the region has backtracked into drought again and that has everyone a bit worried.

Deep subsoil moisture in the region has been quite low for 7-9 years depending on location in the southwest. Folks are tired of dealing with this and there have been a number of producers deciding to retire recently because of the on-going problem with soil moisture, precipitation and just general crop stress.

The climate change "specialists" all claim this is the new world for the Prairies, but World Weather, Inc. is not convinced. The weather is quite cyclical, but our limited data set prevents us from being able to prove those cycles back beyond the early part of the 20th century in Canada and beyond the late 1800s in the United States. However, there is evidence of a cyclical nature to wet and dry periods across the Prairies.

The development of El Nino in 2026 is going to be another step in the right direction. El Nino events tend to put more moisture into the middle latitudes in both the Northern and southern Hemispheres of this planet while reducing moisture in the tropics. La Nina does just the oppo-

site. The drought cycle that began around 2020 was associated with the infamous 22-year solar cycle and the three-year La Nina that came with it made many mid-latitude areas in the world unusually dry.

Droughts associated with the infamous 22-year cycle have historically always been tough to break down. You can see that most clearly in the 1930s and 1950s droughts, but to a lesser degree in the 1970s and the period from 1999 to 2002. The earlier droughts of the 20th century lasted seven to ten years and this one in

cycle and it was not enough to break the pattern.

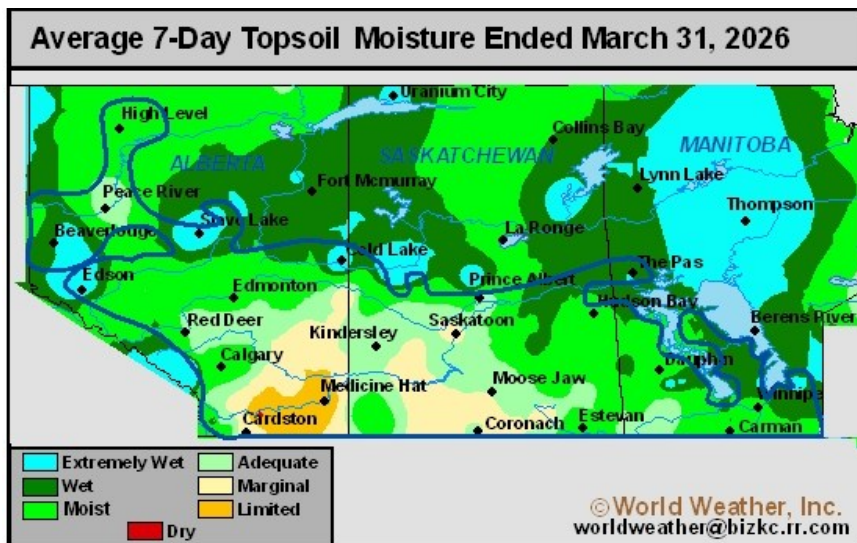
This new El Nino event is occurring 2 years after the solar maximum which is well beyond the end of the most serious 22-year solar cycle and the multi-year La Nina event which ended in 2022. That will allow this El Nino to have a greater potential to bring more moisture to North America, but do not expect that to happen overnight. It will take many months to turn around the pattern especially with drought still prevalent from northern Mexico to northern Canada.

Major droughts like this are hard to break.

The coming El Nino will not begin to influence the world's weather until June (at the earliest). It will likely prevail through the winter of 2027 and into the following growing season. That should be long enough to bring some changes, but you must understand that El Nino is not friendly to the Prairies during the winter months. Winter 2026-27 will likely

be drier and warmer than usual. That puts much pressure on our late summer and autumn to get moisture into the ground before the winter dryness bias begins. If El Nino is still present in the spring of 2027 we should see a better rainfall pattern—certainly better than this year.

With all of that said, there will be a few opportunities for rain this spring in the southwestern Prairies where drought is prevalent today; however, the prevailing weather pattern in the atmosphere is not going to



western Canada seems to fit in with those other drought periods. Since the reason for our recent multi-year drought is similar to that of the 20th century we need to have a little more patience for the cycle to end.

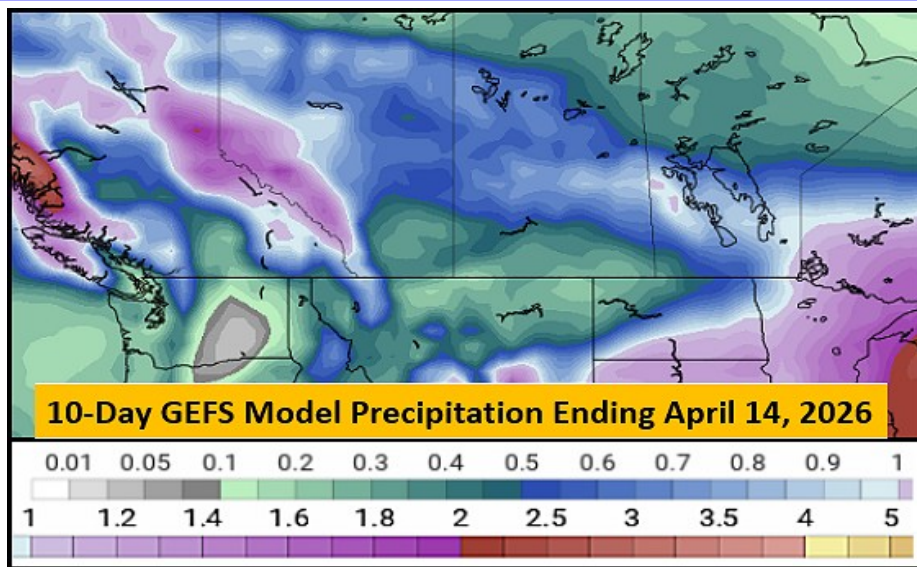
Bringing El Nino into the fold will help greatly, but it must prevail for more than a few months. There was an El Nino event briefly in 2023 and it lasted for nine months. That should have brought some relief to the Prairies; though it occurred while we were still deep in the 22-year solar

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SW Prairies Have Tough Time Breaking Drought (from page 7)

allow rain events very often or with much vigor until later in the growing season. That leaves us with another very challenging spring season with concern about low soil moisture in some areas in both Alberta and Saskatchewan.

There is potential for late April and especially May to be warmer biased in the western Prairies. There will be a few opportunities for rain, but the ideal scenario needed for the region may not evolve and. There should be better rainfall in July and August than in April or May if that provides any help. The precipitation in the summer may still not fall with great volume, but there should be a few more opportunities for rain. The sooner El Nino begins the better it will be for the Prairies, but the region

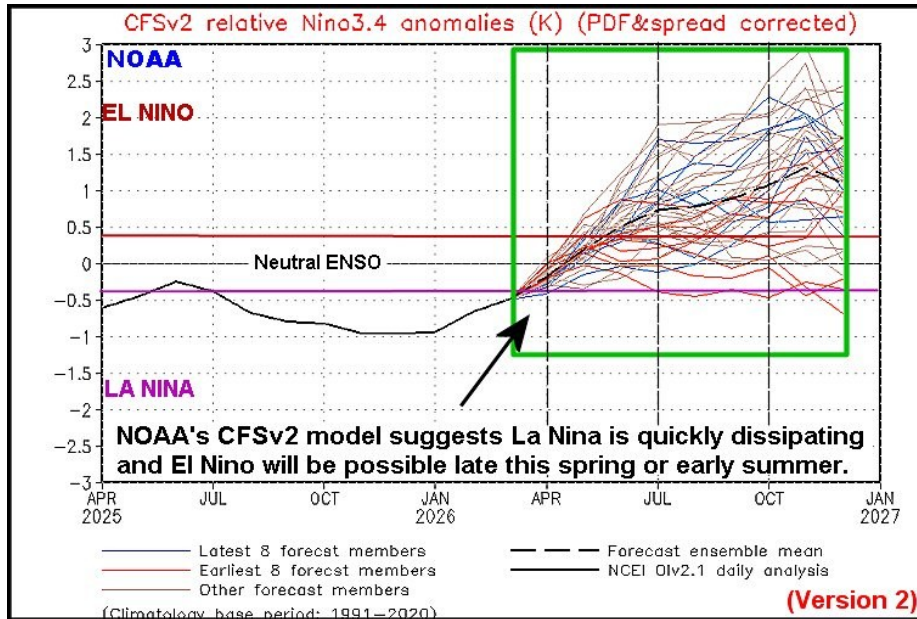


is still dealing with the lunar cycle rainfall pattern. which is not going to favor an ideal

El Nino Likely This Summer

U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has predicted La Nina will quickly give way to neutral ENSO conditions this month with a further transition to El Nino possible in May or June. A similar forecast was released by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology with a more aggressive forecast toward a strong El Nino by late this year.

The implications of this forecast are not great for Canada's Prairies—at least not for a while, but the winter of 2026-27 may prove to be drier and warmer than usual. In the meantime, the phenomenon may not provide a huge amount of influence on the Prairies until it has persisted for a while. Once the El Nino event has been festering for multiple months it will begin raising atmospheric moisture for the middle latitudes and that should eventually lead to improving



rain potentials for the drought stricken western Prairies and some improvement for the driest areas of far eastern Canada as well. The U.S. may experience greater rain earlier in its Midwest production area.

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U.S. April Weather To Leave Hard Red Wheat Areas Dry

Western portions of North America are unlikely to break away from the drier-than-usual conditions that dominated the autumn and winter months. Most of the U.S. Rocky Mountain region, Great Basin and southwestern desert region will be drier than usual in April as will portions of southwestern Canada. Wetter-biased conditions are expected in the first part of April in the western Delta, southeastern Great Plains and a part of the Midwest, but the second half of the month should be drier biased once again as an old familiar weather pattern resumes. Temperatures will be warm in western parts of North America, cooler biased in eastern Canada and mild at times in the U.S. Midwest.

La Nina is quickly dissipating today and neutral ENSO conditions are evolving which should lead to some improved rain amounts and frequency during the spring months of April and May. The first instance of improved rainfall is occurring this week with widespread rain from Texas and the western Delta to the Great Lakes region and upper Midwest from a couple of storm systems. The ground will quickly become saturated in portions of the Midwest and western Delta regions; though some of the drought classification is unlikely to change until more frequent precipitation falls.

World Weather, Inc. does not believe the winter weather pattern has completely broken down, nor does it believe it will break down completely

until late May. That implies this week's wetter weather in the Midwest and Delta will be a short-term phenomenon that will be followed by some additional drier biased weather with some cooler temperatures.

The middle and latter parts of April will probably be drier biased once again allowing the topsoil to

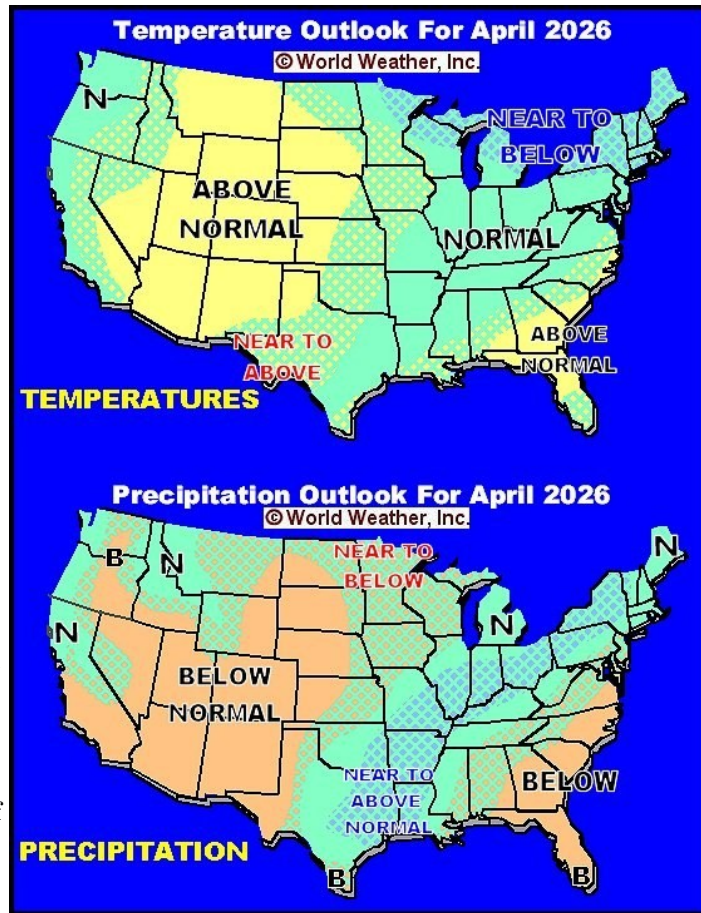
repeating 45-day cycle returns more potent cold to the northern half of the Midwest and northeastern Great Plains.

The April weather pattern is expected to perpetuate a drier-than-usual bias over western parts of the United States and in southwestern portions of Canada's Prairies. Tem-

peratures may trend warmer than usual over western North America again during the latter half of this month as well which may exacerbate concerns over warm and dry conditions from the U.S. high Plains and southwestern Canada's Prairies into the U.S. Great Basin and southwestern desert region. Drought is also expected to prevail in the southeastern parts of the United States from Florida and southeastern Alabama into Virginia.

April temperatures will be warm biased in the west of North America and closer to normal in the eastern United States while eastern Canada is a little cooler biased.

The April forecast may appear to be disturbing to producers in the Midwest and parts of the Delta because of the volume of rain predicted in early April; however, the second half of the month should be drier biased allowing fieldwork to proceed a little better. With that said, there may be some cooler than usual weather periodically in late April that may slow drying rates and keep topsoil temperatures a little below the optimum threshold for seed germination and plant development.



begin firming. Farmers should be able to get back into their fields during the second half of the month. There is some potential for cooler than usual weather to occur at times during the month, although the greatest cool off may come in the last days of April and into early May as a

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