

WORLD AGRICULTURAL WEATHER HIGHLIGHTS

May 10, 2012



1 - UNITED STATES

During April, most of the nation continued to experience unusually warm weather. Cooler-than-normal weather was generally limited to areas along the Pacific Coast and parts of the Great Lakes and Northeastern States. In the latter region, early-blooming fruit crops were threatened by a series of freezes, the worst of which struck from April 27 to 30. Significantly above-normal April precipitation was mostly limited to the Pacific Coast States, the northern Rockies, and parts of the Plains and upper Midwest. Rainfall was especially important across the northern Plains and upper Midwest, where dryness had begun to develop in late-summer 2011. In contrast, mostly dry weather prevailed across the eastern Corn Belt and much of the South. Planting advanced quickly across the dry regions, but pastures, winter grains, and emerging summer crops were in need of moisture in drought-affected areas of the southern High Plains and the lower Southeast. Elsewhere, cool, showery weather slowed spring fieldwork and crop development in California and the Northwest, while further deterioration of water-supply prospects occurred in the Four Corners States.

2 - CANADA

April showers improved planting prospects for Prairie spring grains and oilseeds.

3 - SOUTH AMERICA

In April, timely rain benefited secondary (safrinha) corn in Brazil's main production areas, following earlier periods of warmth and dryness. Soybean harvesting advanced toward completion. In Argentina, a drying trend aided drydown and harvesting of corn and soybeans. A season-ending freeze late in the month may have caused some localized damage to late-planted crops.

4 - EUROPE

Widespread, locally heavy rain returned to most of Europe during April, boosting soil moisture for vegetative to reproductive winter crops. Nevertheless, the impacts of an abnormally dry autumn and an early February arctic outbreak were noted in eastern Europe, where winter grains and oilseeds were either poorly developed or not established at all. However, the wet conditions slowed fieldwork, including the planting of corn, sunflowers, and sugarbeets, particularly in France and Spain.

USDA/OCE – World Agricultural Outlook Board Joint Agricultural Weather Facility

(More details are available in the Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin. at <http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/pubs/index.htm>)

5 - FSU

During April, drier- and warmer-than-normal conditions in Ukraine reduced soil moisture for vegetative winter grains. The early spring dryness compounded the effects of an unfavorably dry autumn on wheat prospects. In contrast, rain in Belarus and Russia favored emerging to vegetative winter crops. In eastern spring wheat areas, an unseasonably warm, dry April accelerated field preparations but rapidly reduced soil moisture. By month's end, however, much-needed rain returned to eastern Russia and northern Kazakhstan.

6 - NORTHWESTERN AFRICA

Locally heavy rain in Morocco stabilized winter grain prospects in the north but arrived too late for more advanced wheat and barley in the south. Wet weather prevailed elsewhere, maintaining favorable prospects for reproductive to filling winter crops.

7 - MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY

An early end to the rainy season across the eastern Mediterranean Coast promoted winter crop maturation and harvesting. In contrast, late-season rain in Turkey and northern Iran improved prospects for winter crops but hampered early cotton planting.

8 - SOUTH ASIA

Pre-monsoon heat prevailed across India and Pakistan during April. Well-above-normal rainfall occurred during the month, with consistent showers in southwestern and eastern India. The rainfall spurred rice transplanting in Assam and Bangladesh. Cotton planting in northern India was aided by warm weather and the absence of stressful heat.

9 - EASTERN ASIA

In April, planting of early double-crop rice, corn, and cotton was underway in southeastern China and parts of the Yangtze Valley. Above-normal rainfall and mild weather in these areas facilitated crop emergence and establishment and benefited filling winter rapeseed. On the North China Plain, mostly warm, dry weather prevailed for jointing winter wheat, with timely rainfall late in the month maintaining favorable wheat prospects.

10 - SOUTHEAST ASIA

Pre-monsoon rainfall in Thailand helped condition soils prior to the start of main-season rice transplanting, while wet weather maintained favorable moisture supplies for summer rice in southern Vietnam. Meanwhile, dry weather occurred during April in northern Vietnam, where additional moisture would be welcome for spring rice. In the Philippines, warm, drier conditions in the north aided harvesting of corn and rice, while consistent rainfall in the south maintained abundant moisture supplies in advance of the main growing season.

11 - AUSTRALIA

During April, periods of dry weather favored cotton and sorghum harvesting in southern Queensland and northern New South Wales. Occasional, soaking rains temporarily disrupted fieldwork but helped maintain abundant moisture supplies in advance of autumn winter wheat planting.

12 - SOUTH AFRICA

In early April, freezing temperatures may have caused some localized damage to late-developing summer crops in parts of the corn belt. A general drying trend continued throughout the eastern part of the country, supporting sugarcane harvesting but limiting moisture for winter wheat germination and establishment. In contrast, scattered showers were timely for emerging winter wheat in Western Cape.

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