

WORLD AGRICULTURAL WEATHER HIGHLIGHTS

February 9, 2012



1 - UNITED STATES

During January, the majority of the U.S. reported above-normal temperatures. Nevertheless, cold weather caused some problems. For example, an early-month freeze damaged some vegetables and other temperature-sensitive crops across Florida's peninsula on January 4-5. Later, a mid-January cold spell resulted in sub-0°F readings across the northern Plains. At the time of the initial cold blast, the northern High Plains' winter wheat crop had no protective snow cover. Much of the Plains' wheat belt also noted drier-than-normal conditions during January, although an early-February snow storm provided much-needed moisture across central portions of the region. In contrast, periods of heavy rain provided some drought relief across the southeastern Plains, including central and northeastern Texas. Farther northeast, slowly developing drought in the upper Midwest contrasted with soggy conditions in parts of the eastern Corn Belt. Meanwhile, drought remained a concern across much of the Deep South and intensified during January in the southern Atlantic region. Elsewhere, drought expanded in the West, particularly from California to the Intermountain region. Areas from the Pacific Northwest to the northern Rockies fared better during January, with periods of heavy rain and snow.

2 - SOUTH AMERICA

In January and early February, periods of rain in Argentina were insufficient to improve prospects for corn and soybeans. In addition, brief periods of unseasonably hot weather placed additional stress on crops. In Brazil, warmer- and drier-than-normal conditions maintained unfavorable prospects for soybeans and main-season corn in key southern production areas. However, favorable conditions farther north, and favorable planting prospects for the second (safrinha) corn crop, helped to offset potential losses in total national production.

3 - EUROPE

Above-normal temperatures and precipitation in January across central and northern Europe maintained favorable overwintering conditions for dormant winter grains and oilseeds. However, sharply colder weather arrived in early February, threatening exposed wheat and rapeseed. In Spain, unfavorable dryness continued to reduce soil moisture for winter wheat.

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>)

4 - FSU-WESTERN

In January, seasonably cold weather settled across Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Frequent snowfall provided adequate protection to dormant winter crops from winterkill, while temperatures consistently below freezing reduced the risk of heaving or ice crusting. Bitter cold overspread the region late in the month, although winterkill concerns were generally minor.

5 - NORTHWESTERN AFRICA

Despite pockets of drier-than-normal weather, generally timely showers maintained adequate soil moisture for vegetative winter grains over much of the region. Locally heavy rain returned by early February.

6 - MIDDLE EAST AND TURKEY

Heavy rain and mountain snow during January insulated dormant winter crops in the north and boosted soil moisture for vegetative winter grains in southern growing areas. Winter crop prospects remained favorable.

7 - SOUTH ASIA

Seasonably cool weather and near-normal rainfall in January benefited vegetative to reproductive winter wheat and rapeseed in northern India. Similar conditions also favored winter wheat across northern Pakistan. Meanwhile, warm, dry weather aided cotton harvesting in southern India. In eastern India, periodic rainfall boosted moisture supplies for rabi rice as well as other rabi grains and oilseeds.

8 - EASTERN ASIA

In China, wheat and rapeseed continued to overwinter well during January, with brief incursions of frigid weather having little impact on the crops. Occasional rainfall maintained moisture reserves for winter wheat, while rainfall was slightly below normal for winter rapeseed in the Yangtze Valley. Meanwhile, above-normal rainfall favored sugarcane and winter-grown vegetables in southern China.

9 - SOUTHEAST ASIA

Flooding rains continued in the first half of January across the eastern and southern Philippines, with more seasonable amounts reported during the latter half of the month. Despite locally saturated conditions, early year prospects for rice and corn were favorable. In Vietnam, spring rice transplanting neared completion in the south, while cool weather hampered the start to spring rice transplanting in the north. Meanwhile, near- to above-normal rainfall in Java, Indonesia, during January maintained favorable prospects for rice, progressing through reproduction.

10 - AUSTRALIA

In January and early February, near- to above-normal rainfall in eastern Australia caused isolated flooding but was overall beneficial for cotton and sorghum development. The rain kept reservoirs near capacity for irrigated crops and maintained abundant soil moisture for dryland crops.

11 - SOUTH AFRICA

A drying trend that began in mid-January reduced moisture for corn and other rain-fed summer crops, including sugarcane in southern KwaZulu-Natal. Above-normal temperatures, even during wetter periods in early January, maintained high evapotranspiration rates of crops in or nearing reproduction.

Next Release: March 9, 2012