

MEDIA ADVISORY
USDA Satellite Features Feed
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FEATURE – FRIGID WEATHER FOR MOST OF JANUARY

INTRO: A U-S-D-A meteorologist says December's cold temperatures will continue well into January. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. (1:32)

IT WILL BE COLDER THAN NORMAL FOR MOST OF JANUARY WITH WET WEATHER IN THE SOUTH AND WEST. THAT'S ACCORDING TO U-S-D-A METEOROLOGIST BRAD RIPPEY, WHO SAYS THERE WON'T BE MUCH GOOD WEATHER NEWS EXCEPT FOR CALIFORNIA.

Brad Rippey, USDA Agricultural Meteorologist: If you're in the South, the East or the Midwest it looks like a continuation of very cold, difficult conditions, but for the western half of the country I think we will see some improvement at least in the temperatures. We'll see some mild conditions and hopefully in California an increase in storminess.

RIPPEY SAYS WHILE IT WILL BE COLD IN THE EAST AND MIDWEST, IT WON'T BE AS WET. HOWEVER, IN THE SOUTH IT WILL BE WET AND COLD.

Rippey: Right now it looks like the wet weather in the near future will be confined to the southern tier of the country, stretching from California, through Texas and into Florida. The bigger problem in the short term for Florida is a cold outbreak. The mechanism that is creating that is a block over the North Atlantic. It's forcing cold air southward. That does not usually occur with El Nino and so I don't think this will be a winter long event. At some point we should break this pattern down and see milder conditions overspread the Plains and the Midwest. It just won't be until later in January or later in the winter.

IN THE WEST, CALIFORNIA WILL BENEFIT FROM STORMIER WEATHER AS IT STRUGGLES WITH DROUGHT.

Rippey: It looks like the prospects for California improve starting at about mid-January. It looks like we will see a stormier pattern returning and that bodes well for California, but again, a long way to go just to pick up a normal year.

IN WASHINGTON D-C FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.