Agricultural Weather Highlights – Thursday - June 18, 2020

- In the West, warmth continues to spread farther inland along the northern Pacific Coast. Below-normal temperatures cover the remainder of the region, although rain and snow showers have largely ended across the northern Rockies. Freeze warnings are in effect early today in portions of the northern Great Basin.

- On the Plains, cool air is replacing previously hot conditions. Furthermore, showers and thunderstorms across the northern Plains are boosting soil moisture and benefiting spring-sown crops. However, last evening’s thunderstorms on the southern High Plains provided only local drought relief, leaving most areas still in need of widespread, soaking rain. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor valid June 16, drought coverage across the central and southern Plains ranged from 27% in Texas to 66% in Colorado. One-third (33%) of Colorado was covered by extreme drought (D3).

- In the Corn Belt, showers and thunderstorms across the upper Midwest, from Minnesota to Nebraska, are generally benefiting corn and soybeans. During the week ending June 14, corn rated in good to excellent condition in Nebraska fell from 83 to 71%, largely due to heat and short-term dryness. In advance of the showers, hot weather is expanding eastward across the Great Lakes region.

- In the South, temperatures remain at near- or slightly below-normal levels, favoring summer crop development. In addition, scattered showers are broadly centered over the Appalachians, with a second area of showers affecting portions of the southern Atlantic region. Overall, conditions remain mostly favorable for Southern crops and pastures.

Outlook: During the next several days, anomalous heat will become established across the Northeast and from the Pacific Coast to the Rio Grande Valley. In contrast, cool air will continue to settle across much of the Plains and Midwest. As a cooler pattern develops across the nation’s mid-section, widespread showers and thunderstorms will occur—totaling 1 to 3 inches or more—from the southern Plains into the upper Midwest. Elsewhere, dry weather will prevail in California, the Great Basin, and the Desert Southwest, while showers will linger in the mid-Atlantic and environs. Additionally, locally heavy showers should affect southern Florida. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for June 23 – 27 calls for the likelihood of below-normal temperatures in the Midwest, while hotter-than-normal weather will prevail in the Atlantic Coast States and along and west of a line from Montana to Texas. Meanwhile, near- or above-normal rainfall across much of the country should contrast with drier-than-normal conditions in a few areas, including southern Florida, the Four Corners region, and across the nation’s northern tier from the Pacific Northwest to Minnesota.

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