Agricultural Weather Highlights – Friday - September 23, 2022

- In the West, a return to dry weather follows recent showers. In addition, warmth has returned across the Southwest, where today’s high temperatures may top 100°F at some low-elevation sites. Although fires have become less active in recent days, officials are still monitoring dozens of wildfires—collectively responsible for more than 900,000 acres of burned vegetation—in California and from the Cascades to the northern Rockies.

- On the Plains, hot, dry weather remains in place across much of Oklahoma and Texas. Meanwhile, widely scattered showers dot the northern and central Plains, in conjunction with a fast-moving cold front. Despite the showers, soil moisture remains limited for winter wheat germination. On September 18, U.S. winter wheat seeding was 21% complete, with progress on the Plains ranging from 13% planted in Oklahoma to 35% in Montana.

- In the Corn Belt, frost and freezes were reported this morning in the upper Great Lakes region, stretching from northeastern Minnesota to northern Lower Michigan. The remainder of the region is also experiencing cool weather; today’s Midwestern high temperatures will remain mostly below 70°F. A cold front moving into areas west of the Mississippi River is generating scattered rain showers.

- In the South, dry weather continues to promote fieldwork and summer crop maturation. However, cooler air has overspread the Southeast, excluding Florida’s peninsula. In contrast, record-setting heat persists in the western Gulf Coast region, where today’s high temperatures could again approach or reach 100°F in non-coastal locations.

Outlook: As Hurricane Fiona heads toward Atlantic Canada, the tropical depression currently crossing the Caribbean Sea will become a named storm. By early next week, the tropical cyclone—likely at hurricane intensity—may pose a significant threat to Florida’s peninsula, although there is still considerable forecast uncertainty. Across the remainder of the U.S. mainland, generally tranquil weather will prevail for the next 5 days. Outside of Florida’s peninsula, any rainfall totals greater than an inch should be limited to portions of the Great Lakes region. In fact, completely dry weather will prevail during the next 5 days in most areas from the Pacific Coast to the Plains. Any lingering extreme heat will be confined to the Deep South, mainly in the western Gulf Coast region, while the coolest weather—relative to normal—should prevail in the Midwest and Northeast. Periods of frost may affect the North, especially across the northern Plains and upper Midwest. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for September 28 – October 2 calls for the likelihood of above-normal temperatures across Florida’s peninsula and along and west of a line from Texas to Wisconsin, while cooler-than-normal conditions will cover much of the eastern U.S. Meanwhile, near- or below-normal rainfall across much of the country should contrast with wetter-than-normal weather in the Southwest and the southern Atlantic States.

Contact: Brad Rippey, Agricultural Meteorologist, USDA/OCE/WAOB, Washington, D.C. (202-720-2397)