Agricultural Weather Highlights – Tuesday - October 25, 2022

- In the West, widely scattered rain and snow showers extend inland from the Pacific Northwest to the northern Rockies. Cool, dry weather covers the remainder of the West. Freeze warnings are in effect early today in portions of the Four Corners States. Meanwhile in California, cool but dry weather favors fieldwork, including cotton and rice harvesting.

- On the Plains, cool weather prevails in the wake of a departing storm system. Early today, lingering rain is confined to the southeastern Plains. Where precipitation recently fell, there was a slight boost in topsoil moisture, which on October 23 ranged from 70% very short to short in North Dakota to 98% in Oklahoma. Drought has led to slow germination of winter wheat; on the 23rd, emergence was at least 10 percentage points behind the respective 5-year averages in South Dakota (62% emerged, versus 77% on average), Kansas (46 vs. 56%), and Oklahoma (40 vs. 61%).

- In the Corn Belt, a band of rain stretches from the Great Lakes region to Missouri. The showers are slowing a previously rapid pace of fieldwork. During the 2-week period ending October 23, nearly one-third (30%) of the U.S. corn and 36% of the soybeans were harvested; overall, 61% of the corn and 80% of the soybeans had been harvested on that date. Today’s high temperatures will remain near or below 50°F in parts of the western Corn Belt.

- In the South, showers and a few thunderstorms are sweeping across the lower Mississippi Valley, although rain is not sufficiently heavy to raise critically low Mississippi River levels. In Greenville, Mississippi, the river fell to a stage of 5.26 feet on Monday; the previous record at that gauge had been 6.70 feet in January 1964. In advance of an approaching cold front, Southeastern warmth and dryness are promoting summer crop harvesting and winter wheat planting.

Outlook: A low-pressure system currently crossing the Ozark Plateau will drift northeastward, reaching the lower Great Lakes region by late Wednesday and exiting the Northeast on Thursday. Meanwhile, a series of disturbances will maintain showery conditions in the Pacific Northwest, where 5-day precipitation totals could reach 2 to 4 inches or more. Light precipitation will spread as far south as northern California and extend eastward across the northern Rockies. Later in the week, one of the Pacific storms will take a circuitous route across the western U.S., emerging across the southern Plains late Thursday or early Friday. Elsewhere, many other regions of the country—including the northern Plains, upper Midwest, Great Basin, and Southwest—will receive little or no precipitation during the next 5 days. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for October 30 – November 3 calls for near- or above-normal temperatures and precipitation across most of the country. Warmth will be most likely east of the Rockies, while cooler-than-normal conditions will be confined to parts of the Southwest, Great Basin, and Intermountain West. Meanwhile, wetness is a near-certainty in the Pacific Northwest, while drier-than-normal weather will be limited to southern sections of the Rockies and High Plains.

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

Web Site: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/TODAYSWX.pdf