Agricultural Weather Highlights – Friday - March 12, 2021

- In the **West**, a developing storm system over the drought-stricken **Southwest** is producing widespread rain and snow showers, especially across **Arizona** and portions of neighboring states. In advance of the approaching storm, windy weather prevails across the **southern Rockies**. Elsewhere, dry weather covers the **Northwest**.

- On the **Plains**, locally heavy showers and a few thunderstorms have developed early today in **Kansas**. Meanwhile, warmth continues across the **southern Plains**, where today’s high temperatures in the **southern two-thirds of Texas** should range from 80 to 90°F. Elsewhere, tranquil weather prevails on the **northern Plains**, where any snow that fell on Wednesday has begun to melt.

- In the **Corn Belt**, chilly conditions are generally confined to the **upper Great Lakes region**. Meanwhile, rain is falling along and near the **Ohio River**, signaling the start of another period of wet weather, even as water levels remain high. Moderate flooding is occurring early today along the **Ohio River at Shawneetown, Illinois**, where the river is more than 10 feet above flood stage. Mild, dry weather covers the remainder of the **Midwest**.

- In the **South**, warm weather continues to promote spring fieldwork, pasture growth, and winter wheat development. In the **Deep South**, recently planted crops have begun to emerge. Today’s high temperatures should reach 80°F or higher in many locations from the **western Gulf Coast region to the southern Atlantic Coast**. Farther north, however, rain has developed across the northern tier of the region, including parts of **Kentucky**.

**Outlook:** A significant spring snowstorm is imminent across **central sections of the Rockies and High Plains**. Heavy snow should develop by tonight and linger through the weekend across much of **Colorado** and portions of neighboring states, with 2- to 4-foot totals possible in the **central Rockies**. Windy weather will accompany the storm, resulting in travel disruptions and livestock stress. However, the storm will also provide beneficial moisture for drought-stressed rangeland, pastures, and winter wheat. Farther east, heavy rain (locally 2 to 4 inches) should fall from portions of the **central Plains into the lower Ohio Valley**. Flash flooding may occur on the **Ozark Plateau** and environs, while rain will perpetuate lowland flooding in the **Ohio Valley**. Farther south, potentially powerful thunderstorms will sweep from the **southern Plains into the Southeast**—the first major, multi-day severe weather outbreak of the season. Early next week, the former powerhouse storm will begin to weaken while crossing the **eastern U.S.** Meanwhile, a new storm system will arrive along the **Pacific Coast**, starting Sunday. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for March 17 – 21 calls for the likelihood of near- or below-normal temperatures nationwide, except for warmer-than-normal weather across **Florida's peninsula** and the **Far West**. Meanwhile, near- or below-normal precipitation across much of the country should contrast with wetter-than-normal conditions in the **East and Pacific Northwest**.

**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](https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/TODAYSWX.pdf)