Agricultural Weather Highlights – Friday - September 10, 2021

- In the West, a few showers and higher humidity levels across northern California and the Pacific Northwest are aiding wildfire containment efforts. Early today, Redding, California, received its heaviest rain since April 25. However, in areas of the Great Basin and northern Intermountain West where rain is not falling, an elevated wildfire threat persists due to gusty winds and the possibility of lightning strikes. Elsewhere, hot, dry weather covers the Southwest.

- On the Plains, a late-season heat wave is peaking. Today’s high temperatures should top 90°F in most locations, with readings of 100°F or higher expected across portions of the central and southern Plains. The hot, dry weather favors fieldwork and summer crop maturation, but is reducing moisture availability for recently planted winter wheat.

- In the Corn Belt, dry weather accompanies a warming trend, hastening summer crop maturation. High temperatures will range from near 75°F in Michigan to 90°F or higher in parts of the western Corn Belt. Despite recent rainfall, serious soil moisture deficiencies persist in drought-affected areas of the upper Midwest; on September 5, for example, topsoil moisture in South Dakota was rated 66% very short to short.

- In the South, hot, humid weather lingers across Florida’s peninsula and the western Gulf Coast region. Elsewhere, pleasant temperatures and lower humidity levels are promoting summer crop maturation and harvesting—and aiding hurricane recovery efforts. On September 5, corn harvest completion among the Gulf Coast States ranged from 36% in Alabama to 90% in Louisiana. New Orleans, Louisiana, reported a low temperature of 73°F on September 9, marking the first reading below the 75-degree mark in that location since August 6.

Outlook: For the remainder of today, Post-Tropical Cyclone Mindy will move farther away from the Atlantic Coast, although showers will linger across parts of Florida. Elsewhere in the tropics, a wave will move into the Gulf of Mexico during the weekend, with the possibility of cyclone formation. Regardless of tropical development, heavy showers should overspread the western Gulf Coast region, with 5-day rainfall totals exceeding 5 inches in some locations. Much of the remainder of the South will experience dry weather during the next 5 days. Meanwhile, a series of cold fronts will generate spotty showers across the northern half of the U.S., although most areas will receive less than an inch. Most of the country, particularly across the West, will experience unusually warm weather for this time of year. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for September 15 – 19 calls for the likelihood of warmer-than-normal weather nationwide, except for near- or below-normal temperatures in the Northwest and along the Pacific Coast. Meanwhile, wetter-than-normal conditions in the Pacific Northwest, western Gulf Coast region, and most areas from the Mississippi River eastward should contrast with near- or below-normal precipitation across much of the western and central U.S.

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