Agricultural Weather Highlights – Friday - May 7, 2021

- In the West, a storm system is producing scattered showers from the Pacific Northwest to the northern Rockies. Nevertheless, short-term dryness remains a concern for many rain-fed crops across the interior Northwest. On May 2, topsoil moisture was rated 70% very short to short in Oregon, along with 64% in Washington. More than one-third (35%) of Oregon’s winter wheat was rated in very poor to poor condition on May 2, up from 13% the previous week.

- On the Plains, widespread freezes occurred early today in the Dakotas. In North Dakota, this morning’s low temperatures included 20°F in Devils Lake and 23°F in Grand Forks. In contrast, warmth has returned across the southern half of the High Plains, where today’s high temperatures should generally range from 85 to 90°F. Dry weather throughout the nation’s mid-section favors planting activities for variety of crops.

- In the Corn Belt, unusually cool conditions continue to slow winter wheat development and the emergence of recently planted corn and soybeans. Advisories for frost and near-freezing temperatures are in effect early today across parts of the northern Corn Belt, from South Dakota to Michigan. Dry weather covers much of the Midwest, although a few rain and snow showers are occurring in the Great Lakes region.

- In the South, rain showers are confined to the middle Atlantic States, including portions of Virginia and North Carolina. Elsewhere, dry weather continues to promote fieldwork, including spring planting activities. Cooler-than-normal weather blankets much of the South, although warmth prevails across southern Florida and the western Gulf Coast region.

Outlook: A weekend storm system crossing the northern Plains and Midwest will produce widespread rainfall totaling 1 to 2 inches. However, rain will largely bypass the upper Great Lakes region and the Red River Valley of the North. Meanwhile, showers and thunderstorms across the interior Southeast—starting on Sunday—could result in 5-day rainfall totals of 2 to 4 inches or more. In contrast, dry weather will prevail during the next 5 days in California, the Great Basin, and the Desert Southwest. Elsewhere, cool weather will continue across much of the country. For example, weekend freezes may occur across the interior Northwest, while occasional frost and freezes can be expected from the northern Plains to the interior Northeast. By early next week, high temperatures above 80°F will be mostly limited to California and the Deep South. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for May 12 – 16 calls for the likelihood of below-normal temperatures along and southeast of a line from Texas to Wisconsin, except for lingering warmth across Florida’s peninsula. Warmer-than-normal weather will also prevail west of the Rockies. Meanwhile, near- or below-normal temperatures across most of the country should contrast with wetter-than-normal conditions in southern Texas and the Atlantic Coast States.

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