Agricultural Weather Highlights – Thursday - September 14, 2023

- In the West, mostly dry weather—accompanied by near- or above-normal temperatures—favors fieldwork. On September 10, Arizona’s cotton harvest was 11% complete, versus the 5-year average of 5%. Meanwhile, Northwestern winter wheat planting progress ranged from 7% complete in Oregon to 29% complete in Washington. Any lingering Western showers generally extend southwestward from Wyoming.

- On the Plains, scattered showers are heaviest in parts of Oklahoma and Texas. The southern Plains’ rain is generally too late for summer crops—but is benefiting drought-stressed rangeland and pastures. Separately, a surge of warmth is occurring across the northern Plains in advance of a weak cold front, which is producing scattered showers.

- In the Corn Belt, frost was noted early today in portions of the upper Great Lakes region. Dry weather is promoting Midwestern summer crop maturation, especially as temperatures rebound to 80°F or higher later today in parts of the western Corn Belt, including much of Iowa, southern Minnesota, and eastern sections of Nebraska and South Dakota.

- In the South, lingering heat is confined to Florida and southern Texas. Scattered showers accompany the transition to cooler weather, although amounts are light. Any rain is too late for summer crops—but should benefit pastures and soon-to-be-planted winter grains and cover crops. Louisiana continues to report some of the region’s worst heat- and drought-related agricultural impacts, with 61% of the pastures and 38% of the soybeans rated in very poor to poor condition.

Outlook: Hurricane Lee will continue to churn northward, with landfall expected in the Canadian Maritimes or eastern Maine during the weekend. However, weakening will occur as the tropical cyclone approaches the Atlantic Coast, and Lee may no longer be a hurricane or may be undergoing a post-tropical transition while moving ashore. Still, high winds, heavy rain, and a dangerous storm surge may occur in parts of coastal New England. Farther west, a storm system affecting portions of the south-central U.S. will gradually weaken and shift southward, although additional rainfall could reach 1 to 3 inches or more in Texas and portions of neighboring states. In contrast, dry weather will prevail during the next 5 days in several areas, including much of the mid-South, Ohio Valley, and Far West. Warmth in the West will shift eastward, with weekend temperatures possibly reaching 90°F as far north as Montana. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for September 19 – 23 calls for the likelihood of near- or above-normal temperatures from the Plains to the East Coast, while cooler-than-normal conditions will prevail in the West. Meanwhile, near- or below-normal rainfall in much of the East and Far West should contrast with wetter-than-normal weather across the remainder of the county, including the Plains, Rockies, and western Corn Belt.

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

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The outlook is an interpretation of National Weather Service (NWS) forecasts and products.

Next scheduled noon release of the “Agricultural Weather Highlights” will be Thursday, October 12. On other weekdays, this product will be posted by 9 am EDT.