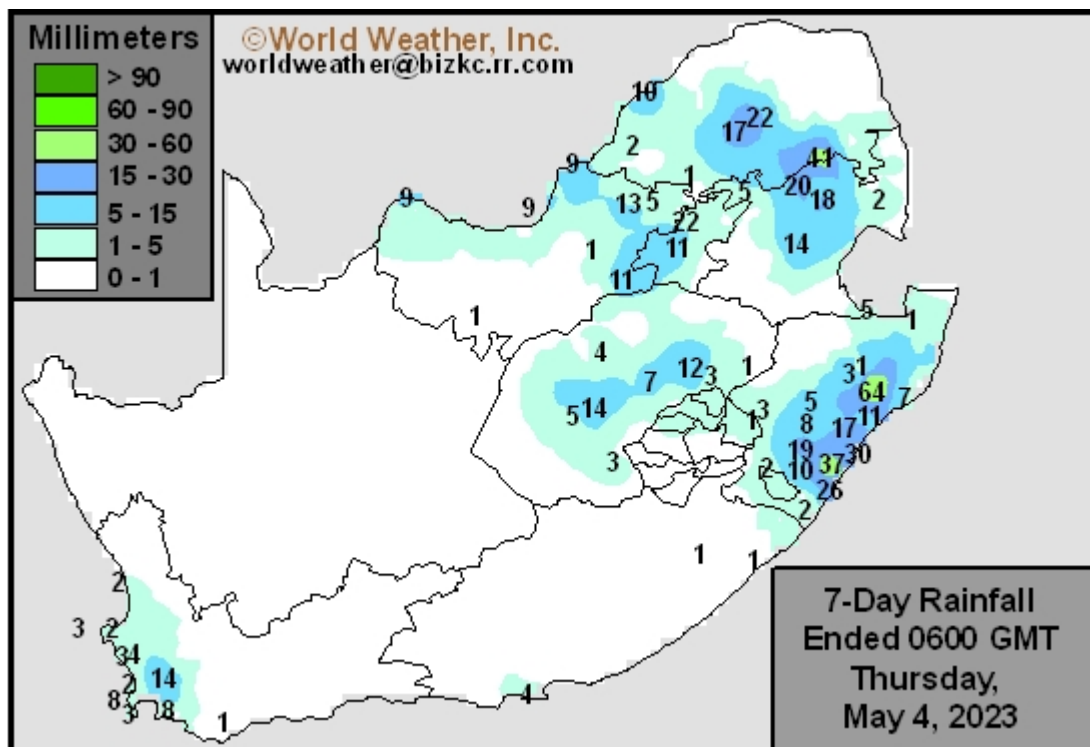


South Africa Harvest May Be Slowed By Erratic Rainfall

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, May 4 (World Weather Inc.) – Periodic rainfall during the past week was not enough to significantly slow the harvest in much of South Africa. *Erratic rainfall will continue on a frequent basis during the coming week and the harvest may be slowed a little more significantly in the wettest locations. Producers will still have ample opportunities to get into the fields between rain events. No significant quality impacts are expected.* In the meantime, Western Cape and Northern Cape will be mostly dry through the end of next week. *Planting of winter wheat will advance with few disruptions. The need for timely rain will increase later this month.* Free State wheat planting will continue or begin around the periods of light rain and the region would benefit from a slightly boost in precipitation later this month.

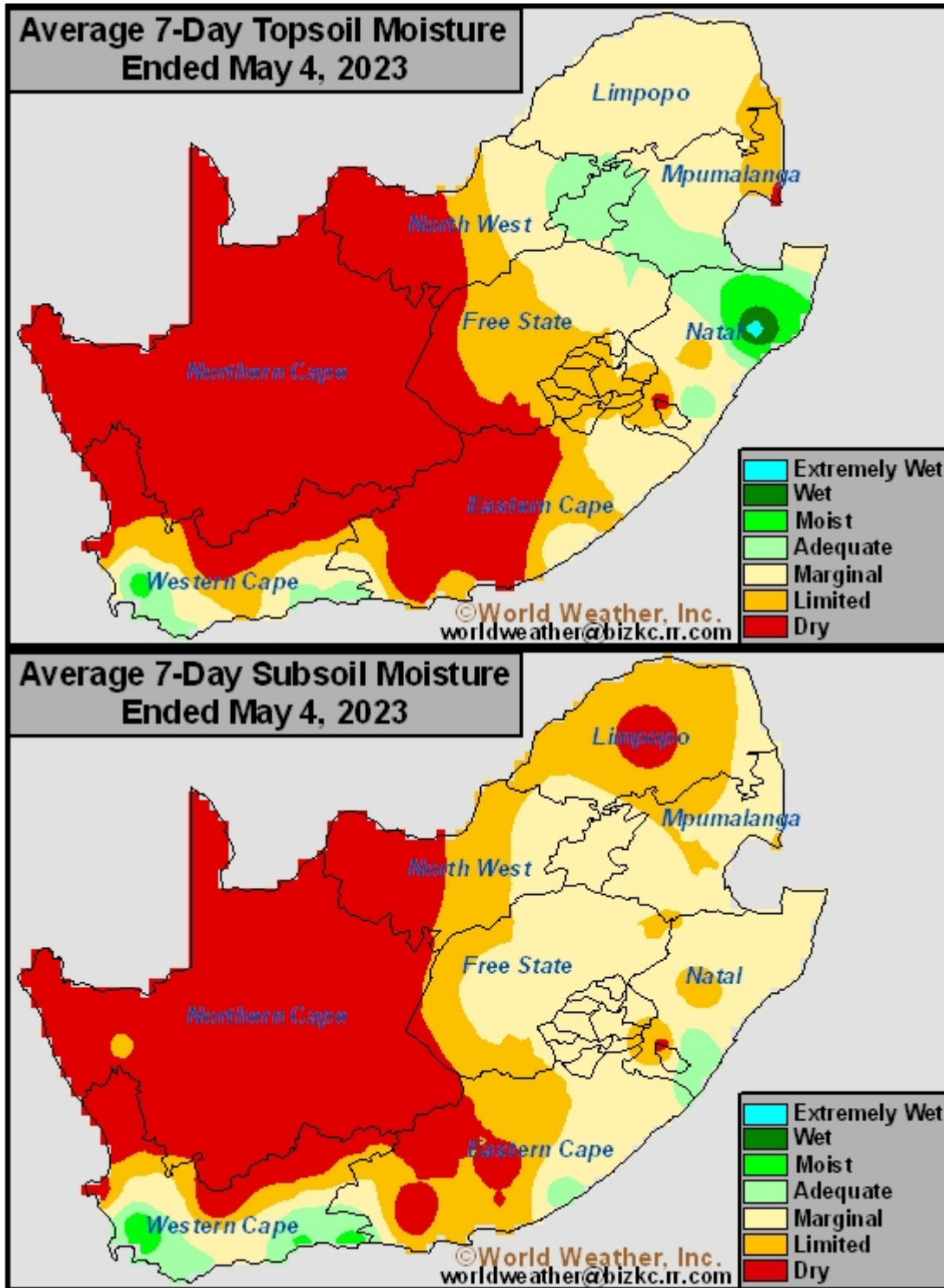
The main production areas in South Africa received varying amounts of rain during the past week. The greatest rainfall occurred in two areas. The first was in southern and central Natal where 0.40 to 1.18 inches resulted with local totals upwards to 2.52 inches. The second area of greater rain occurred from south-central Limpopo into interior eastern Mpumalanga where 0.57 to 0.88 inch resulted and a local amount to 1.63 inches. Moisture totals elsewhere in summer crop areas were less than 0.60 inch with coverage of less than 40%. The only rain noted in the west was along the lower west coast where up to 0.57 inch resulted.



Soil moisture is marginally adequate to short in eastern South Africa while short to very short in western summer crop areas as well as the far western parts of the nation. Drying is normal at this time of year and having limited soil moisture is ideal for the

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maturation and harvest of summer crops. There is need for a moisture boost, though, for winter wheat, barley and canola planting.



Harvesting of the coarse grains, oilseeds, cotton, and other summer crops is ongoing across South Africa. Rainfall during the past week may have slowed the harvest at times,

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though most locations had several opportunities to get into the fields between rain events. Corn yields are still expected to be slightly greater than last season. Yields for other crops are expected to be favorable as well. Timely rain was noted over the growing season and promoted aggressive growth for the main production areas.

Winter wheat barley and canola planting in Western Cape, Northern Cape, and Free State will expand in the coming weeks. Many areas in Western Cape and Free State have some moisture to support establishment, though more precipitation will be needed to sustain aggressive long-term growth. Northern Cape and a large section of Free State irrigate some of the winter crops. Rain is still needed to ensure ideal crop conditions.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

The eastern half of South Africa will have several opportunities for erratic rainfall during the coming week. Two disorganized disturbances will often generate scattered showers today into Tuesday when tracking across the country. Drier weather is expected Wednesday. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range from 0.50 to 3.00 inches in Natal, Mpumalanga, and southern Limpopo. Local rain totals over 4.00 inches will also be possible for these areas. The remaining portions of Limpopo into Free State and North West will receive 0.20 to 1.50 inches of rain. Western South Africa and Eastern Cape will otherwise receive little to no rain. There is potential for more widespread rain during the May 12 – 18 period. However, confidence is a little low for the exact amount of precipitation that will occur.

Harvesting and general fieldwork may advance slowly at times in the eastern half of the country during the coming week due to the periods of rain. Producers may still have opportunities for some harvesting, though conditions will be less than ideal in the wetter fields. No significant quality impacts are expected due to the additional rain.

The periods of rain in Free State will also be beneficial for winter wheat establishment and early-season growth. Producers should be able to put crop in the ground between rain events. Planting in Western Cape and Northern Cape will also begin or continue with few disruptions. There will be some moisture in Western Cape to support establishment. *The need for precipitation will otherwise increase later this month. Establishment conditions will be mostly favorable in Northern Cape due to irrigation.*

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