

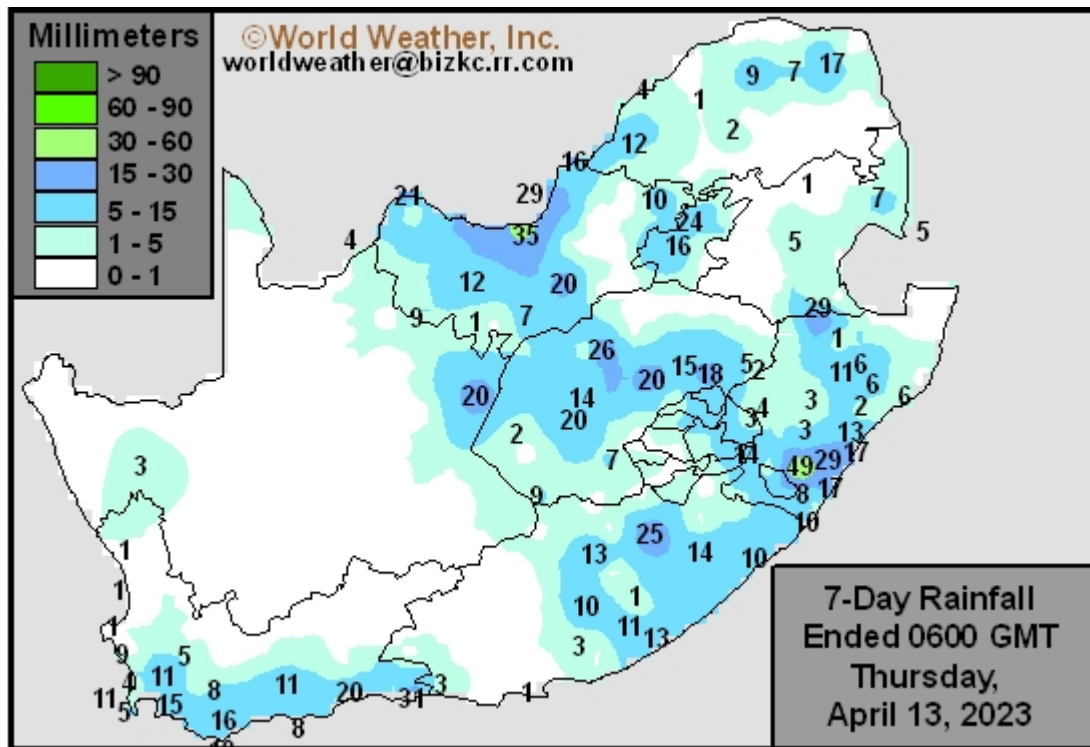
South Africa Dryness Will Be Beneficial For The Harvest

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, April 13 (World Weather Inc.) – Rain was scattered across the main production areas in South Africa during the past week. The precipitation was welcome for any immature coarse grains, oilseed, cotton, sugarcane or other crop. The rain was also too light to significantly impact the quality of mature crops. *Frost was noted in portions of western and central South Africa in recent days, though no production loss resulted. Most of the temperatures were not low enough to do more than induce some leave droppage.* Temperatures were not low enough to induce shattering and no blackened beans were suspected since most of the frost was soft. The country will now trend drier during the coming week. Very little rain is expected and the rain that does occur will be lost to evaporation within a short period of its fall. The environment will either improve or remain favorable for maturation and harvesting.

The main production areas in South Africa saw a mix of rain and sunshine during the past week. Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Free State, North West, the eastern half of Eastern Cape, eastern fringes of Northern Cape, and portions of southern Western Cape reported 0.12 to 1.14 inches of rain with local amounts up to 1.93 inches in southern Natal and northern North West for the seven-day period ending this morning. The remaining portions of western South Africa received little to no rain.

Temperatures were near to above normal with highest readings in the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit. Lowest temperatures were in the 30s and 40s in the western two-thirds of the country and the 40s and 50s in eastern South Africa.

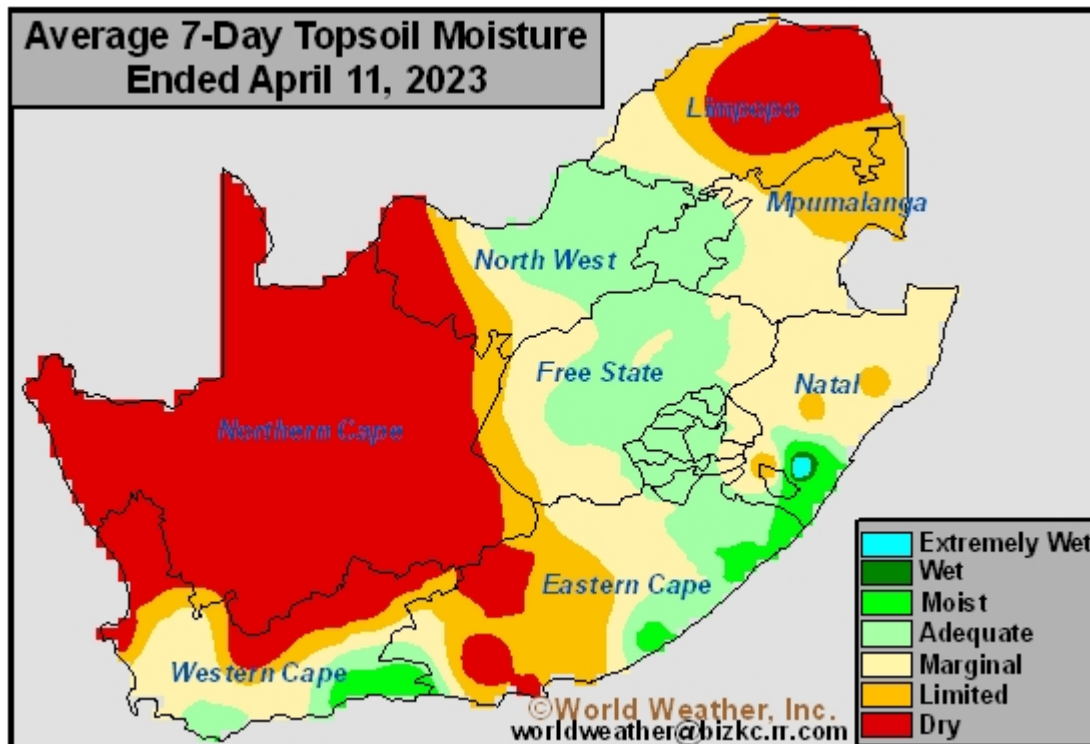


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Frost was noted in portions of western and central South Africa earlier this week. Some of the soybeans in Free State were likely damaged by the frost and minor production losses were suspected. Impacts to other crops were likely minimal.

Soil moisture is rated adequate to marginally adequate in much of eastern and central South Africa. However, portions of Limpopo have a shortage of moisture in the topsoil due to a lack of significant rain and warm weather in recent days. Western South Africa has short to very short soil moisture, though some improvements were noted in southern Western Cape.

Late-season development conditions have remained favorable for much of the coarse grains, oilseeds, cotton, sugarcane, and other crops produced in South Africa this time of year. Periodic rainfall has kept enough moisture in the ground to support aggressive growth for late season crops. The environment has also been favorable for maturation and early-season harvesting despite the periodic rainfall. Production potentials remain favorable this year. Most crops will yield more than the usual.



Drier-than-normal weather will spread across much of South Africa during the coming week. A weak frontal boundary will still generate light rain in portions of southern and eastern South Africa today into Friday while higher pressure builds to the west of South Africa. High pressure will dominate the region later this weekend into the middle of next week, restricting precipitation in much of the country. Isolated showers will still be possible in northern and central South Africa despite the presence of high pressure. Resulting rainfall will generally be too light to counter evaporation or impact long-term soil conditions where it falls.

Temperatures will also trend near to above normal during the coming week with daytime highs reaching the 70s and 80s most days. Portions of western and northern South Africa will also warm to the 90s on a frequent basis later this weekend into next week while

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pockets in eastern and southern South Africa only warm to the 60s today and Friday. Low temperatures will be in the 40s and 50s with pockets in the east only cooling to the 60s.

The lack of rain and warm weather will support favorable conditions for maturation and harvesting across South Africa during the coming week. The main production areas will have some moisture leftover for any crops that are still developing as well.

A more active weather pattern will be possible for South Africa April 21 – 27.

Disturbances will likely track near or into the country that generate scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. Temperatures will likely drop closer to normal with periods of slightly cooler than normal conditions possible. *The rain may disrupt harvesting and general fieldwork, though most producers should have opportunities to get into the fields.*

Winter wheat and barley planting normally begins in May for South Africa. Western Cape is the largest producer of winter wheat and barley and primarily relies on rain. Timely precipitation will be needed later this month into May to support ideal planting and establishment. Northern Cape and Free State are other major wheat producers, though a significant amount of the crop is irrigated. Rain will still be needed to ensure ideal planting conditions.

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