

International Weather and Crop Summary
NOAA/USDA Joint Agricultural Weather Facility

September 28 - October 4, 2008

International (202) 720-9807

HIGHLIGHTS

FSU-WESTERN: Unseasonably warm, dry weather in Ukraine allowed fieldwork for summer crop harvesting and winter grain planting to resume.

FSU-NEW LANDS: The second consecutive week of mostly dry weather aided spring grain harvesting in Russia and Kazakhstan.

EUROPE: Wet weather in central and northern crop areas slowed fieldwork, while drier conditions in southeastern Europe favored harvesting and winter crop planting.

MIDDLE EAST: Additional showers in Turkey boosted topsoil moisture for winter crop planting and emergence.

AUSTRALIA: Showers increased local moisture supplies for reproductive to filling winter grains in western and southeastern

Australia.

EAST ASIA: Dry weather aided summer crop harvesting across China as well as winter crop planting on the North China Plain and in the Yangtze Valley.

SOUTHEAST ASIA: A series of tropical cyclones brought heavy showers to much of the region.

SOUTH ASIA: Showers returned to central and northern India, slowing summer crop maturation but maintaining favorable topsoil moisture for rabi (winter) crop planting.

ARGENTINA: Rain benefited vegetative to reproductive winter wheat.

BRAZIL: Showery weather promoted flowering of coffee and helped to condition fields for planting soybeans and other summer crops.

CANADA: Mostly dry, warmer-than-normal weather favored spring grain and oilseed harvesting across the Prairies.

MEXICO: Drier weather reduced soil moisture for immature summer crops but eased local flooding.

FSU-WESTERN: In Ukraine, unseasonably warm, dry weather allowed fieldwork for summer crop (corn, sunflower, and sugar beet) harvesting and winter grain planting to resume. Weekly temperatures averaged 1 to 3 degrees C above normal, aiding the dry down of summer crops as well as winter grain emergence. Most locations in Ukraine recorded daytime temperatures that ranged from 20 to 25 degrees C during the second half of the week. In Russia, dry weather prevailed across most of the Southern District, with significant precipitation (10-25 mm or more) confined to the extreme southeastern portion of the region. The dryness favored summer crop harvesting and winter grain planting. Reports from Russia as of October 6 indicated that 92 percent of the grain crop was harvested. The corn, sunflower, and sugar beet harvests were 34, 38, and 52 percent complete, respectively. In northern Russia (Central and Volga Districts), light showers (mostly less than 10 mm) maintained adequate soil moisture for winter grain establishment, while unseasonably mild weather (weekly temperatures averaging 2 to 4 degrees C above normal) promoted additional crop growth prior to dormancy. Typically, winter grains begin entering dormancy in northern Russia during the middle of October. Elsewhere, frequent showers (10-25 mm or more) in Belarus interrupted summer crop harvesting but provided soil moisture for winter grain establishment.

FSU-NEW LANDS: Spring grain harvesting was virtually complete in Kazakhstan and approaching completion in Russia. Unseasonably cold but mostly dry weather prevailed across most of the region, helping harvest activities. Weekly temperatures averaged 1 to 4 degrees C below normal in Kazakhstan and the Siberia District in Russia and near normal in the Russian Urals District. Extreme minimum temperatures ranged from -8 to -2 degrees C throughout the region. In cotton-producing areas of Central Asia, scattered showers caused only brief delays in cotton harvesting, while near- to above-normal temperatures favored boll maturation.

EUROPE: Showers returned to central and northern Europe, while dry conditions settled over portions of the Balkans. A strong Atlantic storm system and its attendant cold front generated widespread, locally heavy showers (10-70 mm) across central and northern Europe. The unsettled weather slowed fieldwork, although topsoil moisture remained overall favorable for winter crop planting and establishment. While the heaviest precipitation bypassed central France's crop areas, up to 25 mm of rain in southwestern France slowed corn maturation. Light to moderate showers (10-30 mm) spilled into northern Italy, boosting irrigation reserves for winter crop planting and establishment. Dry weather prevailed across much of southern Europe, favoring summer crop harvesting from France eastward into the southern Balkans. However, locally heavy rain (greater than 80 mm) in Greece was untimely for unharvested cotton. Temperatures across much of Europe averaged 1 to 4 degrees C below normal due to the wet, cloudy weather, although daytime highs managed to push into the upper 20s (degrees C) in the Balkans under generally sunny skies. Most of Europe's primary growing areas have yet to report a widespread frost or hard freeze.

MIDDLE EAST: Wet weather expanded over the northern half of the region, while seasonably dry conditions persisted across the south. A series of disturbances tracked northeastward from the eastern Mediterranean Sea, generating widespread showers (2-35 mm) in Turkey, northern and western Syria, northern Iraq, and northwestern Iran. The rain maintained a favorable start to the fall-winter wet season in Turkey and provided much-needed topsoil moisture for winter crop planting over the remainder of the region's northern crop areas. Seasonably dry weather prevailed across the southern half of the Middle East; most growing areas from the eastern Mediterranean coast eastward into central Iran typically experience a later onset (late October into early November) of the fall-winter rain season than areas farther north.

AUSTRALIA: In Western Australia, South Australia, and Victoria, scattered showers (2-8 mm, locally near 20 mm) increased local moisture supplies for reproductive to filling winter grains. The rain helped maintain good crop conditions in Western Australia, but more rain would be welcome across South Australia and Victoria, where recent drier-than-normal weather has reduced crop prospects. In central and southern New South Wales, widespread showers (5-30 mm) provided a beneficial boost in topsoil moisture for winter wheat and barley. In contrast, dry weather dominated northern New South Wales and southern Queensland. The tranquil weather helped dry down early maturing winter grains but reduced topsoil moisture and irrigation supplies for summer crops, which are currently being planted. Warmer-than-normal weather (temperatures averaging 2-3 degrees C above normal) accelerated crop development in southern and eastern Australia. In Western Australia, temperatures were generally seasonable.

EAST ASIA: Dry weather continued to favor summer crop harvesting and early winter crop planting in China. In Manchuria, seasonably cool, dry weather prevailed for mature corn and soybeans. Harvesting continued for soybeans and was still in the early stages for corn. Freezing temperatures continued throughout most of Heilongjiang and eastern Jilin, aiding dry down of summer crops. Across the North China Plain, mostly dry weather and seasonable temperatures (10-15 degrees C) favored corn, cotton, and soybean harvesting. Additionally, weather conditions aided winter wheat planting. In the Yangtze River Basin, 10 to 25 mm of rainfall caused minor delays to the start of winter rapeseed planting, but ensured good additional moisture for crop development. In the south, drier weather prevailed early in the week after the heavy rains last week from Typhoon Hagupit. Although, Tropical Cyclone Higos was approaching southern China by the end of the week, bringing 25 to locally 200 mm of rainfall mainly to Guangdong. Elsewhere in the region, Super Typhoon Jangmi made landfall in Taiwan, bringing winds in excess of 130 kts and over 100 mm of rainfall. Jangmi weakened considerably (34-63 kts) as it entered the Yellow Sea and moved northeastward, helping to enhance rainfall (50-400 mm) across southern Japan.

SOUTHEAST ASIA: Heavy showers prevailed throughout the region as a series of tropical cyclones moved through the area. In Indochina, Tropical Storm Mekkhala made landfall in central Vietnam early in the week, bringing torrential rainfall (100-400 mm) to mostly minor rice producing areas. The remnants of Mekkhala enhanced monsoon moisture in Thailand, causing unseasonably heavy rainfall (25-100 mm). The rainfall likely slowed rice and corn maturation in the southern half of Thailand where rainfall was the heaviest. Meanwhile in the Philippines, Super Typhoon Jangmi was enhancing rainfall in Luzon as it passed to the north early in the week. By mid-week Tropical Storm Higos made landfall in the eastern Visayas producing rainfall throughout most of the country. Rainfall totals for the week ranged between 25 to nearly 200 mm, with the heaviest amounts occurring along the path of Higos. The rainfall ensured abundant to excessive soil moisture for corn and rice, although slowed harvest activities. The dry season typically begins in November, and further rainfall will decrease irrigation requirements for dry-season cropping. Seasonal tropical rainfall continued to push south into the southern Indonesian island of Java. The migration of showers into Java spurred rice planting in western and central growing areas. Widespread showers (50-200 mm) in oil palm areas of Indonesia and Malaysia provided beneficial moisture but likely slowed harvest activities.

SOUTH ASIA: After abruptly shifting eastward, the monsoon returned to a more typical position over central India. As of October 1, the monsoon has usually retreated into central portions of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra. Following last week's abrupt retreat from most of the subcontinent, monsoon showers (10-30 mm) returned to central and southern India, providing topsoil moisture for reproductive to filling summer crops. Meanwhile, a tropical disturbance generated heavy downpours (25-205 mm) across Bangladesh and northeastern India, causing flooding but maintaining ample moisture reserves for filling rice. Seasonably dry weather favored summer crop maturation and harvesting across northern crop areas. In Pakistan, sunny, hot weather (daytime temperatures as high as 44 degrees C) promoted cotton and rice maturation and harvesting.

ARGENTINA: Weather conditions improved since last week, helping to stabilize crop conditions in central and northern Argentina. Widespread rainfall of 10 to 100 mm eased dryness and provided beneficial moisture to reproductive winter grains, especially in Santa Fe and southern Cordoba where some of the highest amounts occurred. The rainfall likely slowed summer crop planting but ensured good soil moisture for newly planted crops. Additionally, temperatures were near normal throughout the region, easing evaporative losses.

BRAZIL: Showers (10-100 mm) prevailed throughout much of central and southern Brazil. The rainfall maintained beneficial moisture for flowering coffee and citrus throughout southern Minas Gerais and Sao Paulo. Rain in the Center-West region (Mato Grosso, Goias, and northern Mato Grosso do Sul) further increased topsoil moisture for germination of soybeans and other summer crops that are in the early stages of planting. To the south, light to moderate showers benefited immature winter wheat in Rio Grande do Sul but may have affected harvesting elsewhere. Additionally, warmer weather prevailed after last week's cold spell, with temperatures averaging 1 to 3 degrees C above normal.

CANADA: Drier weather (less than 5 mm) overspread Alberta's northern growing areas, enabling spring wheat, barley, and canola harvesting to resume in the wake of last week's wet weather. Elsewhere across the Prairies, mostly dry weather (less than 5 mm) continued to aid spring grain and oilseed harvesting, allowing fieldwork to proceed uninterrupted. Warmer-than-normal air accompanied the mostly dry weather, aiding dry down and harvesting of spring crops. Temperatures averaged about 3 to 7 degrees C above normal across the Prairies.

In eastern Canada, relatively cool, wet weather (10-25 mm, locally near 50 mm) slowed corn and soybean harvesting in Ontario's major summer crop producing areas. Temperatures averaged up to 2 degrees C below normal, but minimum temperatures remained above freezing throughout the area (lows ranging from 1 to 6 degrees C).

MEXICO: Following last week's locally heavy rains, drier weather overspread major summer crop areas of central and southern Mexico. The heaviest rain (less than 5-15 mm) fell primarily along coastal sections of Nayarit and Jalisco, as well as in Tabasco and southern Veracruz, while even lighter showers (less than 5 mm) fell elsewhere across southern Mexico. The drier weather reduced soil moisture for immature summer crops but allowed floodwaters to recede in southern Veracruz and Tabasco.