

Another cold wave hits Florida

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Freezing temperatures over the weekend caused some additional crop damage in parts of Florida, according to a weekly report issued by the Joint Agricultural Weather Facility of the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Agriculture. More rain fell in parts of Spain, Portugal, and Morocco, allowing winter grain sowing to begin in earnest.

Highlights of the report follow.
—United States. Two winter storms dumped generous precipitation in the South and East, leaving the Northeast blanketed with snow. The moisture was sorely needed in many southeastern areas. Cold arctic air dominated the upper Midwest, and moved southeastward later in the week. Temperatures dropped to the mid-20s (F) Saturday night in

parts of Florida's citrus belt, causing some damage. Persistent, seasonally wet weather dominated the Northwest, maintaining favorable conditions.

—Western USSR. Above-normal rainfall occurred in the western North Caucasus and in a band stretching from the central Ukraine northeastward into the Central Region. Other crop areas received lighter amounts of precipitation. The precipitation fell as rain in the eastern Ukraine and the North Caucasus and as snow in the north and west, resulting in an increase in snow cover. Temperatures remained above normal in the east and below normal in the west.

—Europe. Beneficial precipitation fell on winter wheat areas of Portugal, northcentral and southwestern Spain, and

northern Italy. Rainfall was heaviest in Portugal with lighter amounts from 10 to 25 mm occurring in Spain and Italy. The precipitation encouraged winter wheat planting in those areas of Portugal and Spain, and improved soil moisture for dormant winter wheat in northern Italy.

—Northwestern Africa. Beneficial precipitation spread over most crop areas of Morocco late in the week. Amounts of slightly more than 25 mm across the north should permit widespread winter grain sowing. Western Algeria remains too dry for successful sowing, but soil moisture in Tunisia and eastern Algeria should be adequate for crop growth.

—South America. Widespread showers occurred over nearly all crop areas. In Argentina, the

moisture benefited vegetative growth of corn, sorghum, sunflowers, and first-crop soybeans, but slowed the wheat harvest. In Brazil, soybean plantings are nearly complete with favorable soil moisture. Early planted soybeans in Parana and Sao Paulo are in the flowering to pod-filling stages.

—Australia. Favorably dry weather aided the harvest of wheat, barley, and other grain crops throughout southern Australia. The dryness should remain relatively good quality levels of the maturing crops in southern areas as well as facilitate a rapid harvest pace.

—South Africa. Rainshowers persisted throughout the week in the Maize Triangle. Coverage was variable, with totals ranging from near zero to well above normal.

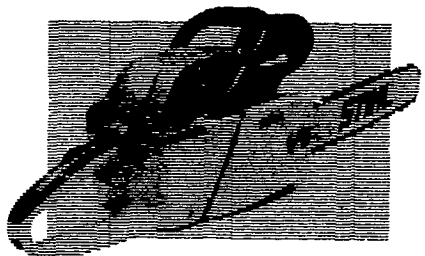
This was good follow-up moisture after last week's generous rains.

—Eastern Asia. Two weak, westerly systems produced light precipitation over much of eastern China. The precipitation maintained good moisture conditions in southern parts of the winter grain belt and improved conditions in the northern areas of Shandong and Hebei. The crop remained dormant over most of the area as temperatures stayed near normal.

—South Asia. A weak, westerly storm moved across central India late in the week, dropping rains of more than 10 mm over parts of Madhya Pradesh and Myaharashtra. The moisture improved growing conditions for unirrigated winter crops. Growing conditions remained favorable in northern crop areas, where fair weather prevailed.

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