Rains benefit northern hemisphere crop areas D.C.-

WASHINGTON,

Precipitation benefited many northern-hemisphere winter grain areas recently as spring-like weather edged northward, according to a weekly report issued last week by the Joint Agricultural Weather Facility of the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Agriculture.

Drier weather over most of South Africa's Maize Triangle worsened localized moisture deficits for corn in the late stages of development.

Highlights of the report follow:

-United States. Relatively mild, dry weather prevailed over most of the Nation early in the week which allowed some land preparation for spring plantings in the Southeast. Significant precipitation fell later in the week over the winter wheat areas of the southern Great Plains which were short of soil moisture, and over the Southeast which further delayed fieldwork. The northern Great Plains retained a snowcover at weeks end. --South America.Showers

brought additional moisture to Brazil's soybean area. The major portion of the crop is still in the pod-filling stage although an increasing proportion is reaching maturity. In fact, about 12 percent of Parana's soybean crop has been harvested, primarily from western and northern crop areas. The long harvest season for corn has begun in northern crop areas. In Argentina, mostly light scattered showers occurred over the crop areas. Corn, generally favorable conditions prevailing.

-Europe.Beneficial rains continued over winter grain areas in Spain. Only light precipitation fell on grains from England southward into France and northern Italy. In southeast Europe, beneficial precipitation in western Yugoslavia, southern Romania, and southern Bulgaria, aided soil moisture recharge. Generally dry weather continued over central and northern Europe. Temperatures were below normal over most of Europe-with the exception of the Iberian Peninsula, where temperatures were near normal.

-Western USSR:Wet weather benefited the major winter grain area of the Ukraine late in the week, breaking a dry spell which had persisted since early February. Winter grain areas of southern Belorussia and the western Black Soils also received beneficial precipitation with relatively dry weather prevailing elsewhere. Temperatures for dormant winter grains went from below normal early in the week to above normal late in the week. No potential winterkill conditions were reported over the region.

-Mexico.Timely light rains over the extreme Northeast should help germinate recently-planted corn and grain sorghum. However, soil moisture still remains low in parts of the area because of an unusually dry winter. Beneficial rains falling over citrus orchards around Jalapa should help support spring bloom and growth.

--Eastern Asia.Precipitation increased slightly in China's northern winter grain areas; 5-15 mm fell over a fairly broad area. Temperatures rose far enough above normal to permit winter grain growth in most areas south of the Yellow River. Above-normal rainfall occurred in the lower Yangtze Valley and in the hills and along the coast to the southwest. The moisture was mostly beneficial in improving preplanting conditions, but some heavy amounts in Guangdong may have caused localized flooding.

-South Asia. Late in the week a storm advanced eastward across Pakistan, spreading light to moderate rainfall over much of that country and into India. The moisture was still beneficial in nothern winter grain areas of these countries where the crops were nearing maturity. Most light amounts in southern winter grain areas of India should not have caused any problems for mature crops.

-Northwestern Africa.Abundant rainfall continued in most winter grain areas, and prospects remained good as the crop continued vegetative growth. Pasture conditions in western Algeria have improved following a second consecutive week of moderate rainfall, although winter grains were probably not sown there this growing season because of earlier drvness.





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