

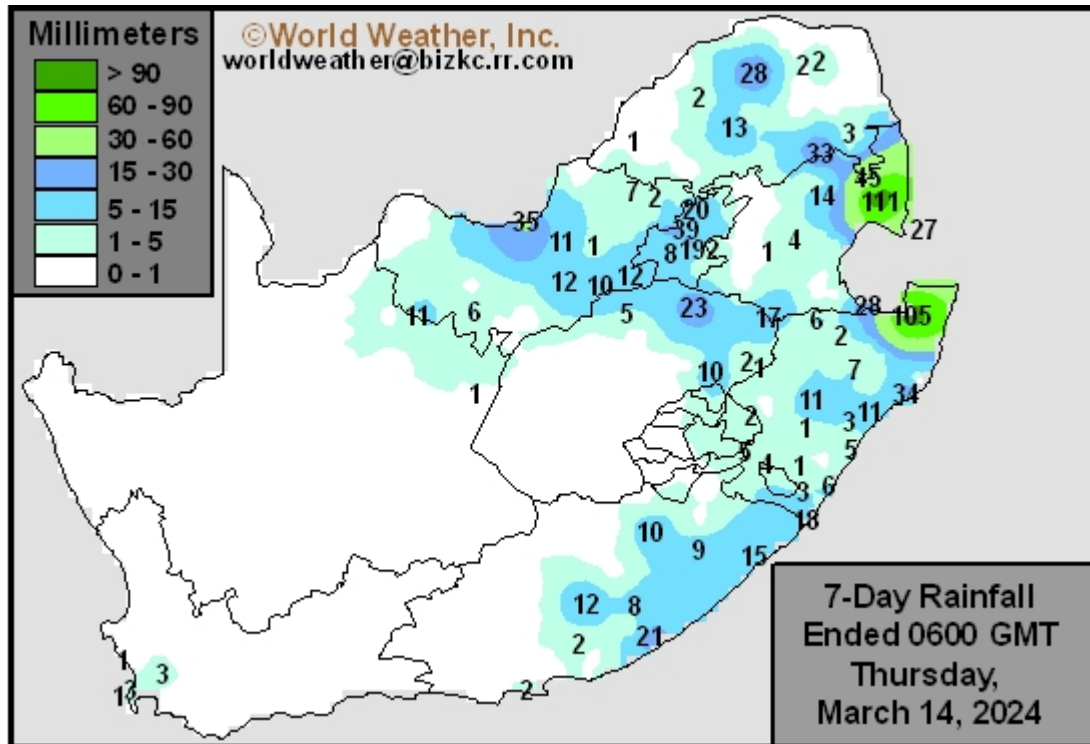
# South Africa Production Hurt By Warm, Dry Weather

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, March 14 (World Weather Inc.) – Many areas in central South Africa continued to dry down during the past week due to a lack of rain and warm to hot daytime temperatures. These areas were already drying down in February and continued dryness has likely hurt production potentials for many crops, but especially late season crops like peanuts, sorghum and unirrigated cotton. Some of the crops may have matured early as a result of the drying trend. Eastern South Africa still had enough moisture to support generally favorable development during the past week and production should be closer to normal. Eastern South Africa will see a good mix of rain and sunshine during the coming week that will maintain a favorable production outlook while areas to the west will remain stressed.

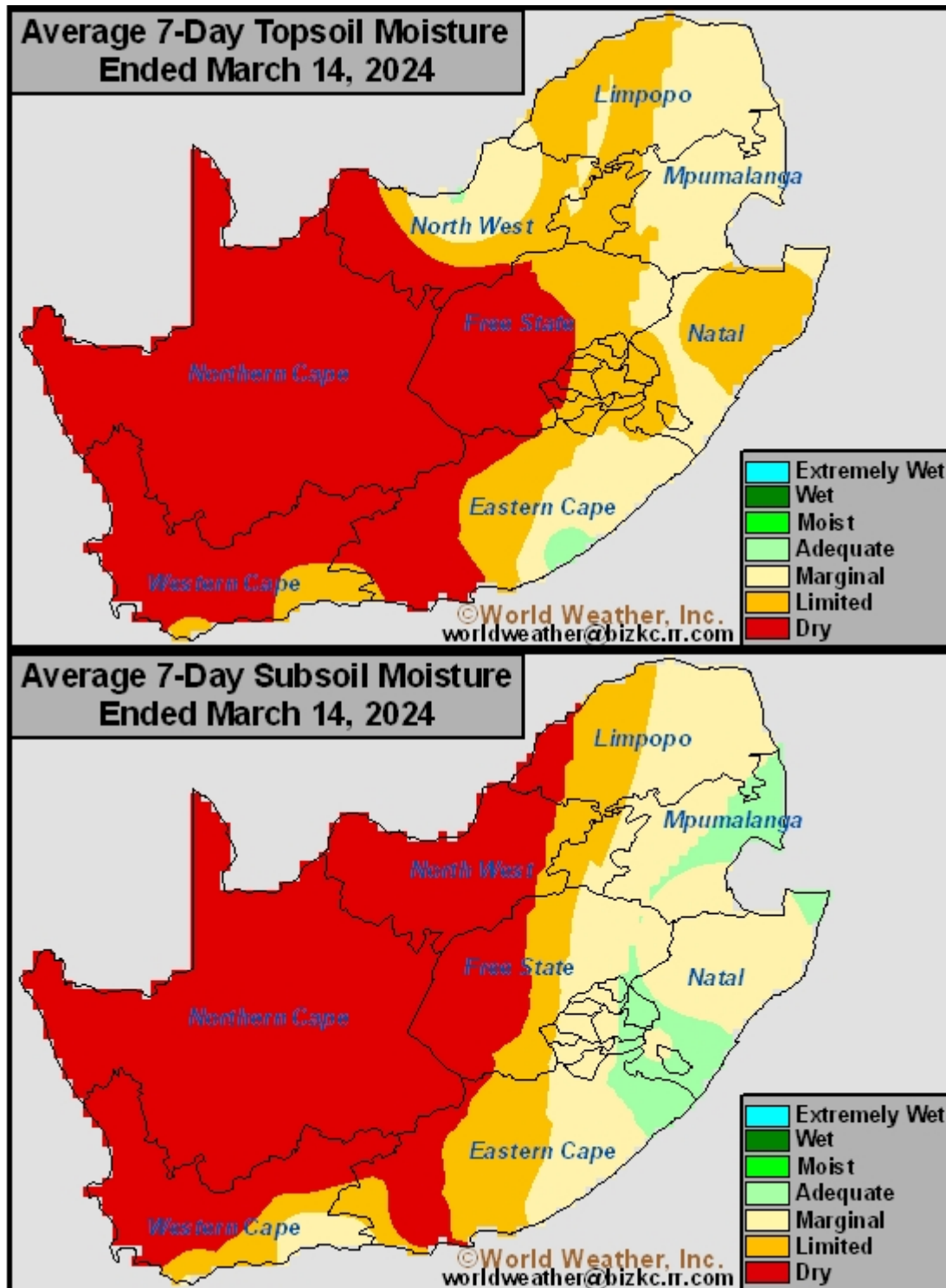
Northeastern Natal and northeastern Mpumalanga received significant rain in recent days as Tropical Cyclone Filipo advanced near South Africa. Moisture totals for the seven-day period ending this morning ranged from 1.10 to 4.37 inches. Other areas in Natal and Mpumalanga into Limpopo, Gauteng, North West, eastern Free State, and portions of Eastern Cape received 0.12 to 1.54 inches with pockets that were mostly dry. Other locations in South Africa received little to no rain during the past week.

Temperatures were often warmer biased during the past week. Highest readings ranged from 90 to 105 degrees Fahrenheit with pockets in the south that only warmed to the 80s. Lowest temperatures were in the 50s and 60s with pockets in the 40s.



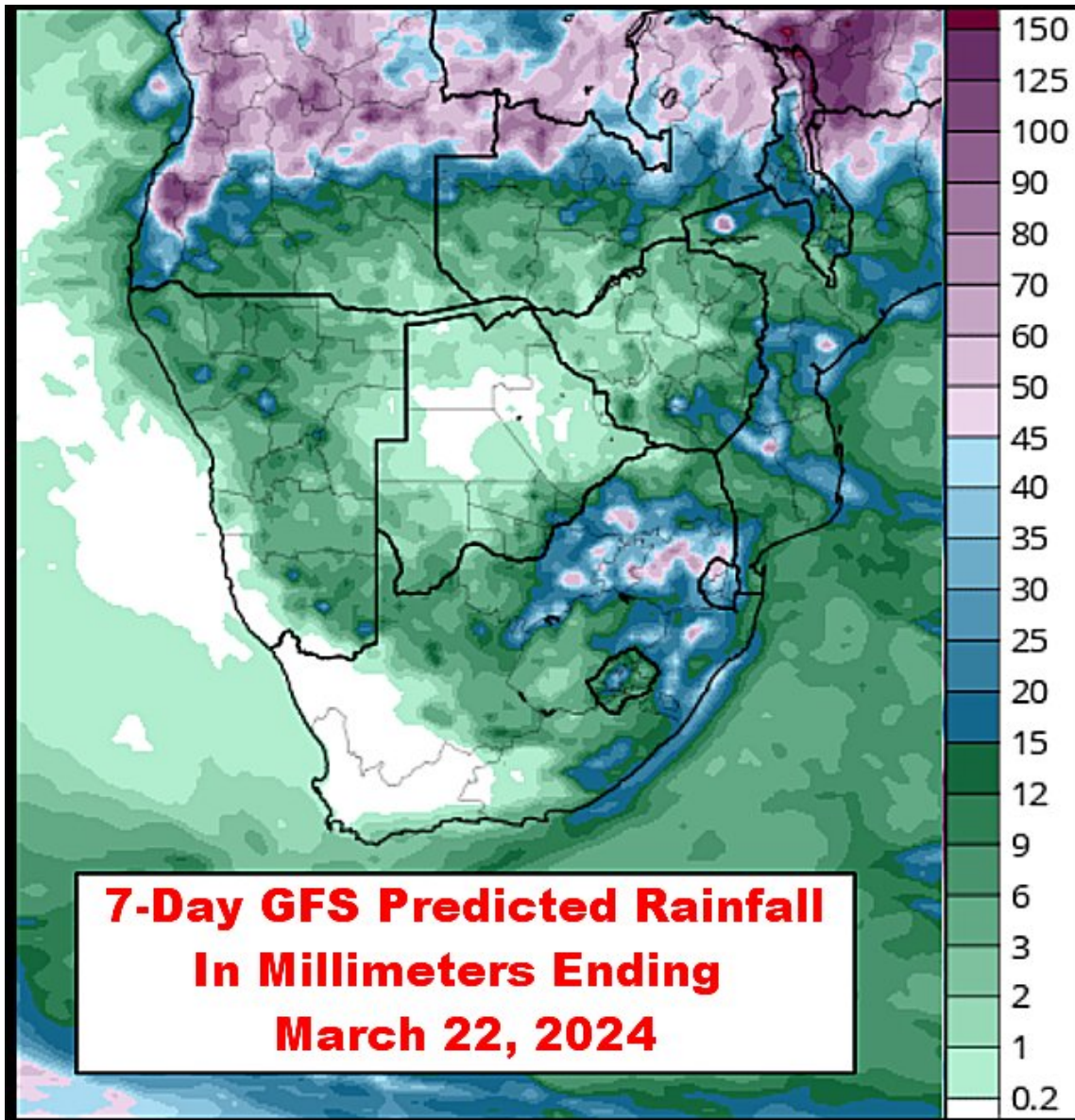
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Soil moisture is rated short to very short across most of the nation with the driest conditions in the western half of summer crop country. Some crop areas in the east still have marginally adequate subsoil moisture.



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Ongoing dryness and periods of hot weather recently hurt production potentials for late season corn, sorghum, peanuts and cotton especially in unirrigated areas. Cotton has been least impacted and most of the soybeans mature early enough that they might have been least impacted. Timely rain and abundant soil moisture were prevalent in the first half of the growing season pushing production potentials much higher than normally expected in an El Nino year. El Nino's dry bias finally kicked in during February and March depleting soil moisture and stressing many late season crops. Crop moisture stress has been slow to evolve in the eastern half of the nation where yields will be best this year.



Eastern South Africa will again see a good mix of rain and sunshine during the coming week. The first wave of scattered showers occurred Thursday. Light rain will often be scattered across the region today through the weekend with the passage of a weak frontal boundary. A disturbance will then promote some of the most significant rain at the beginning and middle of next week. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range

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from 0.75 to 3.00 inches and locally greater amounts for much of Mpumalanga, Limpopo, and Natal. The region will again see a mix of spotty rain and sunshine March 22 – 28 as well. Temperatures will trend near to above normal with daytime highs often reaching the 80s and 90s. However, many areas will only warm to the 70s during periods of more significant rain. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s with pockets in the lower 70s.

**Central South Africa** will have a few opportunities for spotty rainfall during the next two weeks. Other than a few isolated showers, the region will be mostly dry through the end of the weekend. Scattered showers will then evolve at the beginning and middle of next week as a disturbance enters the country. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range from 0.10 to 1.00 inch with local amounts of 1.50 inches or slightly more in eastern sections of Free State and North West. A similar weather pattern is expected March 22 – 28. Western South Africa will receive little to no rain during the coming week with limited rainfall likely March 22 – 28. Temperatures will often trend above normal with daytime highs reaching the upper 80s and well into the 90s most often. Pockets in western South Africa will often warm above 100 degrees as well. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s.

*Late-season development conditions will remain generally favorable for eastern South Africa in coming weeks. The periods of rain will either help keep soil moisture near current levels or bolster it, which will be beneficial for most crops. Early-season harvesting and general fieldwork may be sluggish during the wettest periods. Central South Africa will otherwise remain too dry to support good late-season development despite the periodic rainfall in coming weeks. Production potentials should remain mostly unchanged with lower-than-normal yields likely.*

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