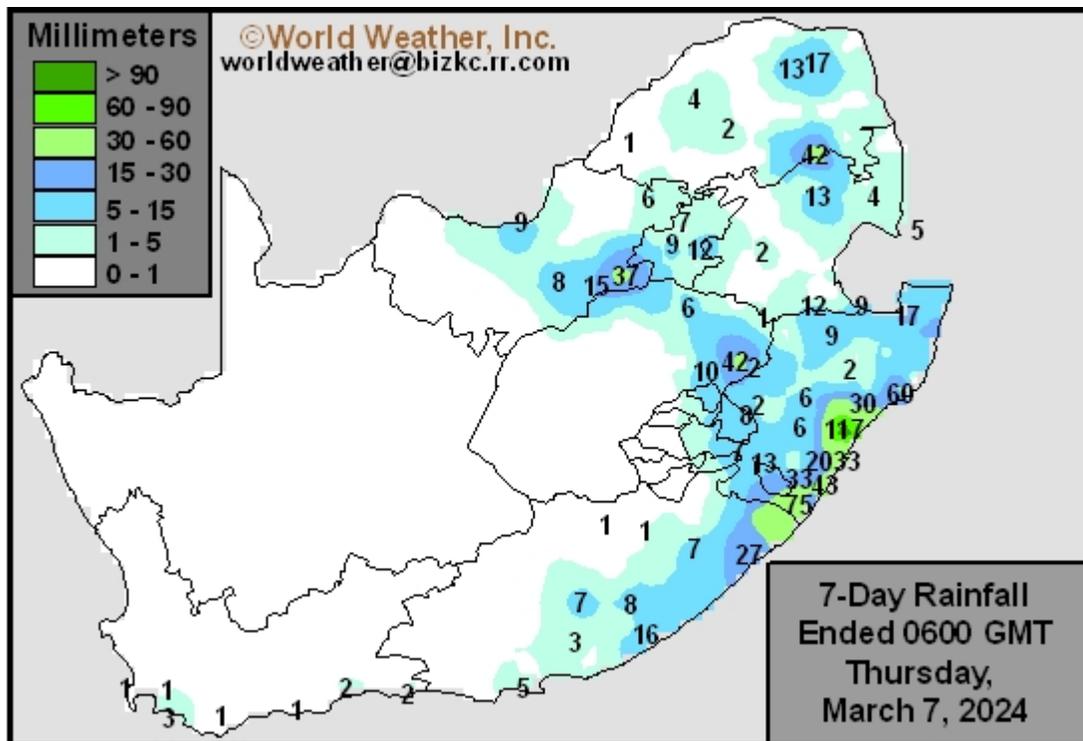


South Africa Rain Beneficial For Late-Season Growth

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, March 21 (World Weather Inc.) – Rain was scattered across eastern South Africa during the past week while areas further west remained drier biased. Eastern South Africa still had enough moisture to support generally favorable development conditions. Free State, North West, and neighboring locations remained too dry to support ideal growth. Central South Africa has been dry enough for long enough to reduce production potentials for the corn and other crops produced this time of year. **A shift in the weather pattern is slated for the country during the coming week. The main production areas will have several opportunities for rain that will gradually bolster soil moisture. Late-season development conditions will remain favorable in eastern South Africa. Minor improvements will occur in central South Africa as well, though the rain may be too late to fix production potentials. Early-season harvesting and general fieldwork may advance slowly due to the wet weather.**

Rainfall varied significantly across the main production areas in South Africa during the past week. Areas near and along the east-central and southern Natal coastlines reported 0.79 to 2.95 inches of rain with a local total of 4.61 inches for the seven-day period ending this morning. Portions of Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng, and eastern fringes of Eastern Cape, Free State and North West received 0.12 to 1.65 inches of rain with pockets that were mostly dry. A few locations in central North West and Eastern Cape received up to 0.63 inch of moisture. Little to no rain was noted elsewhere.

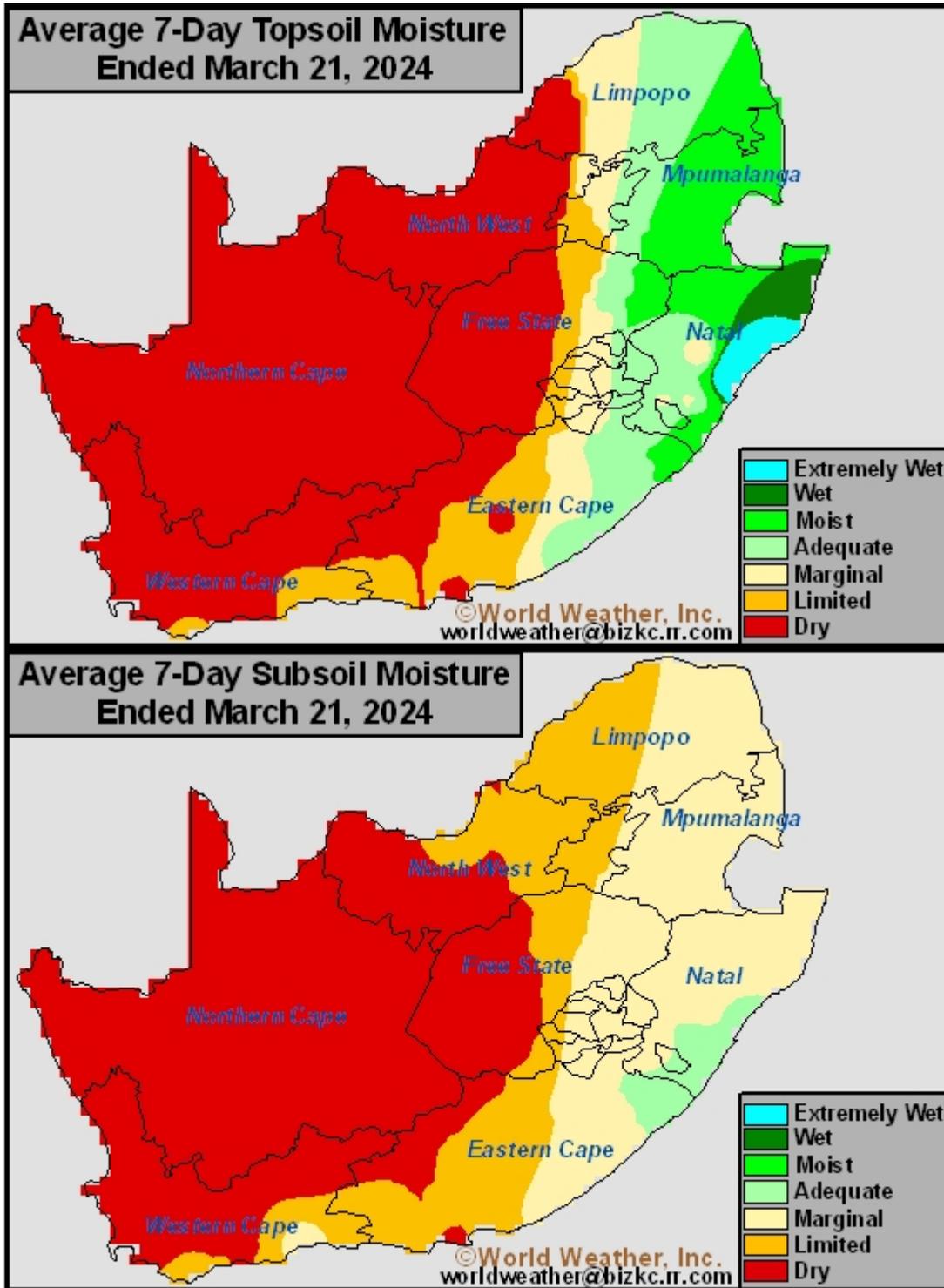


Temperatures were often warmer than normal during the past week. Highest readings were in the upper 80s and 90s Fahrenheit with portions of western and northern

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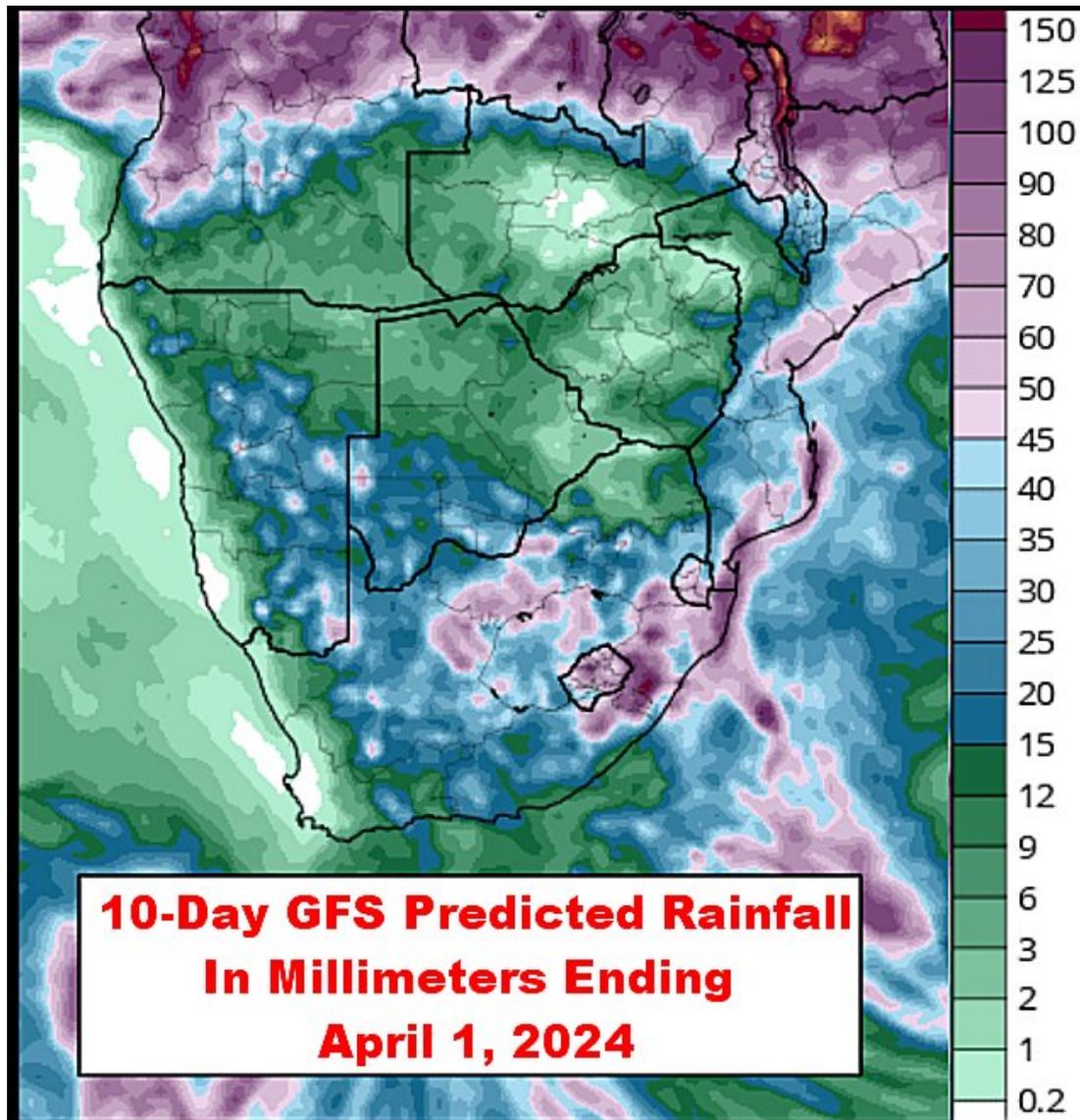
South Africa warming above 100 degrees at times. Lowest temperatures were in the 50s and 60s with pockets in central and southern South Africa cooling to the 40s.

Soil moisture is at adequate or marginally adequate levels in much of eastern South Africa and eastern fringes of Free State and Eastern Cape. Other locations in South Africa have short to critically short soil moisture.



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Eastern South Africa still had enough moisture to support generally good conditions for the coarse grains, oilseeds, sugarcane, and other crops produced this time of year. Portions of Limpopo trended a little too dry and would benefit from a good shot of rain. Free State, North West, and neighboring production areas otherwise remained too dry to support aggressive growth. Central South Africa has received limited rainfall since early February. Development conditions slowly deteriorated in recent weeks and production potentials have been reduced. Rain could still improve late-season development conditions and limit further production losses. Maturation and early-season harvesting otherwise advanced swiftly around the periodic rainfall during the past week.



WEATHER OUTLOOK

South Africa will have several opportunities for rain during the coming week. A disturbance will initially promote erratic rainfall today and Friday. Another disturbance will

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generate scattered showers late Friday into this weekend. More disturbances will bring rain to the country next week. Moisture totals by next Thursday morning will range from 0.75 to 3.00 inches with local amounts of 4.00 inches or more in Natal and Mpumalanga. Portions of Limpopo and western fringes of Western Cape and Northern Cape will also only receive 0.10 to 0.75 inch of rain. Much of eastern and central South Africa will see a mix of rain and sunshine March 29 – April 1. Western South Africa will trend drier than normal during the second week of the outlook.

Temperatures will trend near to above normal for much of South Africa during the coming week. Daytime highs will peak to the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit through Saturday with pockets in central and western South Africa only warming to the 70s. A few locations in western South Africa may also warm above 100 degrees. Highs for the remainder of the coming week will be in the 70s and 80s with pockets in western and northern South Africa warming to the 90s. Low temperatures will be in the 50s and 60s with pockets only cooling to the lower 70s. Seasonable to seasonably warm weather will continue for much of the country March 29 – April 4.

The periods of rain during the next two weeks will gradually improve the moisture profile for much of South Africa's production region. Late-season development conditions will remain favorable in eastern South Africa and improve for central South Africa. Production potentials may improve marginally due to the rain in Free State and North West, though some losses are still expected due to dryness in February and earlier this month. Maturation and early-season harvesting may otherwise advance slowly due to the frequent rainfall.

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