WEEKLY WEATHER AND CROP BULLETIN

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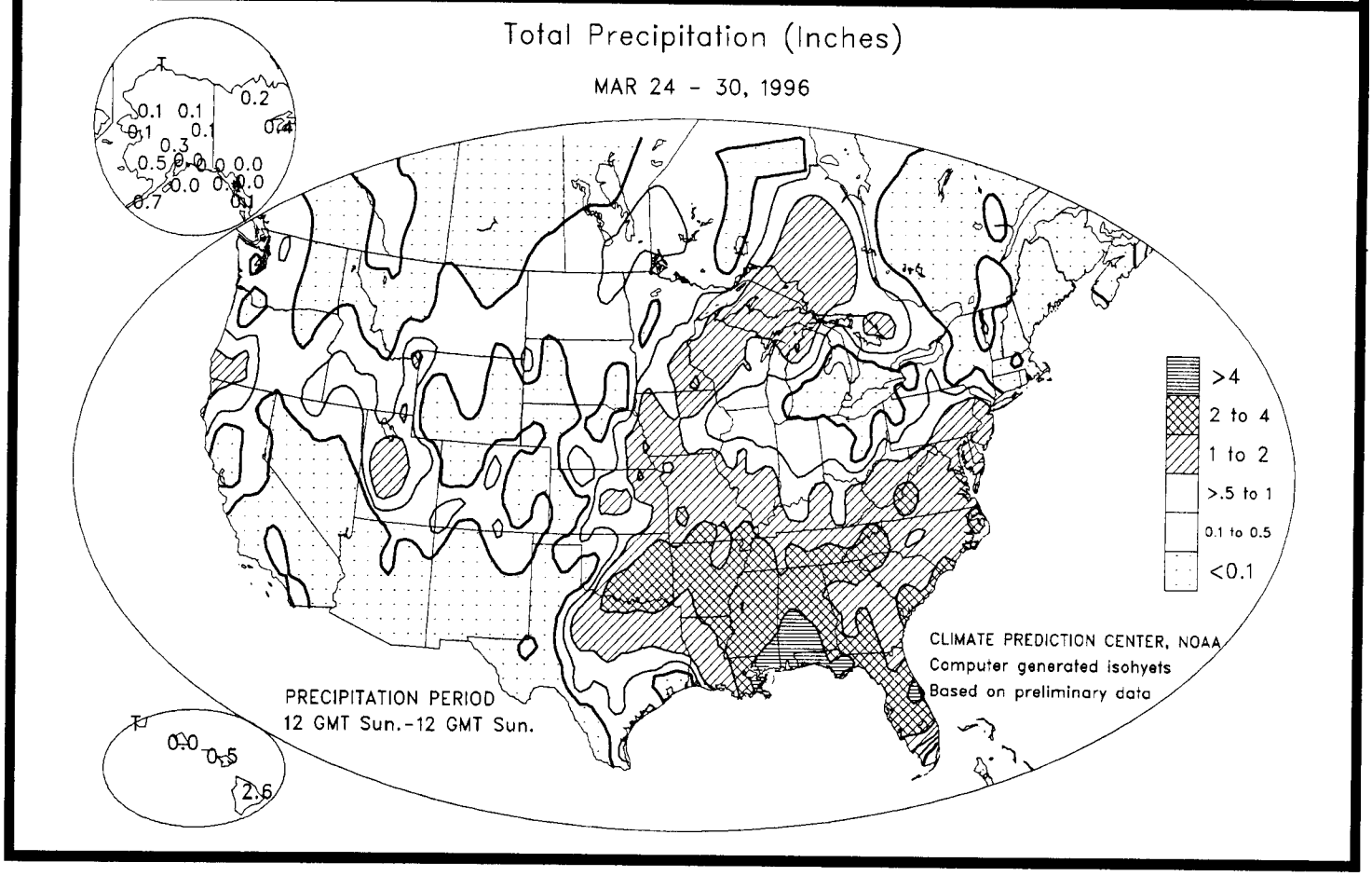

HIGHLIGHTS

March 24 - 30, 1996

After delivering beneficial rainfall to the **eastern Plains**, a strong storm raced northeastward, spelling an early-week end to heavy snow in the **North Central States** and allowing cold air to overspread much of the Nation. Weekly temperatures averaged 15 to 25°F below normal in the **northern Plains**. Rain returned to the **central and southern Plains** on March 26-27 and 30-31, further improving wheat prospects in **Kansas** (except the far west), **Oklahoma**, and **north-central Texas**. The **Texas plains**, however, remained critically dry, with March rainfall less than one-tenth of an inch in **Lubbock** and **Midland**. Six-month precipitation (since October 1, 1995) remained far below normal throughout the **central and southern Plains**, including 36 percent (%) of normal in **Topeka, KS**; 26% in **Lubbock**; and 15% in **Midland**.

(Continued on back cover)

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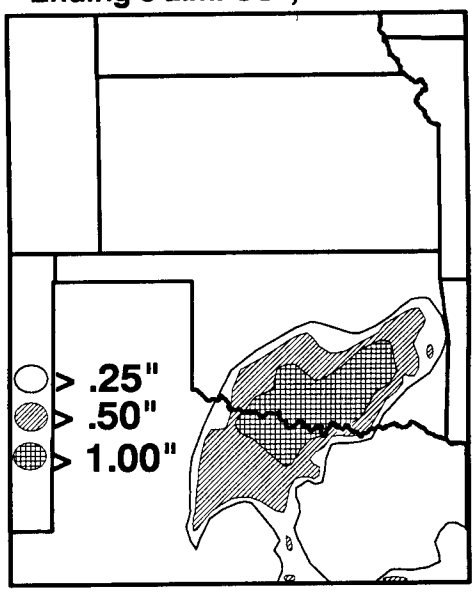
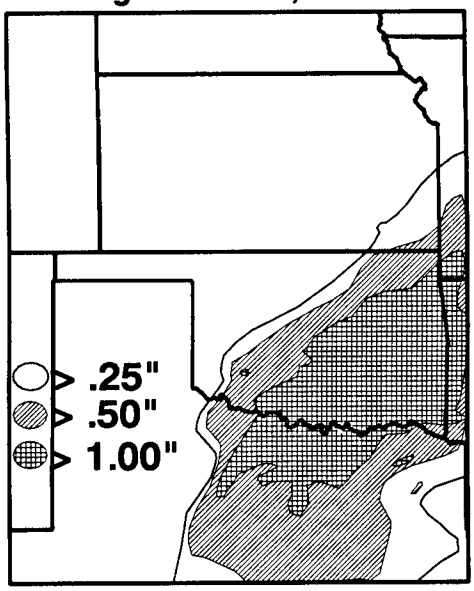
Plains Rainfall Maps, March 26 - 28 and 30 - 31

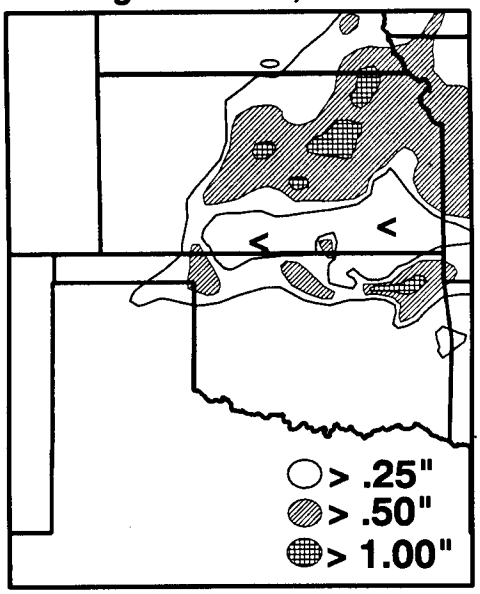
24 Hour Precipitation Ending 6 a.m. CST, March 27

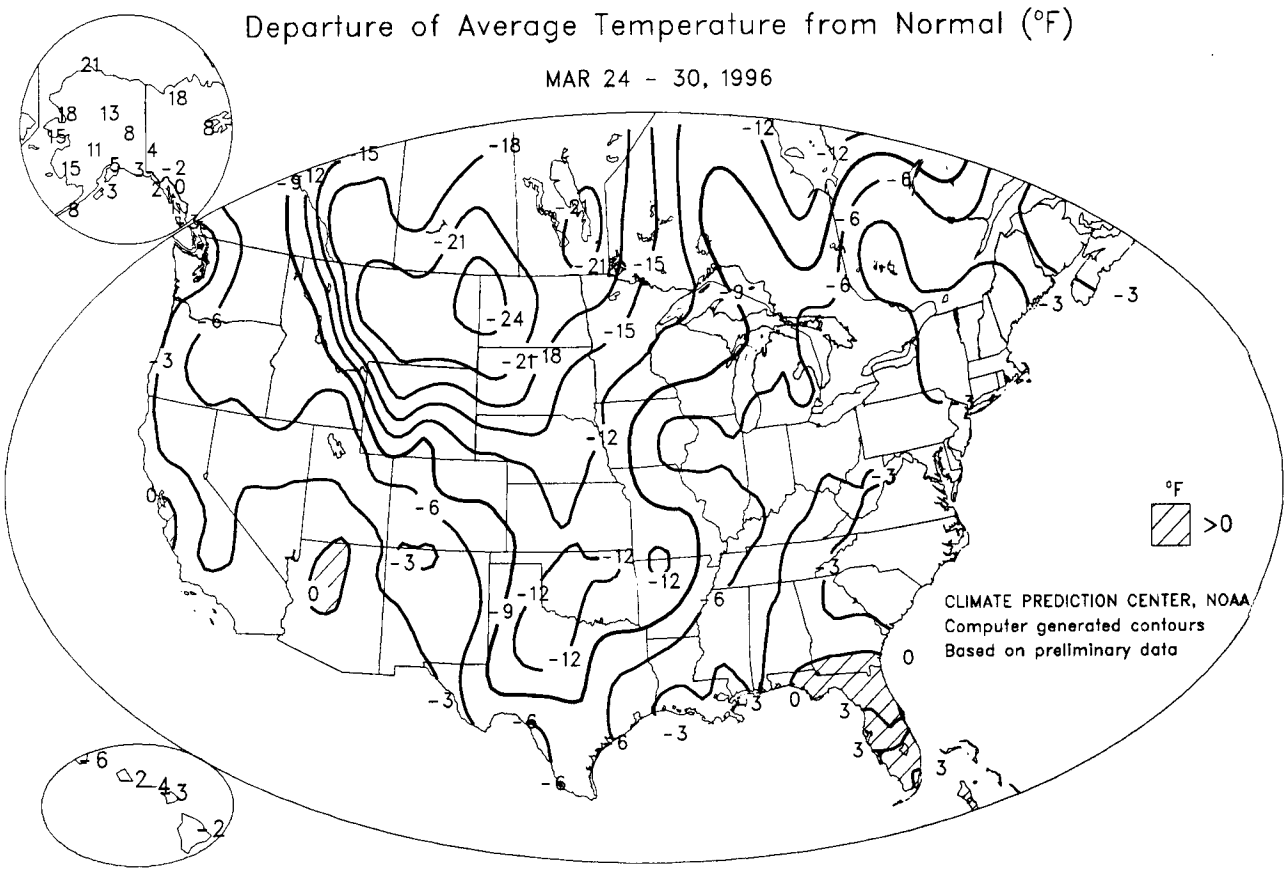


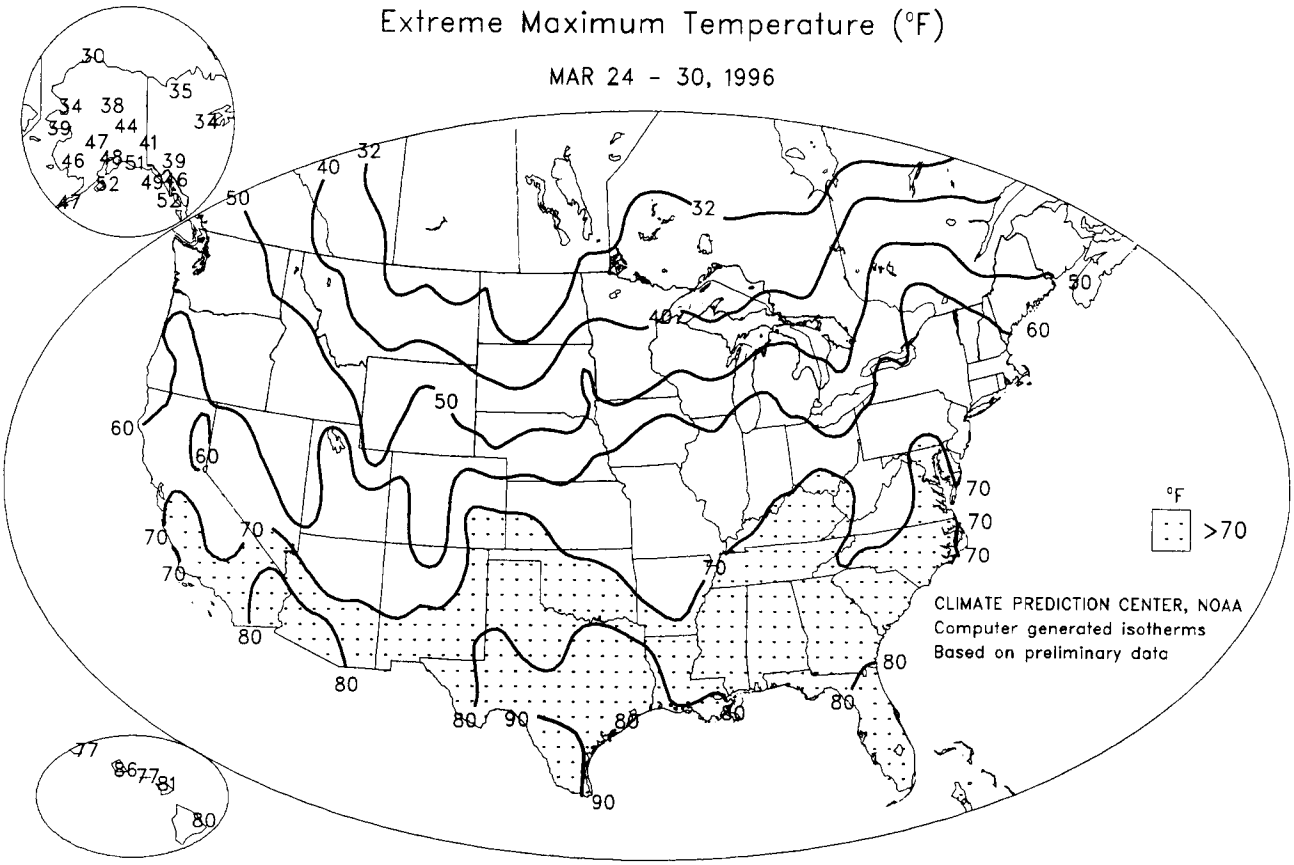
24 Hour Precipitation Ending 6 a.m. CST, March 28

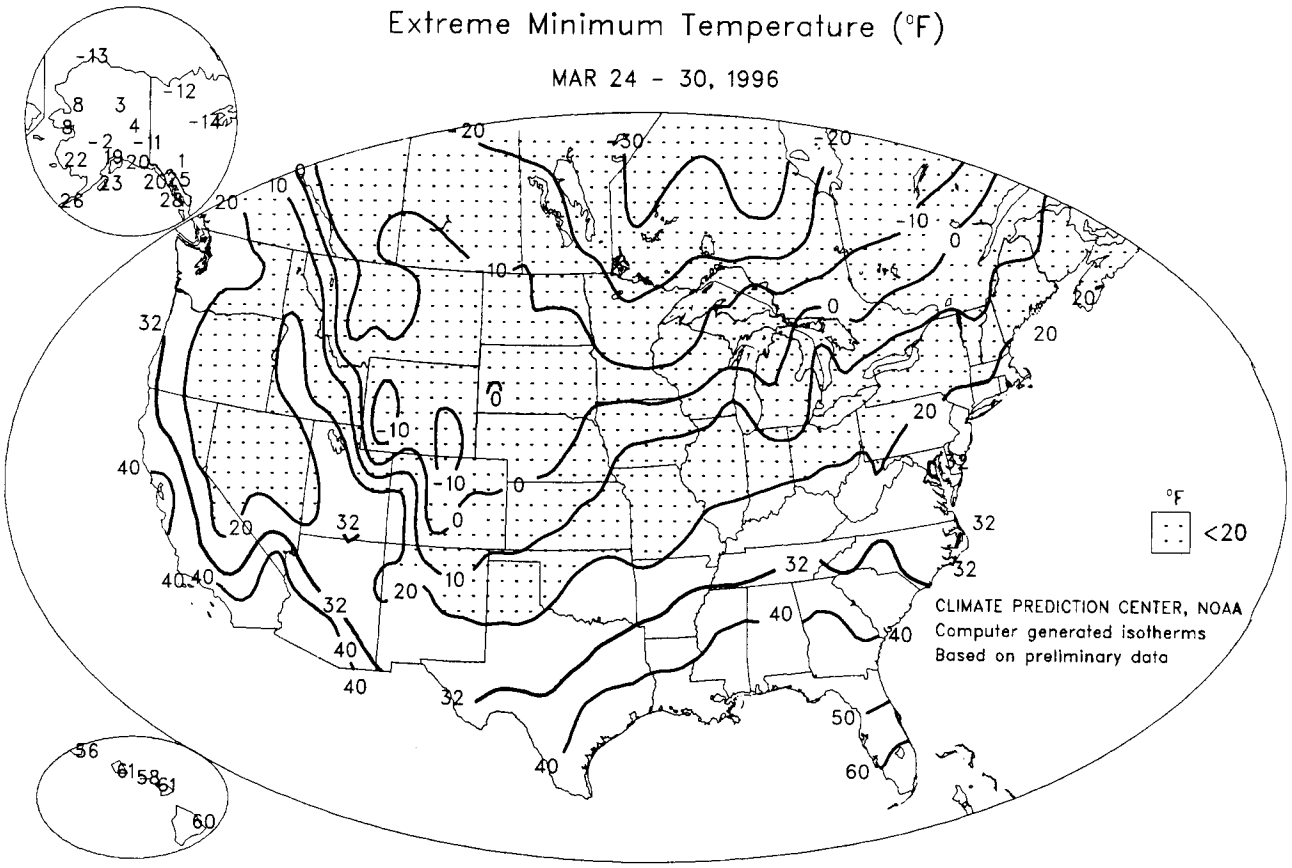


24 Hour Precipitation Ending 6 a.m. CST, March 31



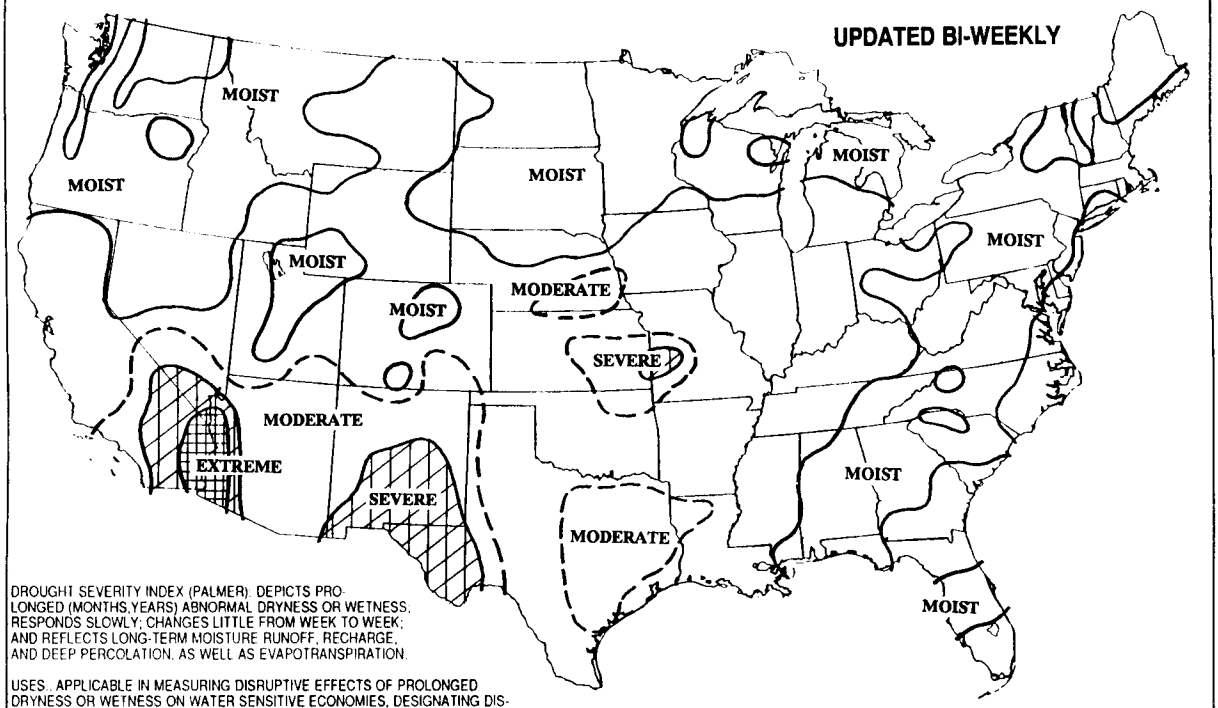



Extreme Maximum Temperature (°F)
MAR 24 - 30, 1996
°F
>70
CLIMATE PREDICTION CENTER, NOAA
Computer generated isotherms
Based on preliminary data


Extreme Minimum Temperature (°F)
MAR 24 - 30, 1996
°F
<20
CLIMATE PREDICTION CENTER, NOAA
Computer generated isotherms
Based on preliminary data

DROUGHT SEVERITY
(LONG TERM, PALMER)

March 30, 1996



DROUGHT SEVERITY INDEX (PALMER). DEPICTS PROLONGED (MONTHS,YEARS) ABNORMAL DRYNESS OR WETNESS. RESPONDS SLOWLY; CHANGES LITTLE FROM WEEK TO WEEK; AND REFLECTS LONG-TERM MOISTURE RUNOFF, RECHARGE, AND DEEP PERCOLATION, AS WELL AS EVAPOTRANSPIRATION.

USES...APPLICABLE IN MEASURING DISRUPTIVE EFFECTS OF PROLONGED DRYNESS OR WETNESS ON WATER SENSITIVE ECONOMIES, DESIGNATING DISASTER AREAS OF DROUGHT OR WETNESS; AND REFLECTING THE GENERAL LONG-TERM STATUS OF WATER SUPPLIES IN AQUIFERS, RESERVOIRS, AND STREAMS.

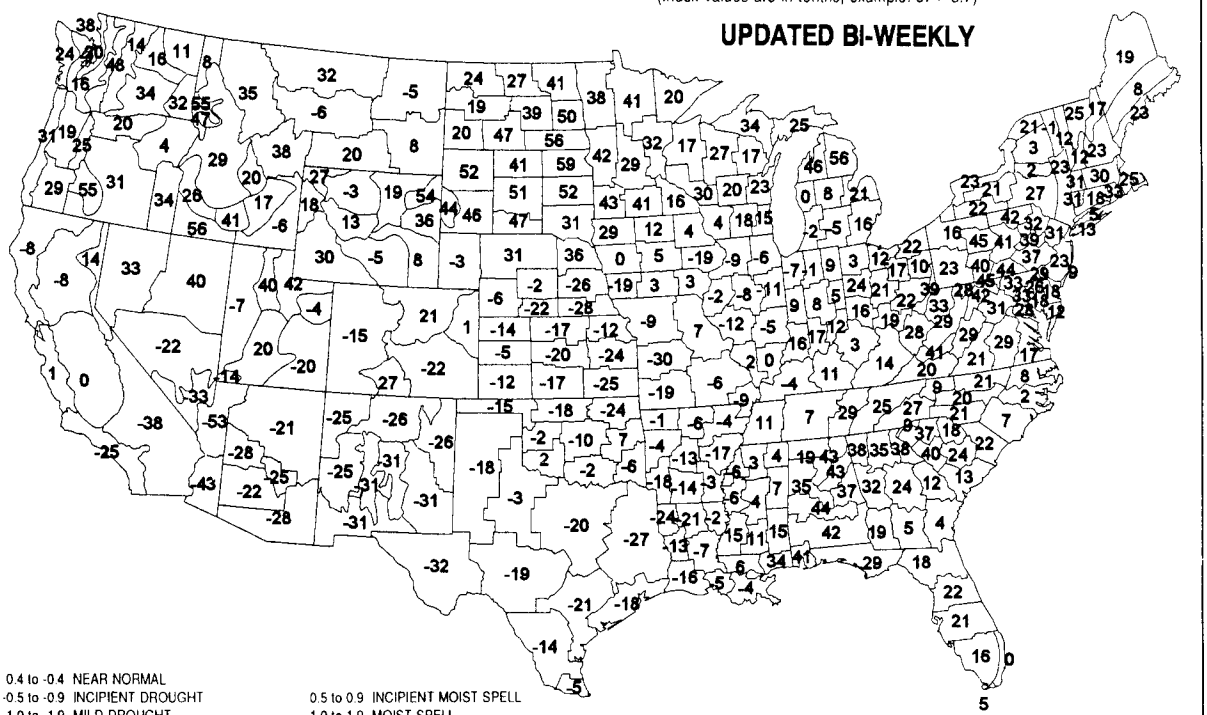
LIMITATIONS...IS NOT GENERALLY INDICATIVE OF SHORT-TERM (FEW WEEKS) STATUS OF DROUGHT OR WETNESS SUCH AS FREQUENTLY AFFECTS CROPS AND FIELD OPERATIONS (THIS IS INDICATED BY THE CROP MOISTURE INDEX).

NOAA/USDA JOINT AGRICULTURAL WEATHER FACILITY Based on preliminary reports

DROUGHT SEVERITY INDEX BY DIVISION
(LONG TERM, PALMER)

March 30, 1996

(Index values are in tenths; example: 37 = 3.7)



0.4 to -0.4 NEAR NORMAL
-0.5 to -0.9 INCIPIENT DROUGHT
-1.0 to -1.9 MILD DROUGHT
-2.0 to -2.9 MODERATE DROUGHT
-3.0 to -3.9 SEVERE DROUGHT
BELOW -4.0 EXTREME DROUGHT

0.5 to 0.9 INCIPIENT MOIST SPELL
1.0 to 1.9 MOIST SPELL
2.0 to 2.9 UNUSUAL MOIST SPELL
3.0 to 3.9 VERY MOIST SPELL
ABOVE 4.0 EXTREME MOIST SPELL

NOAA/USDA JOINT AGRICULTURAL WEATHER FACILITY Based on preliminary reports

National Weather Data for Selected Cities

Weather Data for the Week Ending March 30, 1996

STATES AND STATIONS		TEMPERATURE °F						PRECIPITATION							RELATIVE HUMIDITY, PERCENT		NUMBER OF DAYS			
																	TEMP. °F		PRECIP.	
		AVERAGE MAXIMUM	AVERAGE MINIMUM	EXTREME HIGH	EXTREME LOW	AVERAGE	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL	WEEKLY TOTAL, IN.	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL	GREATEST IN 24-HOUR, IN.	TOTAL, IN., SINCE Mar 1	PCT. NORMAL SINCE Mar 1	TOTAL, IN., SINCE Jan 1	PCT. NORMAL SINCE Jan 1	AVERAGE MAXIMUM	AVERAGE MINIMUM	90 AND ABOVE	32 AND BELOW	.01 INCH OR MORE	.05 INCH OR MORE
AL	BIRMINGHAM	61	37	74	27	49	-6	1.02	-0.41	0.97	7.78	168	20.46	139	90	35	0	4	2	1
	MOBILE	67	41	78	31	54	-8	0.63	-0.81	0.63	1.21	25	11.85	78	82	37	0	2	1	1
	MONTGOMERY	62	40	75	31	51	-6	1.55	0.14	1.25	6.32	134	17.53	116	81	43	0	1	3	1
AK	ANCHORAGE	36	20	40	16	28	1	0.01	-0.15	0.01	0.42	78	2.94	139	69	47	0	7	1	0
	BARROW	0	-23	21	-45	-12	3	0.00	-0.03	0.00	0.04	44	0.15	45	78	69	0	7	0	0
	FAIRBANKS	29	-11	42	-22	9	-4	0.00	-0.08	0.00	0.47	174	2.20	185	75	30	0	7	0	0
	JUNEAU	39	29	42	23	34	0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	84	55	0	6	-	-
	KODIAK	43	33	46	27	38	4	0.20	-0.83	0.09	1.38	40	6.31	39	82	52	0	4	4	0
	NOME	23	11	32	-17	17	7	0.13	0.01	0.05	0.31	84	3.23	181	84	69	0	7	3	0
AZ	PHOENIX	83	57	89	53	70	7	0.00	-0.19	0.00	0.55	79	1.81	87	48	12	0	0	0	0
	PRESCOTT	69	37	74	33	53	9	0.00	-0.41	0.00	0.43	30	1.48	33	56	18	0	0	0	0
	TUCSON	82	51	87	46	67	7	0.00	-0.16	0.00	0.32	59	1.13	54	38	9	0	0	0	0
	YUMA	88	60	93	55	74	8	0.00	-0.06	0.00	0.43	239	0.61	81	45	13	4	0	0	0
AR	FORT SMITH	61	34	76	29	48	-6	0.95	0.02	0.95	0.96	33	5.37	71	75	30	0	4	1	1
	LITTLE ROCK	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.98	-0.17	--	1.82	50	5.94	57	--	--	-	-	-	-
CA	BAKERSFIELD	77	49	84	38	63	5	0.00	-0.22	0.00	0.35	44	3.90	142	91	38	0	0	0	0
	EUREKA	56	42	58	37	49	0	0.75	-0.44	0.47	2.71	67	21.55	144	91	49	0	0	2	0
	FRESNO	75	49	81	40	62	6	0.01	-0.41	0.01	1.36	95	6.33	121	89	20	0	0	1	0
	LOS ANGELES	66	56	70	54	61	3	0.00	-0.41	0.00	1.33	86	7.44	114	92	19	0	0	0	0
	REDDING	74	45	83	34	60	7	0.00	-0.96	0.00	1.44	43	20.15	144	78	28	0	0	0	0
	SACRAMENTO	73	48	79	42	61	6	0.00	-0.56	0.00	2.29	126	11.69	134	91	42	0	0	0	0
	SAN DIEGO	64	57	65	55	61	1	0.00	-0.40	0.00	1.06	79	3.46	73	84	37	0	0	0	0
	SAN FRANCISCO	66	48	79	44	57	3	0.00	-0.67	0.00	2.86	122	15.79	158	86	35	0	0	0	0
CO	DENVER	52	24	66	17	38	-2	0.05	-0.26	0.03	0.70	77	0.99	50	91	33	0	7	2	0
	GRAND JUNCTION	62	31	72	24	46	0	0.04	-0.21	0.04	0.41	52	2.13	112	65	19	0	4	1	0
	PUEBLO	57	22	73	16	39	-4	0.08	-0.11	0.06	1.02	182	1.35	113	87	26	0	7	2	0
CT	BRIDGEPORT	46	35	53	27	41	0	0.24	-0.63	0.24	2.43	88	10.86	119	81	42	0	2	1	0
	HARTFORD	49	30	58	22	40	0	0.09	-0.74	0.09	2.20	82	12.08	128	75	36	0	5	1	0
DC	WASHINGTON	51	38	59	32	44	-5	1.06	0.34	1.00	2.22	94	9.22	117	78	45	0	2	2	1
FL	PANAMA CITY	63	48	75	42	55	-5	1.45	0.22	0.86	2.81	67	9.01	61	80	46	0	0	2	2
	DAYTONA BEACH	70	47	82	40	58	-7	0.89	0.26	0.89	7.44	337	14.32	175	90	39	0	0	1	1
	JACKSONVILLE	67	44	81	35	55	-8	1.63	0.84	1.00	5.15	186	7.35	74	89	41	0	0	2	2
	KEY WEST	74	62	81	53	68	-6	0.12	-0.27	0.12	1.39	109	2.50	48	81	57	0	0	1	0
	MIAMI	76	58	87	51	67	-5	0.00	-0.55	0.00	1.30	73	4.43	75	82	43	0	0	0	0
	ORLANDO	73	48	85	41	60	-7	0.87	0.17	0.87	5.53	223	12.44	157	90	39	0	0	1	1
	TALLAHASSEE	67	42	78	30	55	-7	1.95	0.57	1.37	4.27	90	10.76	70	86	40	0	2	2	2
	TAMPA	69	53	77	44	61	-6	0.05	-0.59	0.05	1.47	62	7.70	102	82	51	0	0	1	0
	WEST PALM BEACH	75	54	89	45	65	-7	0.17	-0.48	0.16	3.48	157	5.50	72	85	45	0	0	2	0
GA	ATLANTA	59	38	72	30	49	-6	0.62	-0.69	0.53	5.17	119	17.20	122	78	41	0	3	3	1
	AUGUSTA	60	39	67	23	49	-8	0.80	-0.24	0.70	2.40	68	7.63	64	88	49	0	2	3	1
	MACON	61	40	67	29	50	-8	1.69	0.63	1.41	4.52	125	10.28	79	87	44	0	2	3	1
	SAVANNAH	64	44	77	34	54	-6	0.60	-0.25	0.60	2.34	82	5.70	58	78	42	0	0	1	1
HI	HILO	78	63	80	60	70	-2	0.25	-3.04	0.13	10.51	104	36.61	119	89	63	0	0	5	0
	HONOLULU	82	67	84	61	75	0	0.05	-0.45	0.05	2.86	171	7.35	98	80	48	0	0	1	0
	KAHULUI	80	65	83	59	73	-1	0.46	-0.15	0.46	3.19	155	8.70	95	86	62	0	0	1	0
	LIHUE	77	66	78	62	72	-1	0.06	-0.90	0.06	3.70	120	13.03	105	80	55	0	0	1	0
ID	BOISE	58	35	66	30	47	3	0.12	-0.18	0.12	1.14	119	3.07	88	75	33	0	1	1	0
	LEWISTON	55	38	61	32	47	2	0.49	0.24	0.49	0.76	95	4.04	134	77	39	0	2	1	0
	POCATELLO	55	27	64	18	41	3	0.08	-0.22	0.08	0.98	104	2.80	96	84	30	0	6	1	0
IL	CHICAGO	42	25	53	21	34	-6	0.02	-0.64	0.02	0.46	24	2.66	55	89	48	0	7	1	0
	MOLINE	46	24	53	21	35	-4	0.03	-0.71	0.03	1.02	48	4.44	90	83	37	0	7	1	0
	PEORIA	45	26	51	23	36	-6	0.06	-0.66	0.05	0.95	46	3.20	63	81	38	0	7	2	0
	QUINCY	44	28	54	22	36	-7	0.21	-0.57	0.21	1.10	48	3.85	74	88	34	0	6	1	0
	ROCKFORD	43	23	51	20	33	-4	0.13	-0.48	0.08	0.28	16	2.19	52	83	41	0	7	2	0
	SPRINGFIELD	47	27	56	23	37	-6	0.31	-0.47	0.16	1.01	43	3.53	62	88	42	0	6	3	0
IN	EVANSVILLE	45	27	56	18	36	-13	0.78	-0.38	0.57	3.54	96	8.50	83	94	55	0	6	3	1
	FORT WAYNE	43	27	54	21	35	-5	0.74	0.05	0.56	1.56	74	5.33	89	86	44	0	5	2	1
	INDIANAPOLIS	43	26	56	18	34	-9	1.21	0.32	0.98	2.08	75	7.10	93	89	53	0	6	2	1
	SOUTH BEND	42	26	52	18	34	-5	0.02	-0.73	0.02	0.86	39	4.60	72	80	42	0	6	1	0
IA	DES MOINES	44	25	51	19	35	-5	0.00	-0.55	0.00	0.17	11	1.59	45	76	37	0	6	0	0
	SIOUX CITY	46	20	51	14	33	-5	0.39	-0.09	0.39	0.43	30	1.49	55	83	32	0	6	1	0
	WATERLOO	44	22	50	15	33	-4	0.09	-0.48	0.07	0.18	11	2.40	68	87	36	0	7	2	0
KS	CONCORDIA	54	25	78	17	39	-4	0.03	-0.51	0.03	0.27	17	0.82	28	76	23	0	6	1	0
	DODGE CITY	57	28	84	19	43	-3	0.16	-0.22	0.10	0.96	86	1.43	64	79	29	0	5	2	0
	GOODLAND	52	20	77	6	36	-4	0.07	-0.21	0.06	0.07	8	0.33	20	77	31	0	7	2	0
	TOPEKA	55	29	73	22	42	-4	0.04	-0.56	0.04	0.58	33	1.52	40	75	26	0	6	1	0
	WICHITA	55	31	75	22	43	-5	0.24	-0.39	0.24	1.33	70	1.48	38	73	26	0	4	1	0
KY	BOWLING GREEN	46	27	80	7	36	-13	0.16	-1.01	0.14	2.80	73	11.76	99	95	53	0	5	2	0
	LEXINGTON	44	29	54	22	37	-11	0.58	-0.44	0.50	3.41	104	9.79	103	90	56	0	5	2	1
	LOUISVILLE	47	31	58	25	39	-9	1.96	0.89	1.90	4.27	124	10.41	107	89	49	0	4	2	1
LA	BATON ROUGE	69	43	79	33	56	-7	3.34	2.27	2.93	4.18	117	12.88	91	86	36	0	0	2	1
	LAKE CHARLES	69	43	80	33	56	-6	0.00	-0.73	0.00	0.18	7	4.30	40	84	33	0	0	0	0
	NEW ORLEANS	69	45	79	35	57	-6	0.01	-1.05	0.01	0.69	19	6.97	47	81	35	0	0	1	0
	SHREVEPORT	66	40	81	30	53	-6	0.80	-0.11	0.52	1.19	39	3.95	34	81	35	0	1	2	1

Based on 1961-90 normals

Weather Data for the Week Ending March 30, 1996

STATES AND STATIONS		TEMPERATURE °F						PRECIPITATION							RELATIVE HUMIDITY, PERCENT		NUMBER OF DAYS			
																	TEMP. °F		PRECIP.	
		AVERAGE MAXIMUM	AVERAGE MINIMUM	EXTREME HIGH	EXTREME LOW	AVERAGE	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL	WEEKLY TOTAL, IN.	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL	GREATEST IN 24-HOUR, IN.	TOTAL, IN., SINCE Mar 1	PCT. NORMAL SINCE Mar 1	TOTAL, IN., SINCE Jan 1	PCT. NORMAL SINCE Jan 1	AVERAGE MAXIMUM	AVERAGE MINIMUM	90 AND ABOVE	32 AND BELOW	.01 INCH OR MORE	.05 INCH OR MORE
ME	CARIBOU	37	24	49	12	31	4	0.59	0.03	0.39	1.69	94	8.41	136	88	56	0	6	3	0
	PORTLAND	44	26	48	17	35	0	0.57	-0.28	0.55	2.48	92	10.43	108	86	46	0	6	2	1
MD	BALTIMORE	49	34	60	27	42	-4	0.73	-0.04	0.73	2.03	80	11.20	127	76	49	0	2	1	1
	SALISBURY	50	36	60	30	43	-4	0.26	-0.69	0.14	1.22	39	9.45	91	81	43	0	2	2	0
MA	BOSTON	48	34	54	29	41	1	0.63	-0.20	0.47	2.77	102	13.39	133	68	40	0	2	3	0
	CHATHAM	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-	-	-	-
MI	ALPENA	37	20	44	12	29	-1	0.00	-0.50	0.00	0.15	10	3.08	68	86	43	0	7	0	0
	DETROIT	41	27	51	22	34	-4	0.99	0.39	0.56	1.27	69	4.89	90	77	48	0	6	2	1
	FLINT	40	23	49	16	31	-5	0.59	0.06	0.59	0.90	59	4.21	99	81	49	0	7	1	1
	GRAND RAPIDS	41	24	48	19	33	-3	0.00	-0.64	0.00	0.22	12	2.20	42	77	40	0	7	0	0
	HOUGHTON LAKE	40	22	46	14	31	1	0.00	-0.48	0.00	0.77	53	4.01	96	76	39	0	7	0	0
	LANSING	42	23	52	17	33	-2	0.18	-0.36	0.18	0.70	45	2.28	53	82	38	0	7	1	0
	MARQUETTE	31	16	40	7	24	-2	0.04	-0.62	0.02	0.30	15	8.46	140	86	51	0	7	2	0
	MUSKEGON	41	23	46	15	32	-3	0.00	-0.61	0.00	0.62	34	3.65	64	82	43	0	7	0	0
	SAULT ST. MARIE	34	16	43	7	25	-1	0.00	-0.54	0.00	0.37	22	6.64	112	77	40	0	7	0	0
MN	ALEXANDRIA	31	18	34	11	25	-4	0.09	-0.26	0.09	0.17	17	2.50	97	86	55	0	7	1	0
	DULUTH	33	17	37	6	25	-2	0.03	-0.43	0.02	0.11	8	2.57	75	79	41	0	7	2	0
	INT'L FALLS	34	11	43	4	23	-2	0.00	-0.26	0.00	0.04	5	3.28	143	74	36	0	7	0	0
	MINNEAPOLIS	39	21	44	14	30	-3	0.08	-0.40	0.04	0.23	17	2.34	72	73	33	0	7	3	0
	ROCHESTER	38	19	44	11	29	-3	0.18	-0.26	0.12	0.37	30	2.58	92	82	42	0	7	2	0
MS	GREENWOOD	63	39	80	30	51	-6	0.41	-0.94	0.41	0.48	11	6.78	49	80	34	0	2	1	0
	JACKSON	64	39	76	30	51	-6	1.94	0.56	1.78	5.04	114	15.90	107	84	34	0	1	2	1
	MERIDIAN	65	37	78	28	51	-7	--	--	--	5.43	108	14.74	93	92	35	0	2	-	-
MO	CAPE GIRARDEAU	53	32	62	28	43	-6	0.16	-1.03	0.10	2.16	58	6.69	66	90	37	0	4	3	0
	COLUMBIA	49	30	58	22	40	-4	0.45	-0.29	0.43	0.86	39	3.68	66	76	33	0	4	2	0
	KANSAS CITY	53	29	71	21	41	-4	0.04	-0.57	0.04	0.31	17	1.65	41	72	25	0	5	1	0
	SAINT LOUIS	49	34	60	28	42	-5	0.52	-0.33	0.46	1.05	40	4.84	73	78	30	0	4	2	0
	SPRINGFIELD	53	31	72	21	42	-6	0.10	-0.82	0.06	0.15	5	3.28	50	75	31	0	4	2	0
MT	BILLINGS	44	27	59	12	35	-1	0.10	-0.18	0.08	0.60	73	2.01	83	84	48	0	6	2	0
	GLASGOW	36	22	44	7	29	-3	0.13	0.03	--	0.27	104	0.88	98	88	58	0	7	3	0
	GREAT FALLS	41	22	55	2	32	-3	0.29	0.02	0.18	0.66	84	1.26	55	86	47	0	6	2	0
	HAVRE	43	24	58	7	33	0	0.14	-0.03	0.08	0.37	79	1.31	95	89	48	0	7	2	0
	HELENA	45	21	57	7	33	-2	0.20	0.03	0.20	0.40	77	0.95	60	84	40	0	7	1	0
	KALISPELL	47	24	52	14	35	0	0.00	-0.22	0.00	0.26	36	4.79	141	83	34	0	7	0	0
	MILES CITY	41	24	53	11	33	-2	0.45	0.30	0.30	0.71	169	2.20	154	92	56	0	7	3	0
	MISSOULA	53	28	62	19	40	3	0.33	0.11	0.22	0.73	101	3.62	129	76	31	0	5	2	0
NE	GRAND ISLAND	50	23	65	14	36	-3	0.00	-0.46	0.00	0.00	0	1.07	41	75	27	0	6	0	0
	LINCOLN	51	23	62	14	37	-4	0.00	-0.52	0.00	0.16	11	1.24	45	78	28	0	6	0	0
	NORFOLK	46	23	54	19	35	-3	0.16	-0.29	0.15	0.25	19	1.22	46	83	34	0	6	2	0
	NORTH PLATTE	49	20	65	11	34	-4	0.07	-0.23	0.07	0.12	14	0.63	38	79	37	0	6	1	0
	OMAHA	48	23	55	15	35	-5	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	76	29	0	6	-	-
	SCOTTSBLUFF	51	23	64	14	37	0	0.11	-0.16	0.05	0.41	53	1.24	71	87	32	0	7	3	0
	VALENTINE	45	22	55	9	34	-4	0.00	-0.34	0.00	0.04	4	0.72	36	88	35	0	7	0	0
NV	ELY	58	26	68	22	42	7	0.04	-0.18	0.04	0.64	91	2.09	99	75	22	0	6	1	0
	LAS VEGAS	78	54	86	48	66	9	0.00	-0.08	0.00	0.08	24	0.36	28	30	10	0	0	0	0
	RENO	65	29	73	27	47	4	0.02	-0.13	0.02	1.47	263	4.57	171	80	19	0	7	1	0
	WINNEMUCCA	63	25	72	21	44	4	0.16	-0.03	0.16	0.68	119	3.44	176	81	20	0	7	1	0
NH	CONCORD	45	24	52	16	35	0	0.40	-0.23	0.33	1.54	77	8.98	126	86	39	0	7	2	0
NJ	ATLANTIC CITY	48	32	55	27	40	-3	0.35	-0.48	0.35	2.16	81	7.56	81	77	44	0	4	1	0
NM	ALBUQUERQUE	65	35	70	29	50	1	0.00	-0.12	0.00	0.00	0	0.35	27	45	11	0	3	0	0
	CLOVIS	65	33	79	20	49	0	0.05	-0.09	0.05	0.05	11	0.41	30	59	15	0	4	1	0
	ROSWELL	70	36	80	29	53	0	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	49	19	0	3	-	-
NY	ALBANY	46	27	59	19	37	0	0.27	-0.42	0.17	1.25	58	5.21	76	78	42	0	6	3	0
	BINGHAMTON	38	24	54	16	31	-3	0.67	0.01	0.30	1.34	65	5.44	79	92	58	0	7	4	0
	BUFFALO	40	26	56	20	33	-2	0.80	0.18	0.27	1.73	88	6.40	91	89	57	0	6	4	0
	NEW YORK	49	37	60	32	43	0	1.11	0.27	1.07	3.15	119	9.37	108	72	45	0	1	3	1
	ROCHESTER	41	26	54	21	34	-3	0.54	0.02	0.33	1.79	107	6.61	112	90	55	0	5	3	0
	SYRACUSE	42	25	56	15	34	-2	0.34	-0.31	0.15	1.53	76	5.91	90	89	49	0	6	4	0
NC	ASHEVILLE	49	31	66	25	40	-9	0.58	-0.70	0.57	2.07	48	12.00	93	82	43	0	5	2	1
	CHARLOTTE	54	36	62	27	45	-8	0.69	-0.30	0.65	3.34	99	9.95	90	77	46	0	3	3	1
	GREENSBORO	51	34	57	27	42	-8	1.16	0.32	0.77	3.55	127	9.78	104	79	51	0	3	3	1
	HATTERAS	51	40	53	39	45	-8	0.52	-0.44	--	2.30	--	--	--	49	35	-	-	-	-
	NEW BERN	58	41	73	28	50	-5	0.39	-0.47	0.31	4.19	142	10.17	87	81	46	0	1	2	0
	RALEIGH	52	35	58	24	44	-8	0.16	-0.67	0.10	1.92	67	8.70	85	85	39	0	3	3	0
	WILMINGTON	59	41	68	27	50	-4	0.82	-0.16	0.70	2.69	80	6.83	54	85	49	0	1	2	1
ND	BISMARCK	37	21	47	12	29	-2	0.55	0.35	0.49	0.70	135	2.32	161	82	50	0	7	3	0
	FARGO	30	19	36	11	24	-4	0.24	-0.02	0.24	0.29	40	3.05	161	90	65	0	7	1	0
	GRAND FORKS	27	14	37	6	20	-6	0.22	-0.01	0.18	0.45	67	2.04	109	89	67	0	7	2	0
	WILLISTON	36	20	45	11	28	-3	0.26	0.09	0.24	0.37	79	1.33	91	84	45	0	7	2	0
OH	AKRON-CANTON	40	27	50	21	34	-6	1.63	0.86	1.39	2.75	112	5.26	76	90	62	0	5	4	1
	CINCINNATI	42	26	57	17	34	-11	1.94	0.95	1.82	2.94	94	8.50	100	94	58	0	5	2	1
	CLEVELAND	38	24	49	15	31	-8	1.02	0.34	0.79	1.92	90	6.21	96	88	65	0	7	4	1
	COLUMBUS	42	30	55	24	36	-4	1.17	0.42	0.89	2.50	108	8.44	128	87	57	0	4	2	1
	DAYTON	41	27	54	21	34	-9	0.98	0.17	0.77	2.36	94	7.43	108	89	60	0	5	2	1

Based on 1961-90 normals

Weather Data for the Week Ending March 30, 1996

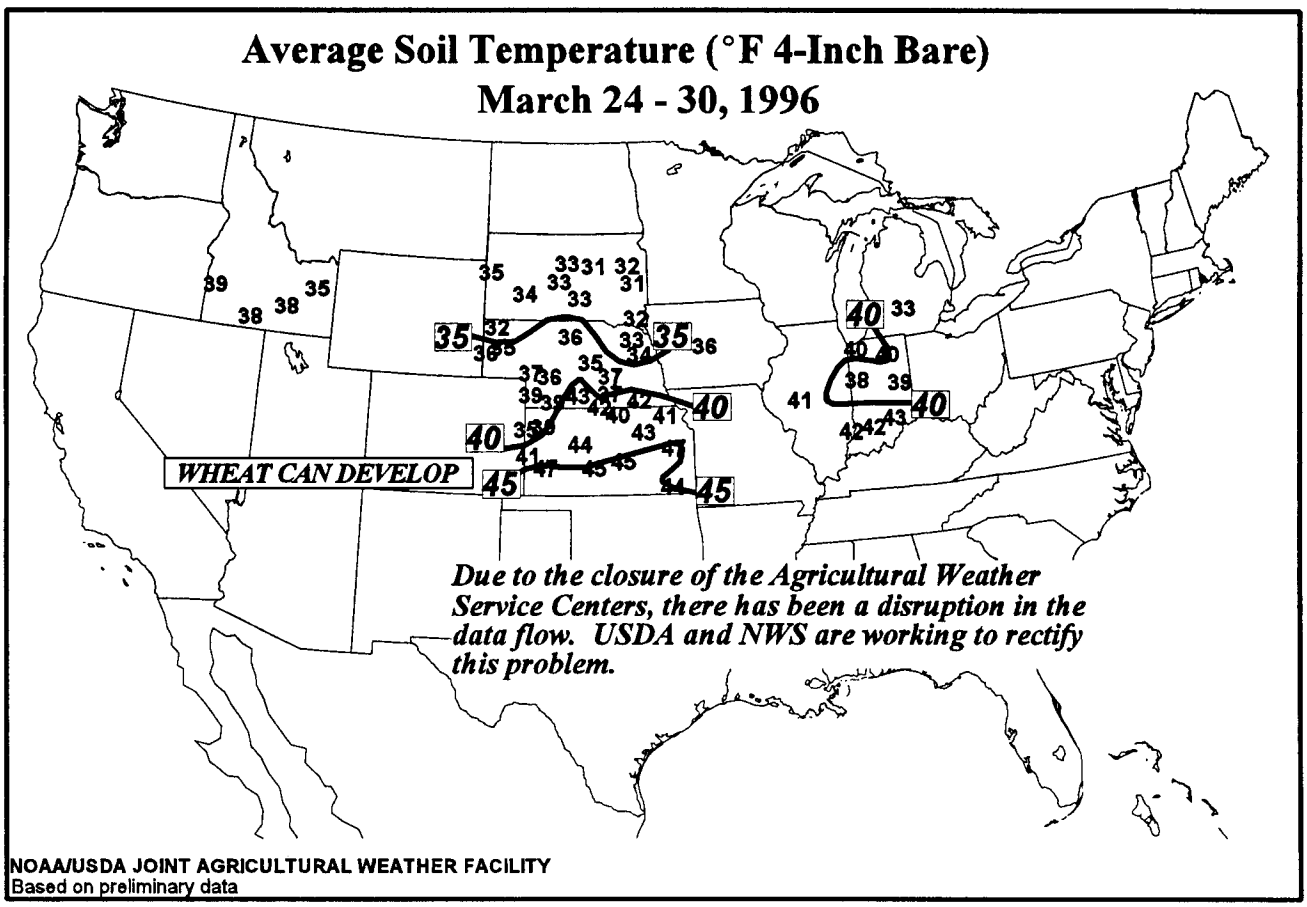
STATES AND STATIONS		TEMPERATURE °F						PRECIPITATION							RELATIVE HUMIDITY, PERCENT		NUMBER OF DAYS			
																	TEMP. °F		PRECIP.	
		AVERAGE MAXIMUM	AVERAGE MINIMUM	EXTREME HIGH	EXTREME LOW	AVERAGE	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL	WEEKLY TOTAL, IN.	DEPARTURE FROM NORMAL	GREATEST IN 24-HOUR, IN.	TOTAL, IN., SINCE Mar 1	PCT. NORMAL SINCE Mar 1	TOTAL, IN., SINCE Jan 1	PCT. NORMAL SINCE Jan 1	AVERAGE MAXIMUM	AVERAGE MINIMUM	90 AND ABOVE	32 AND BELOW	.01 INCH OR MORE	.05 INCH OR MORE
	TOLEDO	41	27	51	22	34	-4	1.46	0.83	1.26	3.94	204	6.77	124	83	49	0	5	2	1
	YOUNGSTOWN	40	26	53	17	33	-5	1.75	1.01	1.43	2.85	124	7.56	115	93	64	0	7	4	1
OK	OKLAHOMA CITY	61	37	74	26	49	-3	0.62	-0.01	0.61	0.62	31	0.68	14	74	30	0	3	2	1
	TULSA	59	36	76	27	48	-5	0.37	-0.45	0.36	0.63	25	1.26	21	72	27	0	3	2	0
OR	ASTORIA	55	40	70	36	48	2	1.01	-0.55	0.56	4.27	79	27.89	120	97	64	0	0	6	1
	BURNS	56	27	62	23	42	4	0.00	-0.22	0.00	1.10	143	3.87	151	83	28	0	6	0	0
	MEDFORD	66	35	77	32	50	3	0.05	-0.35	0.05	0.23	17	8.62	142	88	31	0	1	1	0
	PENDLETON	56	36	60	32	46	0	0.19	-0.08	0.18	0.66	73	4.14	116	84	42	0	1	2	0
	PORTLAND	58	41	69	36	49	1	0.07	-0.72	0.06	2.51	93	18.96	158	90	45	0	0	2	0
	SALEM	58	37	69	33	48	1	0.14	-0.77	0.14	2.20	69	23.45	170	93	47	0	0	1	0
PA	ALLENTOWN	45	31	57	23	38	-3	0.58	-0.17	0.57	2.29	95	10.61	123	79	48	0	4	2	1
	ERIE	38	26	49	22	32	-6	0.48	-0.22	0.19	1.50	68	6.81	100	91	66	0	7	3	0
	HARRISBURG	44	32	56	27	38	-5	0.87	0.13	0.73	2.08	83	9.72	104	84	49	0	3	4	1
	PHILADELPHIA	48	35	59	30	42	-1	0.86	0.06	0.86	2.94	115	7.96	87	73	49	0	2	1	1
	PITTSBURGH	42	30	54	22	36	-5	2.05	1.25	1.19	3.93	156	10.18	135	90	56	0	3	5	1
	SCRANTON	43	29	56	22	36	-3	0.78	0.19	0.38	2.40	129	10.19	164	84	50	0	4	4	0
RI	PROVIDENCE	49	30	54	24	40	1	0.68	-0.26	0.59	2.70	90	9.84	93	79	36	0	5	2	1
SC	CHARLESTON	60	43	65	32	51	-8	0.81	-0.17	0.73	2.25	68	4.66	46	79	44	0	1	2	1
	COLUMBIA	58	39	65	26	48	-8	0.48	-0.61	0.26	4.85	133	8.94	72	85	48	0	3	3	0
	FLORENCE	58	40	65	24	49	-8	0.30	-0.64	0.22	2.44	78	6.73	67	82	47	0	2	3	0
	GREENVILLE	57	36	69	26	46	-7	1.00	-0.22	0.95	5.69	140	14.98	118	82	39	0	4	3	1
SD	ABERDEEN	36	23	40	15	29	-2	0.34	0.06	0.32	0.55	71	2.63	130	88	50	0	7	2	0
	HURON	40	23	48	17	32	-2	0.00	-0.41	0.00	0.33	28	1.68	73	84	47	0	6	0	0
	RAPID CITY	46	22	56	13	34	-1	0.14	-0.12	0.08	0.94	132	1.82	112	86	44	0	7	2	0
	SIOUX CITY	42	21	48	16	32	-3	0.17	-0.24	0.15	0.48	42	1.65	71	85	39	0	6	3	0
TN	CHATTANOOGA	56	34	73	25	45	-7	0.87	-0.50	0.73	6.12	135	15.74	109	90	40	0	4	3	1
	KNOXVILLE	51	31	67	22	41	-9	0.39	-0.77	0.31	2.99	78	13.17	108	88	49	0	5	2	0
	MEMPHIS	57	37	72	31	47	-7	1.10	-0.15	0.98	2.77	70	10.99	90	78	42	0	1	2	1
	NASHVILLE	51	33	64	25	42	-10	1.62	0.50	1.21	3.51	97	9.90	89	88	45	0	4	3	1
TX	ABILENE	69	41	81	27	55	-2	0.01	-0.30	0.01	0.01	1	0.76	24	63	20	0	2	1	0
	AMARILLO	62	29	81	19	46	-3	0.11	-0.11	0.11	0.11	15	0.43	23	66	20	0	6	1	0
	AUSTIN	72	48	80	34	60	-3	0.00	-0.41	0.00	0.12	9	0.78	15	70	28	0	0	0	0
	BEAUMONT	69	43	81	30	56	-6	0.00	-0.74	0.00	0.06	2	3.73	35	89	38	0	1	0	0
	BROWNSVILLE	78	56	90	46	67	-3	0.00	-0.12	0.00	0.00	0	0.21	7	88	27	1	0	0	0
	CORPUS CHRISTI	76	52	87	41	64	-3	0.00	-0.19	0.00	0.00	0	0.09	2	78	30	0	0	0	0
	DEL RIO	77	50	86	39	63	0	0.00	-0.25	0.00	0.01	1	0.41	12	66	25	0	0	0	0
	EL PASO	73	44	80	31	59	2	0.00	-0.06	0.00	0.00	0	0.31	29	42	11	0	1	0	0
	FORT WORTH	67	43	79	31	55	-1	0.52	-0.18	0.52	0.52	24	1.80	28	72	31	0	1	1	1
	GALVESTON	67	55	74	46	61	-2	0.00	-0.50	0.00	0.00	0	0.77	11	72	40	0	0	0	0
	HOUSTON	72	44	84	30	58	-4	0.00	-0.69	0.00	0.02	1	2.19	22	78	28	0	1	0	0
	LUBBOCK	67	36	80	23	51	-2	0.00	-0.19	0.00	0.00	0	0.28	16	62	17	0	3	0	0
	MIDLAND	71	39	82	28	55	-2	0.00	-0.11	0.00	0.00	0	0.08	6	60	14	0	2	0	0
	SAN ANGELO	71	40	81	27	56	-4	0.00	-0.20	0.00	0.00	0	0.30	12	63	19	0	2	0	0
	SAN ANTONIO	74	45	86	31	60	-3	0.00	-0.34	0.00	0.02	2	0.71	15	70	25	0	1	0	0
	VICTORIA	73	45	79	33	59	-5	0.00	-0.50	0.00	0.00	0	0.32	4	90	31	0	0	0	0
	WACO	70	41	80	25	56	-4	0.08	-0.46	0.08	0.09	5	1.09	20	72	25	0	2	1	0
	WICHITA FALLS	68	38	81	29	53	-2	0.00	-0.57	0.00	0.00	0	0.10	2	69	21	0	3	0	0
UT	CEDAR CITY	64	29	71	24	46	5	0.02	-0.30	0.02	0.18	18	1.81	69	67	16	0	6	1	0
	SALT LAKE CITY	60	36	72	30	48	5	0.83	0.37	0.82	2.02	145	6.66	175	73	34	0	3	2	1
VT	BURLINGTON	44	26	58	15	35	2	0.13	-0.40	0.07	0.48	30	5.01	98	82	36	0	5	3	0
VA	NORFOLK	53	40	71	34	47	-3	0.70	-0.13	0.51	2.27	82	10.78	106	74	40	0	0	3	1
	RICHMOND	52	37	58	27	45	-5	0.44	-0.38	0.28	1.55	57	6.96	75	71	29	0	1	2	0
	ROANOKE	47	33	60	29	40	-8	1.56	0.76	1.54	2.55	98	11.56	138	79	43	0	4	3	1
WA	QUILLAYUTE	55	38	68	33	47	3	1.01	-1.51	0.45	4.35	50	30.16	84	98	72	0	0	6	0
	SEATTLE-TACOMA	56	40	70	36	48	2	0.33	-0.45	0.20	1.63	61	17.31	142	90	54	0	0	4	0
	SPOKANE	52	30	55	27	41	1	0.02	-0.31	0.02	0.58	51	5.58	120	85	40	0	5	1	0
	YAKIMA	59	28	63	26	44	0	0.00	-0.14	0.00	0.40	78	3.52	143	72	29	0	7	-	-
WV	BECKLEY	42	27	58	20	35	-9	0.89	0.12	0.59	3.00	120	11.38	134	91	59	0	6	4	1
	CHARLESTON	44	31	56	25	38	-10	0.97	0.14	0.46	3.43	127	11.31	129	91	62	0	4	5	0
	HUNTINGTON	45	30	57	26	38	-7	0.96	0.16	0.58	3.40	131	11.17	127	91	59	0	4	3	1
	PARKERSBURG	44	31	58	24	37	-7	1.29	0.41	0.79	3.11	110	11.30	126	94	63	0	4	4	1
WI	GREEN BAY	40	21	48	16	31	-2	0.03	-0.47	0.01	0.25	17	2.80	75	76	39	0	7	3	0
	LACROSSE	42	22	49	14	32	-3	0.31	-0.18	--	0.43	32	3.87	122	81	35	0	7	-	-
	MADISON	42	21	51	17	32	-4	0.08	-0.45	0.08	0.28	19	3.33	88	78	39	0	7	1	0
	MILWAUKEE	41	25	47	19	33	-2	0.00	-0.65	0.00	0.13	7	2.13	43	72	40	0	7	0	0
	WAUSAU	39	20	45	11	30	-2	0.05	-0.43	0.05	0.12	9	2.76	85	77	40	0	7	1	0
WY	CASPER	48	21	63	13	34	-1	0.31	0.08	0.18	0.54	81	1.74	96	93	41	0	7	4	0
	CHEYENNE	44	21	57	13	32	-2	0.10	-0.15	0.07	0.63	86	1.23	80	81	36	0	7	2	0
	LANDER	48	25	62	12	37	1	1.40	1.11	0.99	1.42	182	2.63	141	83	40	0	6	4	1
	SHERIDAN	42	27	56	13	35	-1	0.97	0.73	0.42	1.95	291	2.78	133	92	59	0	6	4	0
PR	SAN JUAN	87	71	90	69	79	1	0.10	-0.46	0.08	0.99	59	9.20	137	87	51	1	0	2	0

Based on 1961-90 normals

National Agricultural Summary

HIGHLIGHTS for March 25 - 31, 1996

Favorable rain fell across parts of east Texas, Oklahoma, and the Delta States, slightly improving wheat prospects. Kansas received significant precipitation late in the week, but wheat condition declined since the benefit of the rain was not yet observed. The precipitation missed the Texas High Plains, western Oklahoma, and western Kansas, where the lack of moisture stressed winter wheat and pastures. Very low temperatures during mid-week across the Central States curtailed wheat development and brought the possibility of freeze damage and leaf burn to early-jointed wheat fields. Repeated freezing and thawing lowered wheat condition in the middle Mississippi Valley. Seedbed and field preparation was delayed in the central Plains by frozen ground. In Kansas, wheat jointing was 2 percent (%) complete, 16 percentage points behind the 5-year average of 18%, and 40 points behind last year. Cotton planting was ahead of normal in Arizona, while cool weather slowed germination in recently planted Texas cotton fields. In California's San Joaquin Valley, cotton planting was underway.



March State Summaries of Weather and Agriculture

These summaries provide brief descriptions of crop and weather conditions important on a national scale. More detailed data are available in Weather and Crop Bulletins published each Monday by NASS State Statistical Offices in cooperation with the National Weather Service. The crop weather reports are also available on the Internet through the NASS Home Page on the World Wide Web at "http://www.usda.gov/nass/."

ALABAMA: Topsoil 42% adequate, 58% surplus. Spring plowing complete 33%, 41% 1995, 27% avg. Corn planted 20%, 46% 1995, 35% avg. Wheat headed 9%, 21% 1995, 16% avg.; 2% very poor, 32% poor, 49% fair, 15% good, 2% excellent. Pasture 6% very poor, 31% poor, 54% fair, 9% good. Livestock 2% very poor, 14% poor, 73% fair, 10% good, 1% excellent. Activities: Planting corn, cool season vegetables, ground preparation for spring planting, general care of livestock, poultry, catfish.

ARIZONA: Farmers continued with planting cotton, going from 2% of the State's acreage planted in early March to 26% planted by month's end, both well ahead of normal. Temperatures have been good, weather has been cooperating. Most took advantage of earlier planting dates, trying to lessen the effect of whitefly. Karnal bunt was discovered in State wheat early in March, followed later in the month by our acreage estimate indicating the crop was up 40%. Crop continued behind normal after later-than-normal seedings. Acreage heading increased from nearly none to 51% by months end. Condition improved as the month progressed. Early, only 92% of the acreage was rated good or excellent, but that increased to 98% good or excellent. Alfalfa hay harvest also increased during March, as did the quality of hay. At the beginning of the month, 43% of acreage was being harvested moderately or active, with 85% of the crop in good to excellent condition. Our most recent numbers showed 71% of the acreage being moderately or actively harvested, with 94% of the crop in good to excellent condition. Winter vegetable season began to decrease near the end of March in western areas. Harvest remained active in central areas throughout the month. Iceberg lettuce, romaine, leaf lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, parsley, cabbage, celery, mixed greens, spinach, green onions, turnips were the volume leaders during March. Salad savoy, broccoflower, anise, kale, cilantro, carrots, leeks, many other vegetable crops were also harvested. Eastern areas shipped a steady supply of tomatoes. Citrus harvest remained active in central, western production areas as grapefruit, navel, Valencia oranges, lemons, tangerines were picked by area growers. Continued lack of any significant precipitation in 1996 has kept range conditions across State looking dismal going into summer. Over half of the rangeland, pastures remained in very poor to poor condition, while just over a quarter could only be rated as fair. Cattlemen continued with supplemental feeding, culling of herds because of the pasture situation. Cattle, calves were rated in poor to fair condition. Stock water, soil moisture supplies continued mostly short in most areas of the State. Insect damage remained negligible.

ARKANSAS: Main farm activities were: Applying fertilizer, planting corn, preparing fields, feeding hay. Corn planting underway. A minor insect problem was reported in wheat in the eastern part of the State. Wheat, oats reported in good to excellent condition. They continue to progress at a normal rate. Low temperatures caused some damage to State's fruit crop. Livestock reported in fair to good condition. Hay shortage is still a concern.

CALIFORNIA: Rain hampered field activity early month; by month's end, field activities resumed. March weather began cold, warmed up; temperatures averaged above normal. Small grains grew rapidly; head development, many fields. Wheat, barley, oats, forage crops, treated for weeds. By late March, cotton planting underway, San Joaquin Valley; active, desert counties. Ground preparation, pre-irrigation for corn, cotton, safflower planting. Corn planted, lighter soiled areas, southern San Joaquin Valley. Sugar beets planted, northern San Joaquin Valley. Oats, winter forage, alfalfa cut for hay, green chopped. Fruit development advanced, warmer-than-normal weather. Cherry trees reached full bloom. Most other stone fruits completed bloom; some fruit set, leaf formation. Almond trees past bloom, some nut development. Apples blossoming. Bud swell, walnuts, kiwifruit. Grape growers disced, irrigated, applied herbicides. Some vineyards leafing out. Navel orange picking continued. Valencia orange harvest, active, desert area. Grapefruit harvest, active, desert. Lemon picking, active. Avocado trees near bloom. Warm weather conducive to growth, early planted squash, cucumbers. As soil conditions permitted, eggplant, assorted peppers, various other vegetables planted. Broccoli, cauliflower, harvested. Harvesting processing spinach continued. San Joaquin Valley head, leaf lettuce harvests continued. Bell peppers, seedless watermelon transplanted. Asparagus harvest active, desert; increasing San Joaquin Valley. Red onions treated to control mildew. Fresh market tomatoes transplanted. Merced County sweetpotato hotbeds established. Kern County carrots harvested. Late blight, some Kern County potato fields. Rangeland vegetation grew well, favorable conditions. Normal feed expected, remainder of season. Feed, water supplies, very good. Supplemental feeding continued, some areas. Livestock movement, slow. Sheep grazed alfalfa. Most lambs shipped out of Imperial Valley. New lambs, calves doing well.

COLORADO: A couple of light rain, snow showers gave some relief to the dry conditions in the eastern plains. However, it was not enough for producers to feel comfortable with the winter wheat crop. As of the end of March, winter wheat 4% excellent, 32% good, 35% fair, 21% poor, 8% very poor. With the dry conditions, producers are ahead of normal in planting barley, dry onions, spring wheat, sugar beets. Major farm activities: Caring and feeding of livestock, planting early spring crops, preparing taxes, general farm maintenance.

DELAWARE: Hay supply short. Small grains in poor to good condition. Livestock, poultry generally in good condition. Rain delaying soil preparation. Activities: Top dressing small grains, spreading manure, preparing equipment, taking delivery of seed, planting supplies, some spring planting.

FLORIDA: Topsoil moisture short to surplus throughout the month with most areas adequate. Sugarcane harvest was completed during the first half of the month, tobacco growers began transplanting during the second half of the month. Farmers started to plant corn, while preliminary field work continued for other spring crops. Low temperatures, strong winds, blowing sand hampered, hurt, slowed vegetable production in many areas of the State. Many fields had leaves burned, fruit scarred causing higher gradeout and lower production. Acreage was lost and replanted in several fields. The full effects of the adverse weather are still to be determined. Strawberry harvest peaked during the month with many growers opening fields for U-Pic harvest. Quality ranged fair to good with overall volume down from last year. Temperatures were nearly ideal for citrus trees. New growth has formed in abundance with bloom buds forming through the first part of the month. Most trees were in full open bloom by the last of the month. Harvest of early, mid oranges ended the middle of the month, and movement of Valencias was increasing by the end of the month. Harvest of temples, honey tangerines were almost over at the end of the month.

GEORGIA: Soil moisture adequate to mostly surplus. Damaging winds, hard freeze early in the month damaged fruit, vegetables, small grains, early planted row crops. Extent of damage to some crops not known for several weeks. Pastures mostly poor to fair with some good, growth slow. Corn planting, tobacco transplanting, watermelon planting underway, but more than a week behind normal. Progress slowed the last 2 weeks of March because of rain, wind, and unseasonably cool weather. Corn conditions varied, 23% very poor to poor, 57% fair, 20% good. Tobacco, watermelons mostly fair to good. Wheat development slow, conditions fair to good. Apple bloom behind normal, but conditions fair to mostly good. Peach bloom ahead of normal, but major losses due to the freeze expected. Activities for the month included planting corn, tobacco, melons; spraying, fertilizing, preparing land for planting.

HAWAII: Overall crop conditions generally good. Banana production to remain light. Papaya production will remain light. Head cabbage in good condition with production steady. Sugarcane harvesting progressing.

IDAHO: As of the end of March, winter wheat 1% poor, 9% fair, 54% good, 36% excellent. Spring wheat planted 18%, 10% 1995, 18% avg. Barley planted 12%, 7% 1995, 12% avg. Oats planted 8%, 2% 1995, 3% avg. Onions planted 17%, 21% 1995, 39% avg. Dry peas planted 19%, 1% 1995, 3% avg. Sugar beets planted 11%, 3% 1995, 14% avg. Calving was 81% complete, lambing was 87% complete at the end of March. Hay, roughage supply was reported to be 12% short, 81% adequate, 7% surplus at the end of the month. Activities: Planting barley, spring wheat, sugar beets, onions, dry edible peas, feeding, caring for livestock, cleaning and repairing irrigation equipment, fertilizing.

ILLINOIS: Topsoil moisture for March was slightly behind normal. By mid-month, topsoil moisture was 2% surplus, 57% adequate, 37% short, 4% very short. As of March 17, 1% of the oats crop had been planted. This compares to 5% 1995, 8% avg. The condition of the wheat crop deteriorated from a month earlier due to temperature fluctuations that caused freezing and thawing of the crop. By mid-month, wheat 13% good, 45% fair, 32% poor, 10% very poor. Major farm activities included spreading dry fertilizer on fields, hauling grain, hauling manure, fence row cleaning, brush removal.

INDIANA: A winter storm during the middle of March left heavy deposits of snow over many areas of the State. Winter wheat that had begun to break dormancy prior to this storm may have sustained some additional winter kill, but the extent is unknown at this time. Farmers continued to move large amounts of stored grain to market because of the high grain prices. Hay supplies remain mostly adequate with some areas getting short. Livestock was reported in mostly good condition, but feedlots were muddy. Very little fieldwork was accomplished during March. Major activities: Preparing equipment, top dressing winter wheat, hauling manure, purchasing seed, fertilizer, attending meetings, planning for the 1996 crop season, care of livestock.

IOWA: Low soil moisture has many concerned as State heads into spring planting season. Rain, snow which fell across parts of State 24th, 25th of March helped soil moisture conditions somewhat. Topsoil moisture very short 2%, short 32%, adequate 61%, surplus 5%. Subsoil moisture very short 9%, short 38%, adequate 51%, surplus 2%. Frozen fields delaying fieldwork activities across parts of State. Producers hoping for higher temperatures, rain to help thaw out fields across State so they can begin spring seedbed preparations. 1996 row crops primary seedbed preparation completed 43%, 37% 1995, 35 avg.; fertilizer application completed 43%, 34% 1995, 33% avg. Winter wheat 4% very poor, 12% poor, 49% fair, 29% good, 6% excellent. Percent crop lost to winterkill: 4% winter wheat, 4% alfalfa hay, 4% red clover hay. Temperature fluctuations stressful on livestock, blizzard conditions on March 25 resulted in some calf losses. A few reporters indicated calving season is going well so far. Weather is causing pneumonia, flu in all livestock; TGE is being reported in hogs.

KANSAS: Condition of the wheat crop has not improved. As of March 31, condition of the crops 14% good, 39% fair, 47% poor to very poor. Dry weather, a hard freeze on March 7th are the primary reasons for the continued decline. Small amounts of wheat are jointing in southern areas of the State. Wheat jointing is currently 2% complete, compared to 42% 1995, 18% avg. Across the State, wind damage is reported to be 6% severe, 25% moderate, 30% light, 39% with no damage. Freeze damage is estimated to be 5% severe, 23% moderate, 29% light, 43% with no damage. Brown wheat mites continue to be active in the southern regions of the State. Insect infestation is currently considered 2% severe, 8% moderate, 14% light, 76% with no infestation. Disease infestation remains minimal. Seeding of oats has reached 85% complete across the State, behind 90% 1995, ahead of the average of 77% for this date. Spring barley seeding is 47% complete across the State, well behind 91% 1995, 75% avg. Surface soil moisture 75% short to very short, 25% adequate. Subsurface moisture 71% short to very short, 29% adequate. Pasture condition for the State 20% good, 47% fair, 33% poor to very poor. Spring calving is beginning to wind down. Major crop activities include seedbed preparation, anhydrous application, spraying wheat for insects.

KENTUCKY: Cold, wet weather prevailed through most of March continuing to stress livestock and limit fieldwork. Temperatures 5° below normal for the month. Frequent precipitation occurrences provided ample soil moisture, kept fields muddy. Statewide precipitation was 0.08 in. below normal; central, east areas received above normal rainfall. Fertilizing, field preparation for spring planting was limited by the weather. Winter wheat began to green late in the month, but growth was limited by low temperatures. No unusual warming occurred and fruit trees generally maintained winter dormancy. A wet heavy snow late in the month damaged trees and downed power lines across much of central and western portions of the State, leaving many farmers without electricity for several days. Pastures continued to provide very limited nutrient value, supplemental feeding remained a necessity. Cattle remained in poor to fair condition.

LOUISIANA: Days suitable for fieldwork 21.0. Soil moisture supplies were generally in the short to adequate ranges. Corn planting made excellent progress despite freeze damage that forced a few producers to replant. Cotton growers continued to prepare fields for this year's crop. Sugarcane growth, halted by freezing temperatures, showed few signs of resuming. Rice growers continued to water-level and fertilize their fields. Wheat: a late freeze damaged most fields with some areas reporting almost total losses. However, by month's end, some fields showed signs of rebounding. Soybeans: producers continued to prepare soybean land. Sweetpotato growers were busy preparing ground for planting. Vegetables: crops sustained extensive damage from the cold despite frost, freeze control measures. Strawberries were especially hard hit. Livestock: cattle condition deteriorated as pasture growth slowed to almost a stop. Spring calving was active, however. Crawfish producers continued to report disappointing yields. Pasture feed: winter pastures, already suffering from this winter's dry conditions, were hit hard by the freeze.

MARYLAND: Wet weather still slowing top-dressing of small grains, spring tillage. Hay supply short to adequate at this time. Cold weather inhibiting pasture growth in some areas. Small grains generally poor to good as development continues to lag behind normal. Livestock, poultry generally in good condition. Activities: Tending livestock, applying fertilizer to small grains, spring planting.

MICHIGAN: Spring tillage was very limited in March, behind normal. Standing water, ice on wheat, hay fields were a concern with producers. Livestock conditions were normal with no unusual problems. Feed supplies remain adequate. Maple sap collection was active with a good run to date. Major activities for the month were caring for livestock, hauling manure, spreading fertilizer, selling corn, soybeans, repairing equipment and planning for spring. Some pruning of fruit trees continues as weather permits.

MINNESOTA: Mid-March weather melted snow from croplands in the southern third of the State. Farmers had their field start-up delayed by a late-March snowstorm that blanketed the State with a foot of snow, unseasonably cool weather. This additional snow placed increased burden upon livestock producers having difficulty finding quality forage at an affordable price.

MISSISSIPPI: Main farming activities for the month of March included: Farm planning; land preparation; planting corn; tending livestock. Early spring field tillage started at the beginning of the month but was halted by the end of the month due to heavy rainfall. Most producers were anxiously waiting on farm bill so planning could be finalized for all crops. Maturity of wheat will be delayed due to the recent freeze. Cattlemen continue to feed hay and are waiting on pastures to produce forage. Fruit, vegetable growers are accessing their damages from freezing temperatures.

MISSOURI: Topsoil moisture supply, 7% very short, 34% short, 55% adequate, 4% surplus. Shortages exist in the northwest, west central, central, southwest districts, which all report 57% or more very short or short. March found producers occupied with normal seasonal activities and chores. Row crop producers were busy with spring tillage, fertilizer applications. Condition of winter wheat, 17% very poor, 38% poor, 32% fair, 12% good, 1% excellent. Condition of the wheat crop is poorest in the southwest district, which reports 39% very poor, 38% poor; more favorable crop ratings are found in the south central, southeast districts which report 28% or more, good or better. There have been some reports of wheat heaving due to repeated freezing and thawing. Oats sown 41%, 56% 1995, 40% avg. Supply of hay, other roughages, 21% very short, 28% short, 48% adequate, 3% surplus. Stock water supplies, 16% very short,

29% short, 54% adequate, 1% surplus. Condition of livestock, 11% poor, 32% fair, 54% good, 3% excellent.

MONTANA: Farmers getting ready for spring fieldwork. Calving, lambing major activities for the month. Winter wheat 6% poor, 53% fair, 39% good, 2% excellent. Protectiveness of snow cover on winter wheat at the end of the month was 1% very poor, 19% poor, 47% fair, 31% good, 2% excellent. Wind damage to winter wheat 58% none, 34% light, 7% moderate, 1% heavy. Freeze, drought damage to winter wheat fields 44% none, 46% light, 9% moderate, 1% heavy. Calving 64% complete. Lambing 37% complete. Most livestock receiving supplemental feed. Grazing at the end of the month was 17% open, 68% difficult, 15% closed.

NEBRASKA: A March 24 blizzard halted the limited fieldwork activities, stressed cattle, especially newborn calves. A few calf losses were reported. Wheat condition declined during March, was 10% very poor, 31% poor, 45% fair, 14% good. "Green up" has yet to occur, and the crop is in need of moisture. Oat seeding was off to a good start at 21% seeded, slightly ahead of the 5-year average.

NEVADA: Fieldwork was undertaken sporadically during March, as several storm systems passed through the State. Soil moisture and snowpack were above normal, continued to improve. Farmers with surface irrigation were jubilant as the second consecutive winter of above-normal precipitation assured adequate water supplies for the coming irrigation season. Plowing of fields for grain was underway, fall-seeded grains were greening. Hay fields were being fertilized in preparation for warmer weather. Onion planting was completed with most fields having been prepared earlier. Calving was in full swing throughout the month. Sheering, lambing were also underway. Ditch burning was common. Main farm, ranch activities: Plowing, ditch cleaning, onion planting, calving, lambing.

NEW ENGLAND: Major farm activities: March brings with it the start of maple syrup season throughout the region. Cool nights and warm days have provided excellent sugaring conditions for this season's maple crop, with many producers on track to set new production records. The farm operators are beginning to bring tractors, trucks, implements out from storage in preparation for the planting season. For comparison, at this time last year, farmers were planting early season varieties of sweet corn in southern regions of New England. This year, growers have just started to make final decisions on how many acres to actually plant due to frost still on the ground. Snow, wind damage from the past few months seems to be no worse than previous years. Orchardists have started spring pruning, damage assessment programs. Fruit tree growers have begun to speculate on how much of an effect the sub-zero temperatures will have on this year's production. Manure spreading by dairy farmers continues, preparation for greenhouse tomato production has started.

NEW JERSEY: Soil moisture during the month of March was adequate. Low temperatures killed some fruit tree buds but damage was not believed to be significant enough to reduce production. Fruit producers were busy pushing out old orchards, planting, pruning, fertilizing. Nurserymen were primarily digging out, shipping plant material. Vegetable farmers were establishing transplants in greenhouses as well as planting potatoes, greens and turnips. All growers were implementing pest control measures, repairing equipment.

NEW MEXICO: The eastern side of the State was taking measures to control wind erosion. They were planting onions, lettuce, chile fields in southern areas during the month. Other farm activities included irrigating, fertilizing, spraying, ditch maintenance. A few wheat fields in the southwestern corner of State have been quarantined by the New Mexico Department of Agriculture because of Karnal Bunt fungus. Northern areas did not receive much freeze damage to their fruit trees as previously thought. The fruit trees are just starting to bloom in State. Ranchers continue to supplementally feed and water their livestock. Pasture and range conditions continue to decline in New Mexico due to little to no moisture received this year. The lack of moisture has affected the dryland wheat crop.

NEW YORK: Maple syrup production was underway as the month began, gained momentum, was in full swing by the end of the month. Most areas have experienced near ideal conditions. In a few areas, daytime temperatures have not been high enough to produce good sap flows. Vegetable storage facilities are near empty and being prepared for the upcoming season. Apples and potatoes were being moved from storage to market. Spring plowing was getting underway as soils dried enough to support machinery. Livestock producers caring for animals, spreading manure, doing maintenance work. Hay, other feed supplies becoming tight. Orange County onion growers were preparing fields for planting as they dried. By the end of the month planting was just beginning.

NORTH CAROLINA: Soil moisture 47% adequate, 53% surplus. Potatoes 90% planted, 84% 1995, 80% avg. Cabbage 70% transplanted, 78% 1995, 75% average. Crop condition: Wheat 9% poor, 34% fair, 51% good, 6% excellent; oats 1% very poor, 14% poor, 29% fair, 54% good, 2% excellent; barley 5% poor, 38% fair, 55% good, 2% excellent; rye 2% poor, 16% fair, 76% good, 6% excellent; pasture 1% very poor, 16% poor, 41% fair, 40% good, 2% excellent; outside tobacco plant beds 2% very poor, 2% poor, 37% fair, 56% good, 3% excellent; greenhouse tobacco plant beds 1% poor, 6% fair, 60% good, 33% excellent; potatoes 2% poor, 11% fair, 86% good, 1% excellent; truck crops 7% poor, 35% fair, 57% good, 1% excellent; hay and roughage supplies 8% very short, 19% short, 71% adequate, 2% surplus; feed grain supplies 2% very short, 12% short, 84% adequate, 2% surplus. Activities included: Tending tobacco beds; top dressing wheat; preparing corn, tobacco fields; pasture maintenance; digging and marketing ornamentals; tending livestock; repairing equipment, general maintenance.

NORTH DAKOTA: Winter conditions continued through March delaying snow melt, fieldwork. Cold weather stressed newborn calves causing some sickness, losses. Cattle remained fair to mostly good. Cows 1% poor, 21% fair, 73% good, 5% excellent. Calves 1% poor, 25% fair, 69% good, 5% excellent. Long winter diminished hay supplies in some areas. Hay, forage supplies none very short, 8% short, 87% adequate, 5% surplus. Grains, concentrates 1% very short, 8% short, 90% adequate, 1% surplus. Pastures, ranges 100% still dormant; 1% open for grazing.

OHIO: Plowing for spring planting started in mid-month. Snow, rain at the end of the month may delay the start of corn planting. Winter wheat is generally reported to be in at least fair condition; however, many observers will not speculate on whether the wheat condition has suffered from winter weather until later in the season. Winter wheat is being top dressed. Some ponding is reported in wheat fields. Excessively wet ground has hindered manure hauling. Wet pastures have not been conducive to spring lambing, calving.

OKLAHOMA: Topsoil 49% very short, 31% short, 20% adequate. Subsoil 31% very short, 45% short, 24% adequate. Wheat 19% jointing, 80% 1995, 61% avg; Oats 15% jointing, 29% 1995, 28% avg. Corn 70% seedbed prepared, 76% 1995, 71% avg.; 10% planted, 8% 1995, 11% avg. Sorghum 13% seedbed prepared, 41% 1995, 30% avg. Soybeans 30% seedbed prepared, 29% 1995, 29% avg. Peanuts 23% seedbed prepared, 29% 1995, 32% avg. Cotton 14% seedbed prepared, 46% 1995, 45% avg. Livestock 2% very poor, 10% poor, 36% fair, 51% good, 1% excellent. Feeder steers, heifers were steady to $2/cwt lower.

OREGON: Surplus rainfall continued, statewide. A couple of damaging freezes hit Willamette Valley, Mid Columbia fruit producers. The Dallas cherry crop was reported 50% damaged. Minor freezing of blackberries, raspberries, Willamette Valley. Statewide fruit budding and "greening up." Small grains field preparation, chemical application started, eastern sections. Willamette Valley nurserymen continued normal operations after cleaning up from February floods. Western pastures "green up" underway, eastern still dormant. Calving underway statewide, little scour problems.

PENNSYLVANIA: Major activities for March were hauling manure, fixing fence, caring for livestock, attending farm organization meetings. Still too wet, cold for field work.

PUERTO RICO: No weather data available.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Temperatures averaged at or below normal for the month, with wide variations from week to week. Heavy thunderstorms, accompanied by golf to tennis ball-size hail occurred around mid-month. Wet conditions delayed land preparation activities. Early-blooming peach trees were damaged severely by record-low temperatures at mid-month. Small grains fair to good condition. Pastures fair to good. Livestock good. Supplemental feeding continued.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Temperatures below normal for most of March. A snowstorm with severe blowing occurred toward the end of the month, which resulted in some livestock deaths. Fortunately, its short duration kept losses of newborn calves and lambs at a minimum. The condition of livestock continued to be rated mostly good to excellent; wet, cold weather is causing some scour problems among newborn calves. High grain prices are limiting the supplemental feeding of livestock. High winds, low temperatures also caused more damage to the winter wheat crop. Most areas of the State are predicting some winterkill. Winter wheat 2% very poor, 7% poor, 26% fair, 62% good, 3% excellent. About the only fieldwork that is being done is the application of fertilizer. State is still very wet; there is growing concern of a late spring.

TENNESSEE: Peach crop, strawberries bedded on plastic suffered heavy freeze damage from severe cold during March 7, 10. Cool, wet conditions during March have slowed pasture and wheat growth. These same conditions pushed farmers behind schedule in soil preparation activities, fertilizing pastures, setting out early vegetable crops, sowing traditional tobacco seedbeds. Livestock producers continued to feed hay, with stocks starting to become short due to the hard winter.

TEXAS: Small Grains: Low temperatures once again caused havoc on the High Plains' wheat crop. Irrigation remained steady where available. Throughout the Low Plains, Cross Timbers and Blacklands, rainfall was beneficial to most fields; however, some have passed the point where rain can help. Fields in the Blacklands, Central Texas continued to head out at very short plant heights. Statewide wheat condition was rated at 36% of normal, compared with 63% 1995. Corn: scattered rainfall should help seed germination on recently planted fields. Low temperatures at midweek slowed growth on emerged fields. Pre-watering continued in the High Plains where planting will begin soon. Many dry planted fields across the State have not emerged. Statewide condition is rated at 48% of normal compared with 77% 1995. Grain sorghum planting moved ahead slowly for part of the week. The rainfall will also help planting moisture, but more is needed. Statewide condition is rated at 45% of normal, compared with 87% 1995. Cotton: lower temperatures for part of the week slowed germination, growth in the Coastal Bend, Rio Grande Valley. Planting slowly increased along the Upper Coast, in the Coastal Bend; however, dry conditions are still a concern to most producers. Rice planting slowly continued along the Upper Coast. Flushing of planted fields continued. Soybeans: planting is underway along the Upper Coast; however, dry conditions in many areas have slowed progress.

Commercial Vegetables: In the Rio Grande Valley, harvest of greens, carrots, cabbage, onions continued. Citrus harvest also continued. In the San Antonio-Winter Garden, the onion crop is off to a good start. Some frost damage has occurred to melons. Cabbage harvest continued. Melon planting also continued. In East Texas, some additional frost damage occurred during the early part of the week. Planting slowly continued. In the Trans-Pecos, onions were making good progress. Cantaloup planting is underway. Chili planting is off to good start. Pecans: many areas are reporting trees in the bud break stage with leaves beginning to show in some groves. Dry conditions have many producers worried about the crop size. Spraying activity should increase as more trees begin to leaf out. Peach producers across the State are now saying their crop may be a total loss due to the recent freezing weather. Some later varieties, however, may have a better potential to produce a crop.

Range and Livestock: Increased greening occurred in many areas because of rainfall, but growth was kept to a minimum by the cold weather. Feeding of livestock remained a steady chore during the week. Hay supplies continued to be difficult to locate, many producers are having to get hay from out of State. Spring livestock activities occurred throughout the State during the week.

UTAH: Calving, lambing, planting of grains, preparing fields for spring planting were the major farm activities for March. Ideal calving, lambing conditions accounted for lower-than-normal death loss. Most county agents reported good pasture, range conditions. Some areas are looking for spring rains to improve pasture conditions. Hay supply is good, above normal carryover is expected this year. Fall-seeded grains were in good condition.

VIRGINIA: Statewide average temperature did rise 5 degrees this week; however, average temperature in most localities is still below normal. For the month of March, temperatures were still as much as 9 degrees below normal. Precipitation during the month was slightly below normal in most areas of State except in the central mountain region, which posted 1 inch more precipitation than would be normal for March. Producers continue to topdress small grains, while pastures, hayfields are being fertilized, overseeded. Fields are being limed, disked, plowed in preparation for upcoming planting. Growers are actively managing, monitoring greenhouse plants. Corn, early vegetable crop planting is just getting underway. Tobacco planting to plant beds, greenhouses just about complete. Some vegetable growers are laying plastic for tomato planting, as well as continuing the planting of potatoes. Apple, peach trees are in mainly fair to good condition at month's end. Livestock producers in southwestern areas are currently faced with short hay supplies. Improving pasture conditions should ease the demand for hay in these areas.

WASHINGTON: Assessment of stone fruit, berry, grape winter damage continued. Fruit tree pruning and tree removal were nearly complete in preparation for spring. Orchard cleaning proceeded, dormant sprays were applied. Early potatoes, onions, wheat were planted. Farmers continued to prepare fields for seeding, some saturated fields slowed fieldwork. Weed control, soil fertilization began. Vegetable transplants were started in local greenhouses. Producers continued to clean up flood debris, evaluate remaining flooded fields adjacent to waterways. Machinery maintenance and repair continued. Oyster harvest began to slow down. Producers started burning irrigation ditches. Calving, lambing continued. Feed supplies were short in some areas.

WEST VIRGINIA: Topsoil moisture 39% adequate, 61% surplus. Barley mostly fair condition. Wheat 1% very poor, 45% poor, 46% fair, 8% good. Cattle 3% very poor, 8% poor, 34% fair, 54% good, 1% excellent. Sheep 13% poor, 36% fair, 50% good, 1% excellent. Hay, roughage supplies, 11% very short, 36% short, 50% adequate, 3% surplus. Feed grain supplies 4% very short, 26% short, 70% adequate. Farm activities: Feeding and caring for livestock. Repairing damage caused by January floods. Conducting soil tests. Seeding tobacco beds, repairing fences, plowing ground where soil conditions allowed.

WISCONSIN: As of the end of March, frost level 13.9 in.; 8.5 in. 1995; 10.5 in. normal. The snow depth was 2.0 in.; 0 in. 1995; 3.9 in. normal. Soil moisture remains very good. General chores, heavy hauling of manure while the fields are still frozen, attending many farm auctions, preparing for the cropping season were many of the happenings in the agriculture sector this month.

WYOMING: Topsoil moisture 91% adequate or better. Subsoil moisture 85% adequate or better. Cooler-than-normal weather and above-normal precipitation over much of the State slowed fieldwork during March. 1996 winter wheat crop 47% fair, 53% good; wind damage 1% none, 53% light, 46% moderate; freeze damage 1% none, 96% light, 3% moderate. Barley <1% planted, 32% 1995, 30% avg. Oats <1% planted, 5% 1995, 7% avg. Spring wheat 4% planted, 13% 1995, 11% avg. Calving 56% complete, 61% 1995, 58% avg. Farm flock ewes lambed 68%, 72% 1995, 69% avg; shorn 73%, 69% 1995, 70% avg. Range flock ewes lambed 10%, 7% 1995, 13% avg; shorn 26%, 34% 1995, 34% avg. Calf, lamb losses light to mostly normal. Range, pasture 18% fair, 67% good, 15% excellent. Stock water adequate.

International Weather and Crop Summary

March 24 - 30, 1996

HIGHLIGHTS

FSU-WESTERN: The fifth consecutive week of unusually cold weather maintained snow cover unusually far south and west.

EUROPE: Below-normal temperatures slowed early winter grain development in the north and east.

NORTHWESTERN AFRICA: Dry weather prevailed over winter grain areas in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia.

SOUTH AFRICA: Mostly dry, seasonably warm weather benefited maturing corn.

AUSTRALIA: Continued dryness in eastern Australia benefited mature sorghum and cotton, but late-planted summer crops, as well as pastures, needed more rain.

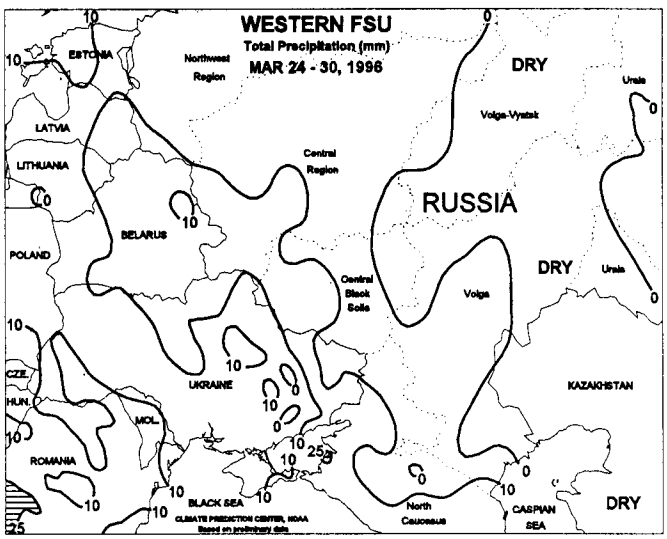
EASTERN ASIA: Widespread rain benefited vegetative wheat in the central North China Plain and transplanted rice across central and southern China.

SOUTHEAST ASIA: Unseasonably heavy rain boosted irrigation supplies but caused local flooding in Indochina, while showers returned to the oil palm areas of the Malay Peninsula.

SOUTH AMERICA: In central Argentina, drier weather favored corn, sunflower, and early soybean harvesting. Rain benefited immature soybeans across extreme southern Brazil, while somewhat drier weather aided fieldwork across the north.

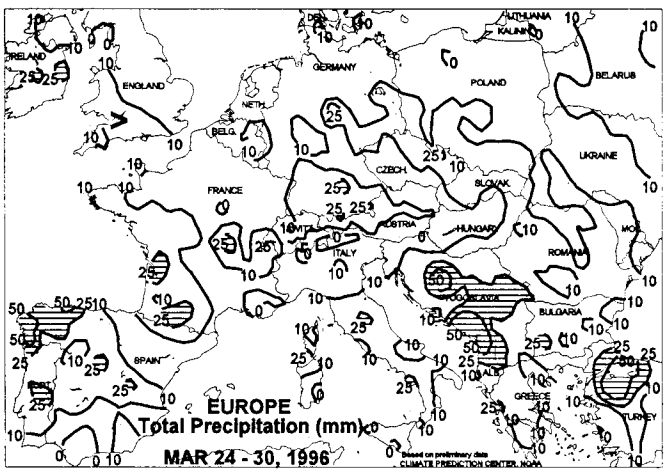
FSU-WESTERN

The fifth consecutive week of unusually cold weather covered Ukraine, most of southern Russia, Belarus, and the Baltics, maintaining a later-than-usual snow cover. Also, snow (3-18 mm liquid equivalent) fell over these areas, adding to existing snow cover. Typically, these areas become snow free by early April. However, at week's end, snow cover extended as far south as southern Ukraine and the northern tip of the North Caucasus region in Russia. The persistent cold weather has slowed greening in winter grains and prevented early-season fieldwork. Weekly temperatures averaged 2 to 6 degrees C below normal over Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, and the Baltics. Near-normal temperatures were confined to western areas in the North Caucasus, where some greening in winter grains and fieldwork for spring barley planting likely occurred.

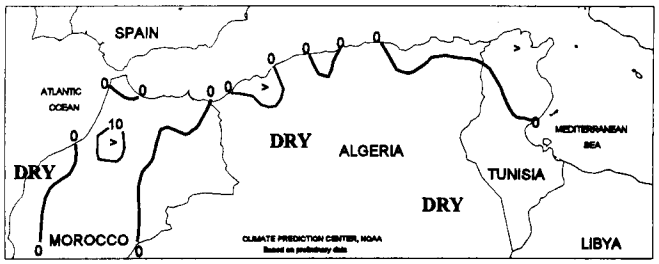


EUROPE

Below-normal temperatures continued over northern and eastern Europe, slowing early winter grain development in the north and east. Weekly temperatures averaged 2 to 4 degrees C below normal in these areas. In addition, lowest minimum temperatures ranged from -2 to -7 degrees C from England and northern France, eastward through Poland, and southward through Bulgaria. Light precipitation (about 10 mm) accompanied the unusual cold, hampering spring grain planting. Reports indicate the persistent cold in Germany has caused winter crops to begin breaking dormancy about 3 weeks later than usual. Elsewhere, mild weather and light showers (10-27 mm) over Spain and southern Italy benefited winter grains nearing reproduction.

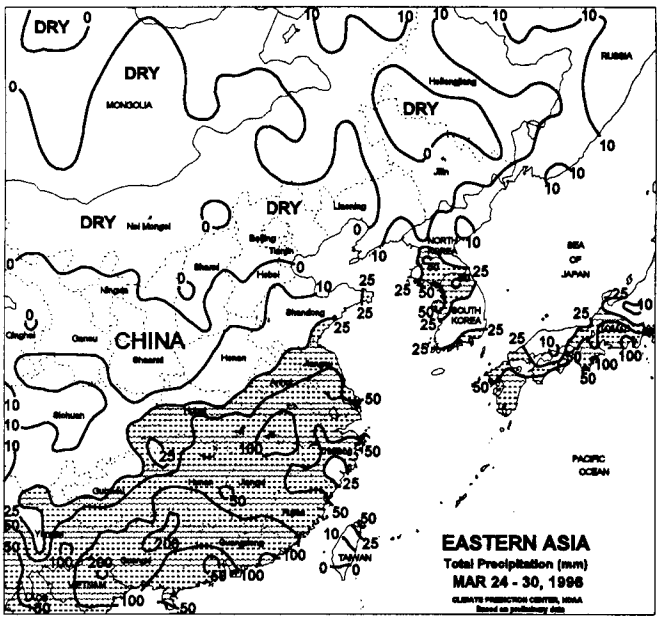


NORTHWEST AFRICA Total Precipitation (mm)
MAR 24 - 30, 1996



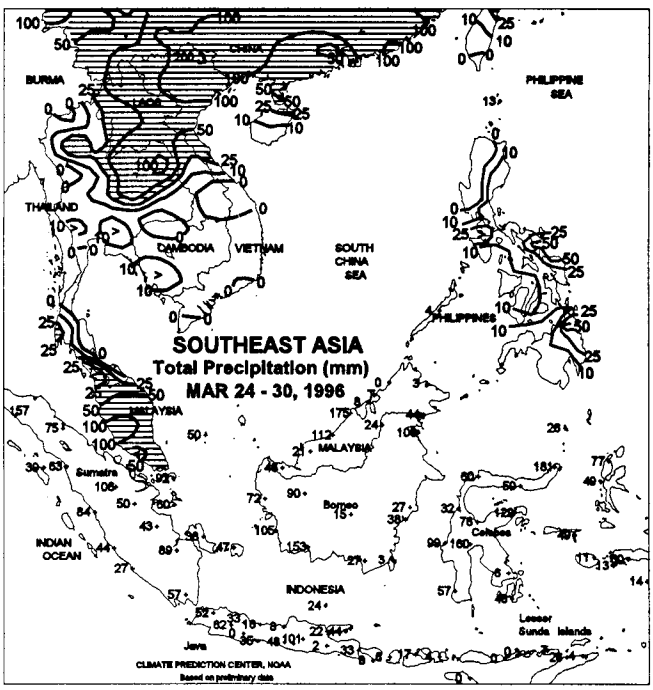
NORTHWESTERN AFRICA

Dry weather prevailed over winter grain areas in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Although the dryness in these areas came at the highly moisture-sensitive reproductive phase of crop development, adequate soil moisture maintained favorable conditions for growth. Weekly temperatures averaged 2 to 4 degrees C above normal over the region, promoting crop development.



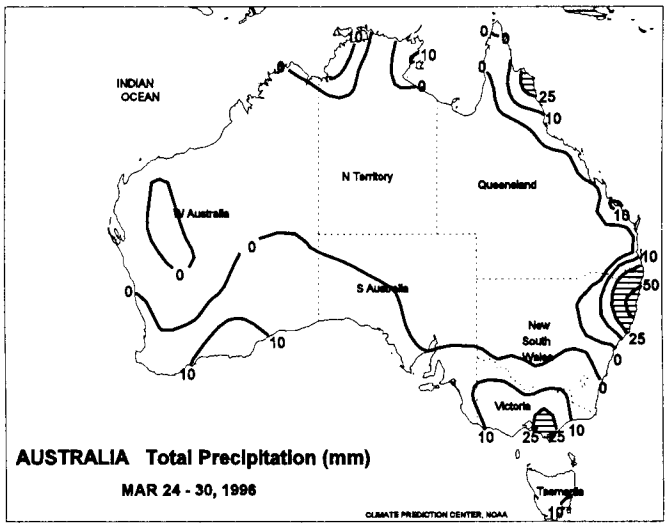
EASTERN ASIA

Widespread rain covered most crop areas of China. Light to moderate rain (8-25 mm) covered the central North China Plain (Shandong and Henan), aiding rainfed vegetative winter wheat and increasing irrigation supplies. Heavier rain (25-50 mm) fell across the southern wheat areas of northern Anhui and Jiangsu. The western spring wheat areas (southern Gansu and Shaanxi) received light rain (2-10 mm), moistening topsoils for spring wheat planting. Of the major winter wheat areas, only southern Hebei received little or no rain. Across the Yangtze Valley and southern China, widespread rain (20-75 mm) favored reproductive winter grains and oilseeds, and increased irrigation supplies for transplanted rice. Heavier rain (125-250 mm) fell across Guangdong and Guangxi, causing local flooding. Widespread rain (10-50 mm) covered the Korean Peninsula, boosting pre-season moisture reserves for rice.



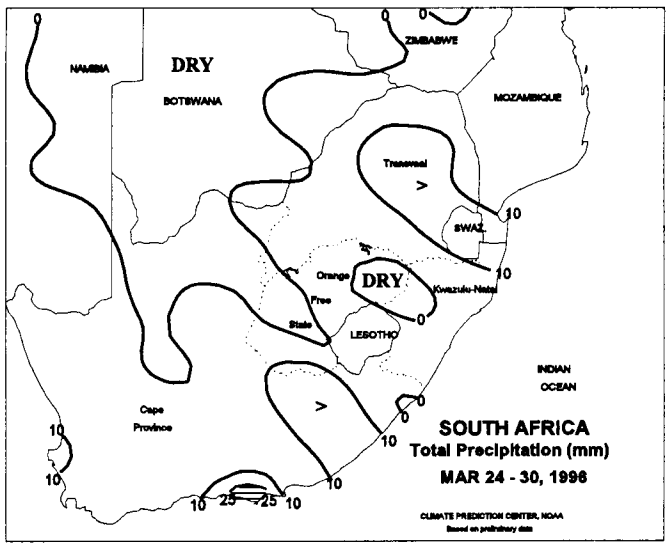
SOUTHEAST ASIA

Unseasonably heavy rain (50-100 mm) fell across northeastern Thailand, Laos, and northern Vietnam, boosting irrigation supplies for rice. Heavier rain (125-200 mm) caused local flooding across northern Vietnam. In Vietnam, winter-spring rice transplanting typically ends by early April. Showers (25-70 mm) returned to all oil palm areas of the Malay Peninsula. In Java, somewhat drier weather (10-50 mm) prevailed, favoring main-season rice harvesting. Across the Philippines, showers (20-60 mm) were mostly confined to the east-central Islands and southern Luzon. Mostly dry weather (less than 10 mm) elsewhere favored second-season crop harvesting.



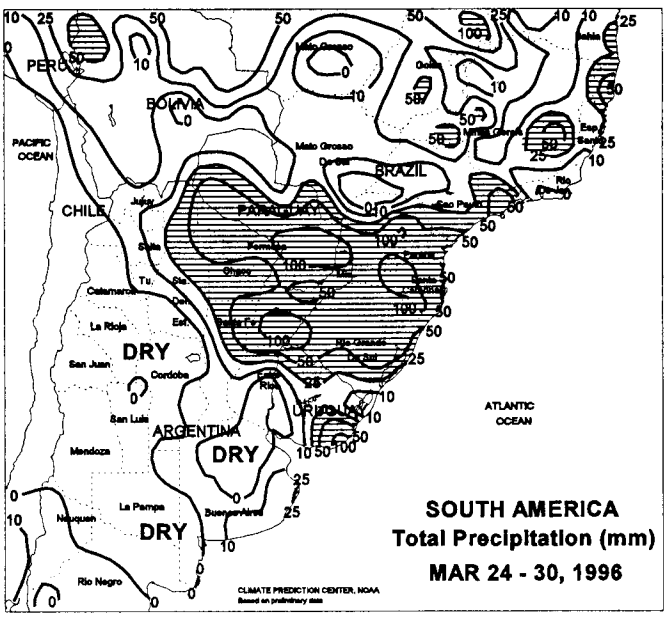
AUSTRALIA

Dry weather continued throughout eastern Australia's main summer crop areas. While the dryness benefited early sorghum and cotton harvesting, more rain would be welcomed for immature crops. Highs in the low 30's C enhanced the drying of maturing crops. Elsewhere in eastern Australia, the warm, dry weather in western pasture and grazing areas (western Queensland to southeastern South Australia) exacerbated moisture deficits as highs reached the mid 30's C. However, moderate rain in Victoria increased subsoil moisture reserves for the next winter grain crop. In Western Australia, mostly light rain (1-10 mm or more) was limited to the southern coast, with generally cooler weather covering the main agricultural areas. In New Zealand, light to moderate rain (10-35 mm) covered the main pasture areas. Heavy rain (greater than 100 mm) from Tropical Cyclone Beti was limited to the northeastern tip of North Island.



SOUTH AFRICA

Mostly dry, seasonably warm weather continued for the second week, benefiting maturing corn. Much of the region was completely dry, with measurable rain generally totaling less than 5 mm. Temperatures across the corn belt averaged near to above normal, with highs ranging from the low 30's C in the west to the mid 20's C in the east. Lows ranged from 5 to 10 degrees C across the corn belt. On average, the first autumn freeze is 4 to 5 weeks away. In Kwazulu-Natal, continuing dry weather has helped alleviate excessive moisture in the main sugarcane areas.



SOUTH AMERICA

Dry weather prevailed across central Argentina, favoring corn, sunflower, and early soybean harvesting. However, rain is still needed for immature soybeans across the region. Farther north, widespread rain (40-70 mm) slowed cotton harvesting in northern Argentina. Heavier rain (50-100 mm) delayed cotton and soybean harvesting in southern Paraguay. In southern Brazil, moderate rain (35-70 mm) benefited immature soybeans in Rio Grande do Sul. Across Santa Catarina and southern Parana, moderate to heavy rain (50-100 mm) slowed soybean harvesting and hampered transportation to the east coast ports. In contrast, drier weather (less than 15 mm) prevailed from northern Parana into southern Mato Grosso, aiding soybean harvesting.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service/Climate Prediction Center
Managing Editor ..... ***Douglas Le Comte*** (202) 720-7919
Editor ..... ***Brad Rippey*** (202) 720-1444
Meteorologists ..... ***David Secora, Jeff Savadel, Brian Morris***
Subscriptions ..... ***Joyce Houston*** (202) 720-7917
fax (202) 720-1455

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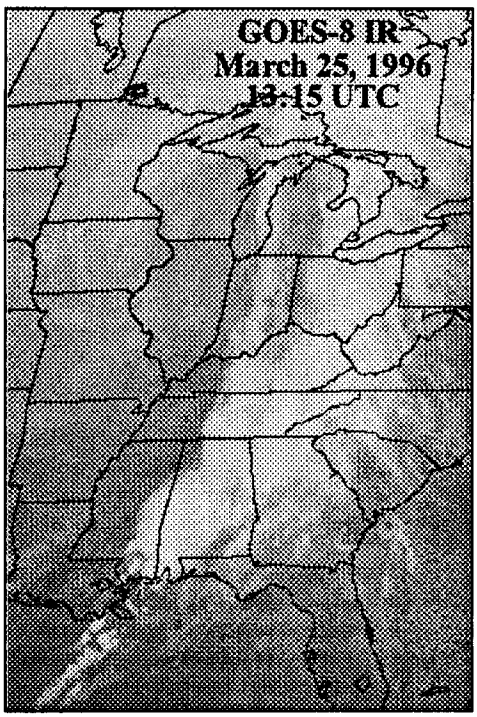

Early in the week, snow spread from the **central Rockies** to the **western Great Lakes**. March 23-25 totals reached 11.3 inches in **Minneapolis, MN**; 6.5 inches in **Denver, CO**; 5.6 inches in **Norfolk, NE**; and 4.0 inches in **Sioux City, IA**. Strong northerly winds induced blizzard conditions across the **northern Plains** and **upper Midwest** on Sunday, as gusts reached 55 mph in **Aberdeen, SD** and 60 mph in **Sioux City**. In advance of the storm's cold front, winds topped 50 mph across the **central and southern Plains**, including gusts to 54 mph in **Concordia, KS** and 52 mph in **Lubbock, TX**. Post-frontal winds took aim on the **Midwest**, where **Indianapolis, IN** clocked a gust to 62 mph on Monday. Farther north, 14.2 inches of snow blanketed **Marquette, MI**, boosting their seasonal total to 205.9 inches.

Nearly 30 daily-record lows were broken in the **Plains** and **Midwest** on March 25-27. In the **central and southern Plains**, where temperatures fell as much as 70°F in 36 hours, lows on Monday dipped to 7°F in **Hays, KS** and 13°F in **Amarillo, TX**. **Laramie, WY** notched a daily-record low of -18°F. On Tuesday, **Minneapolis, MN** recorded -10°F, their latest such reading, formerly set on March 16, 1900. Lows plunged below zero as far south as **Hastings, NE** (-5°F), and in **Minnesota** fell to -14°F in **St. Cloud** and -22°F in **International Falls**. Several locations in **Oregon** tied or broke daily records, including **Salem** (25°F) and **Eugene** (27°F). Cool weather also blanketed **Hawaii**, resulting in daily records at **Lihue** (56°F on Tuesday) and **Honolulu** (61°F on Thursday). Meanwhile, above-normal temperatures prevailed across **Alaska**, where **Barrow** tallied a trio of daily records on March 24-26, including a high of 30°F on Tuesday.

The passage of five storms through the **central and southern Plains** during the last 18 days of March accounted for most of the month's rainfall and provided much-needed moisture for wheat. Although weekly totals--delivered by the most recent three storms--reached 1.44 inches in **Tulsa, OK** and 1.83 inches in **Dallas, TX**, March precipitation was below normal throughout the region. Across the **Southeast**, three episodes of rain boosted monthly totals above 10 inches in locations such as **Melbourne, FL** (a March-record 11.58 inches) and **Birmingham, AL** (10.58 inches). Weekly rainfall topped 8 inches in **Mobile, AL**, while **Melbourne** logged daily rainfall records on Thursday (2.42 inches) and Saturday (1.71 inches). In addition to the rain on March 30, about a dozen tornadoes swept across the **Southeast**, including seven in **Florida** and four in **Louisiana**.

Farther north, snow returned to the **northern Middle Atlantic region** on March 28-29, adding 4.1 inches to **New York City's** seasonal record total (74.9 inches through March 31). **Williamsport, PA** (seasonal total of 83.9 inches) and **Newark, NJ** (77.7 inches) were added to the snowfall-record list, eclipsing marks that had stood since 1977-78 and 1867-68, respectively. Snow returned to the **Western and Northern States** toward week's end. March 28-29 totals included 5.3 inches in **Williston, ND** and 2.9 inches in **Salt Lake City, UT**.

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