

Midwest Ag-Focus Climate Outlook

Main Points

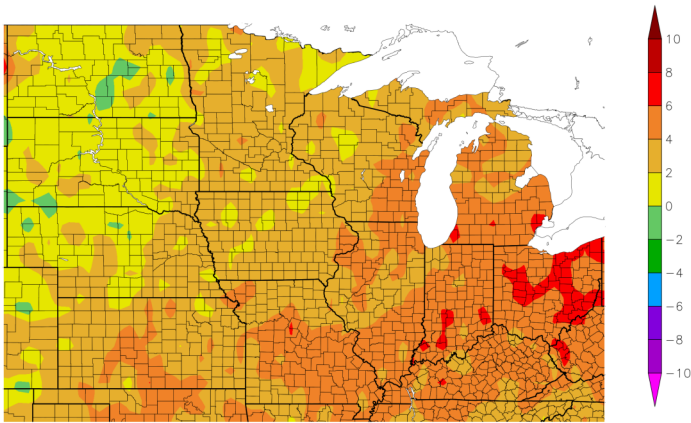


- ◆ Drought conditions continue across Central Corn Belt, but there have been large improvements.
- ◆ Much of the region has received near to above average precipitation.
- ◆ Early planting progress was slowed by rain, but it should be able to continue.
- ◆ El Niño to La Niña transition is still in process.
- ◆ Risk of summer crop stress eased a little with recent rains, but risk of heat and dryness still exists through the summer.



Current Conditions

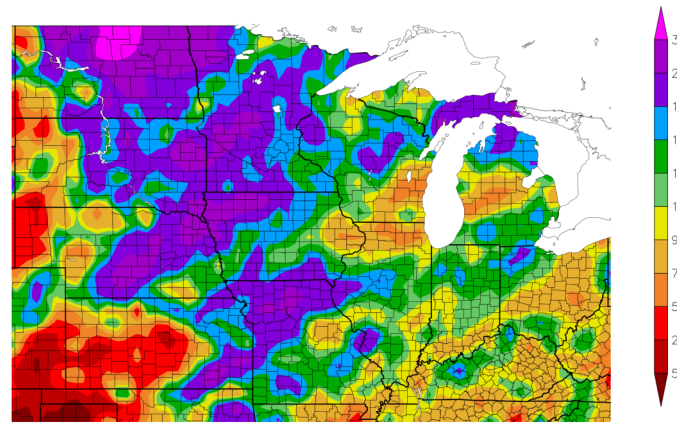
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
4/9/2024 – 5/8/2024



Generated 5/9/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
4/9/2024 – 5/8/2024



Generated 5/9/2024 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

The spring planting and growing season for 2024 is well underway. Overall temperatures have been warmer than average over the last 30 days, with the region around 2 to 4°F above average for April, though the area did still experience a few below-freezing episodes over large areas. Precipitation has been above average for most of the central to northern parts of the region, helping with the drought conditions. Large swaths of the region have experienced 150-200% of average precipitation. Eastern areas have been drier, though this result was good following the early spring wetness there. Very dry areas continue in Kansas with wide areas at 25 to 50% or less of average. Some persistent areas from parts of Kansas and other spotty areas continue to miss out on some of the recent rainfall.

Images from High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC), Online Data Services: [ACIS Climate Maps](https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/midwest). Generated: 05/09/2024.



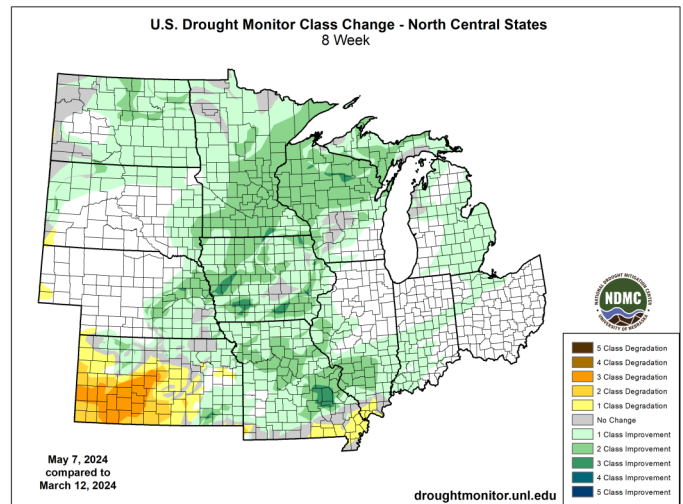
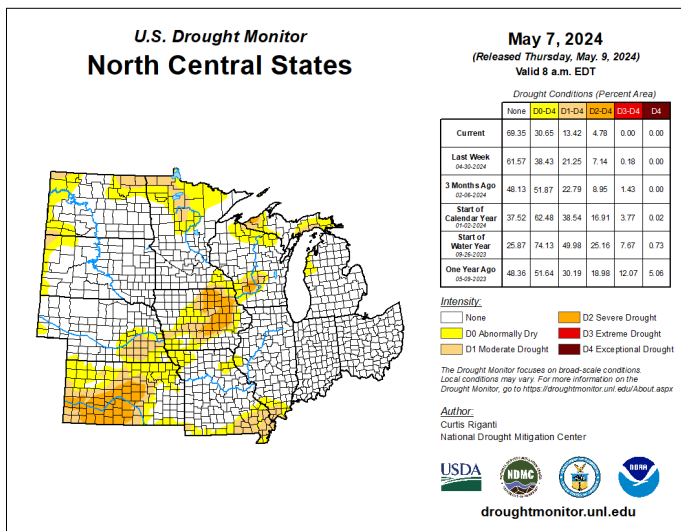
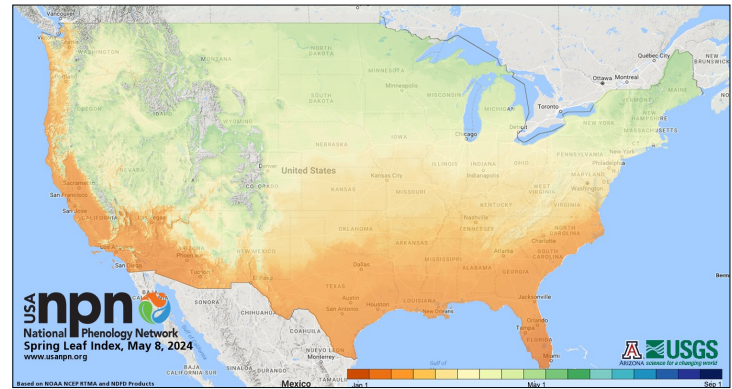
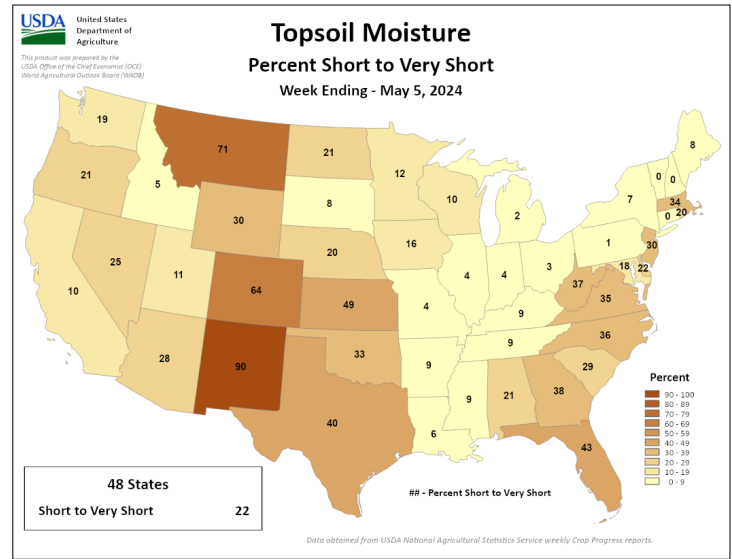
Impacts

Precipitation has been a somewhat mixed blessing around the region. The recent precipitation has been helpful in alleviating drought conditions, but the rains have also been heavy enough to slow planting progress and create wet soils, leading to some concern about late planting or replant of already planted crops. This situation is a marked change from 4 to 6 weeks ago, during which dry soils were a greater concern; there have been significant improvements shown in the US Drought Monitor. Several areas of drought persist due to shorter-term dryness (e.g. Kansas) and persistent long-term dryness centered on Iowa.

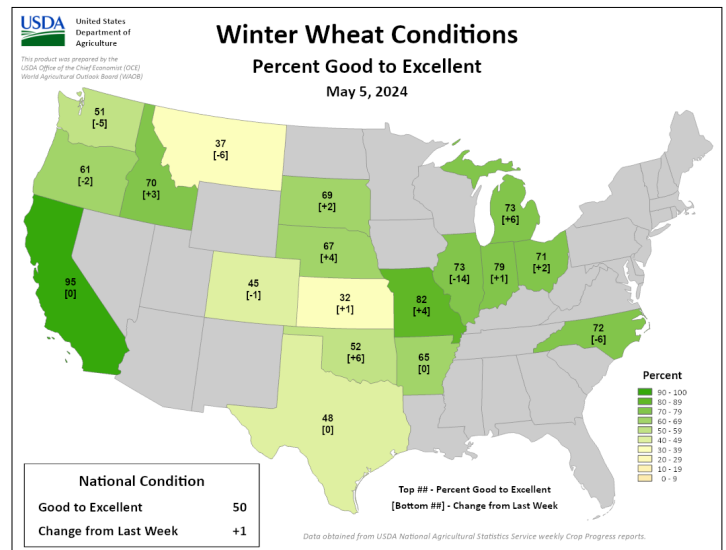
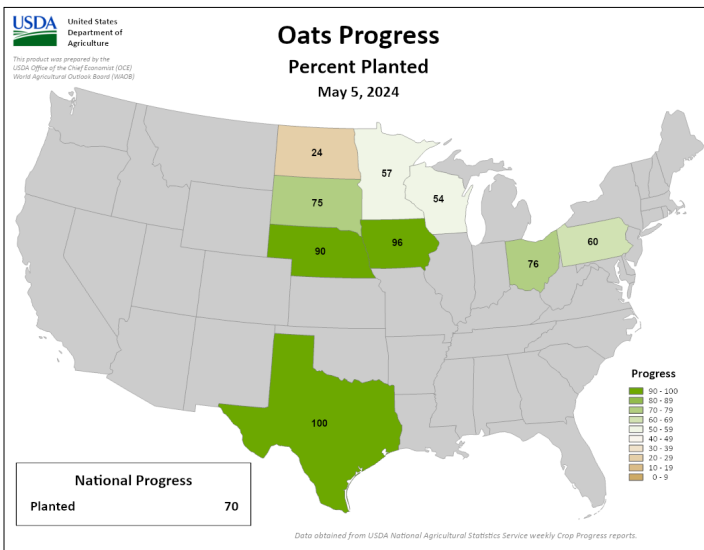
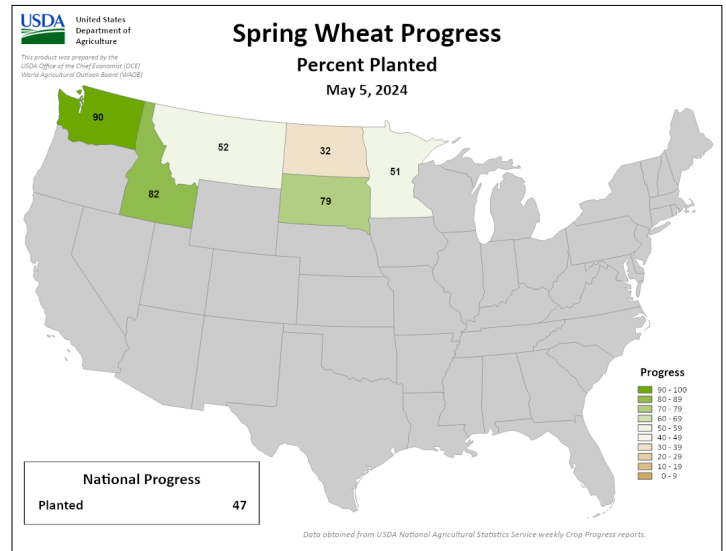
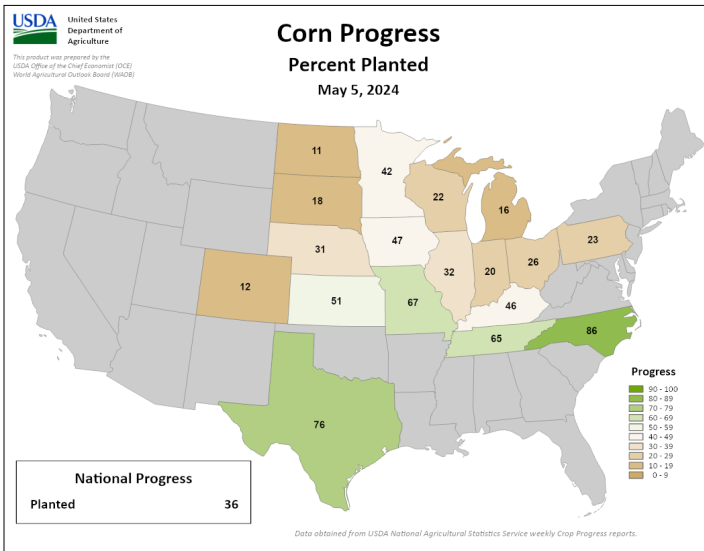
While the precipitation has aided drought recovery, several excess water issues have appeared. Flooding in several rivers has occurred, though mostly minor. Wet soils have also slowed planting progress. After a fairly early start to planting, progress has been slower in recent weeks. Delays are not enough to be a problem at this point but have diverted the expected early planting because of the dry soils.

Freezing conditions did occur in several places around the region. Climatologically, these freezes were not late, but they were somewhat damaging because of the warm late winter and early spring that helped push early vegetation development. Overall damage seems to have been relatively minor, but some damage was noted; full damages may not be known until later in the season.

The active severe weather season has caused the usual structural damage, but does not seem have been a problem agronomically. Early summaries suggest that April 2024 was been the second most active tornado season on record.



Maps Generated by the [United States Department of Agriculture](https://www.usda.gov), the [National Phenology Network](https://www.usanpn.org), and the [National Drought Mitigation Center](https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu).



Outlook



There have been few overall changes in climate drivers as the El Niño continues to weaken rapidly with the expected transition to La Niña still on track. Recent wetness should begin to ease a bit allowing better planting progress with less precipitation.

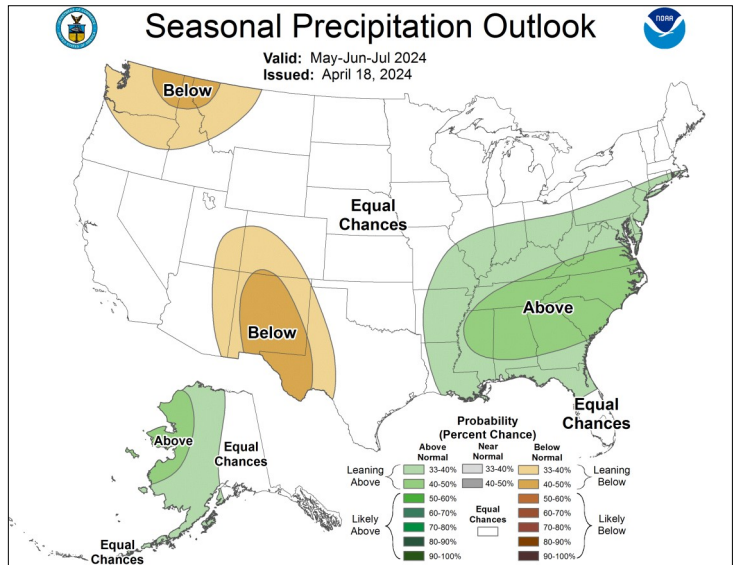
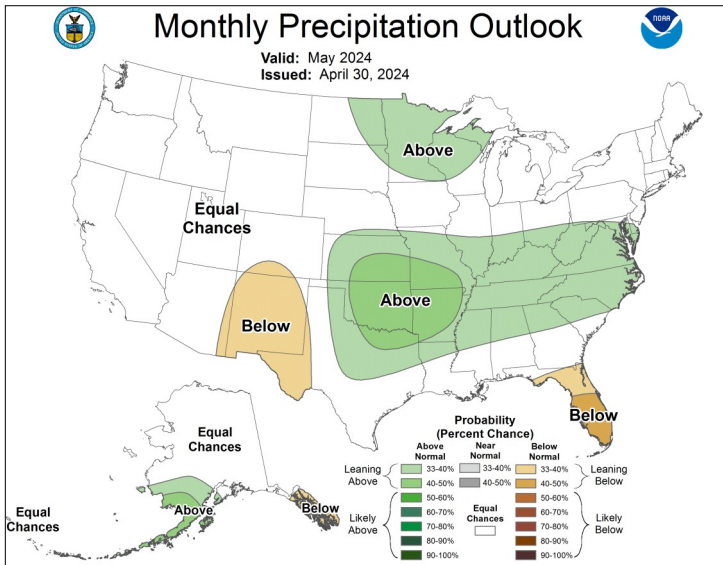
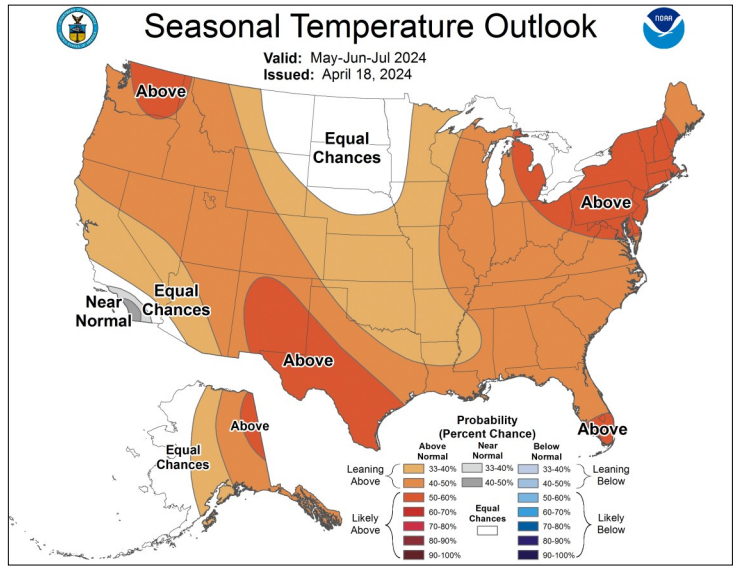
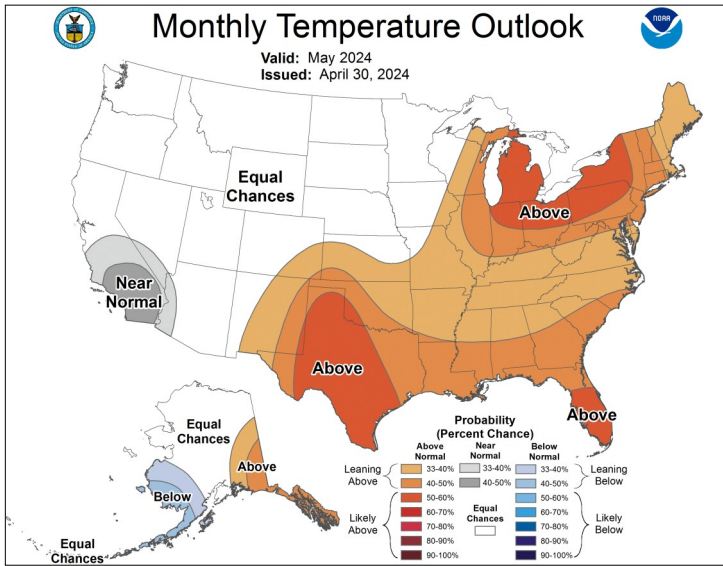
The near-term outlooks do ease precipitation chances, allowing for some drying and hopefully allowing for planting progress. The monthly outlooks have better chances for warmer-than-average conditions over the Great Lakes and eastern Corn Belt, with some smaller, local areas leaning towards chances of above-average precipitation. For the seasonal outlook, larger areas have better chances for being warmer-than-average, with few hints at expected precipitation.

There are some concerns about delayed planting and replant. While some delayed planting is likely, the chance for prevent-plant seems low. Warmer conditions in the coming weeks would help push crop development. The additional soil moisture will help ease risk from the chances for increased heat (and crop water demand) in the summer, but the chances for additional heat and decreased precipitation are still apparent.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/midwest>





Outlooks provided by the [Climate Prediction Center](#).

Partners and Contributors



- [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#)
- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#)
- [Climate Prediction Center \(CPC\)](#)
- [National Weather Service \(NWS\)](#)
- [National Center for Environmental Information \(NCEI\)](#)

- [National Drought Mitigation Center \(NDMC\)](#)
- [National Integrated Drought Information System \(NIDIS\)](#)
- [Midwestern Regional Climate Center \(MRCC\)](#)
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