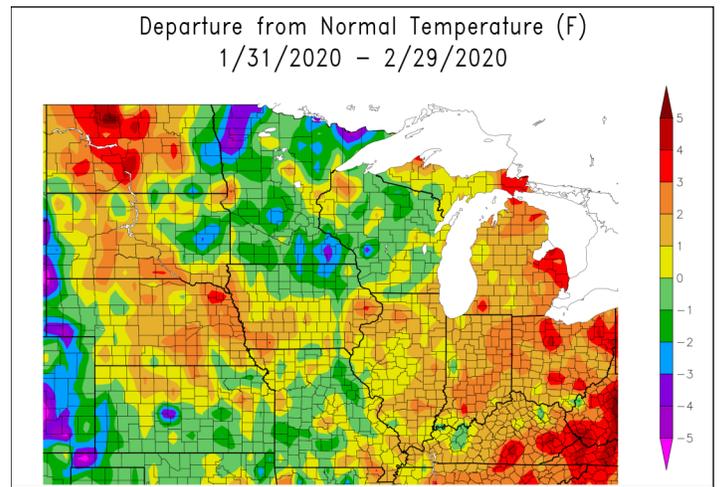
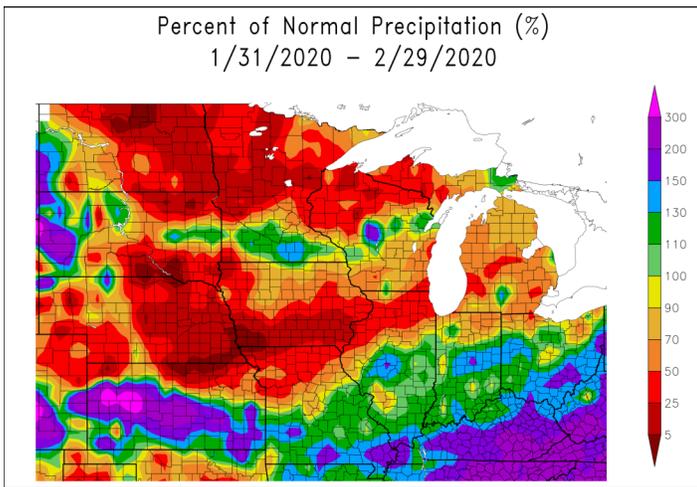


Midwest Ag-Focus Climate Outlook

Current Conditions



Most of the region was quiet during February leading to dry conditions across much of the area. Drier-than-average areas stretched from eastern Nebraska to northern Illinois and Michigan and in the Dakotas and Minnesota, where several areas were below-half-average precipitation. That was somewhat welcome for agriculture interests looking at very wet conditions. The departures from average are not large at this time of year. Thus, the dryness is not having a major impact. Wetter-than-average areas were further south and in a band from South Dakota to Wisconsin. Temperatures were several degrees above average over most of the area, especially the east. The colder-than-average areas were largely snow-covered.



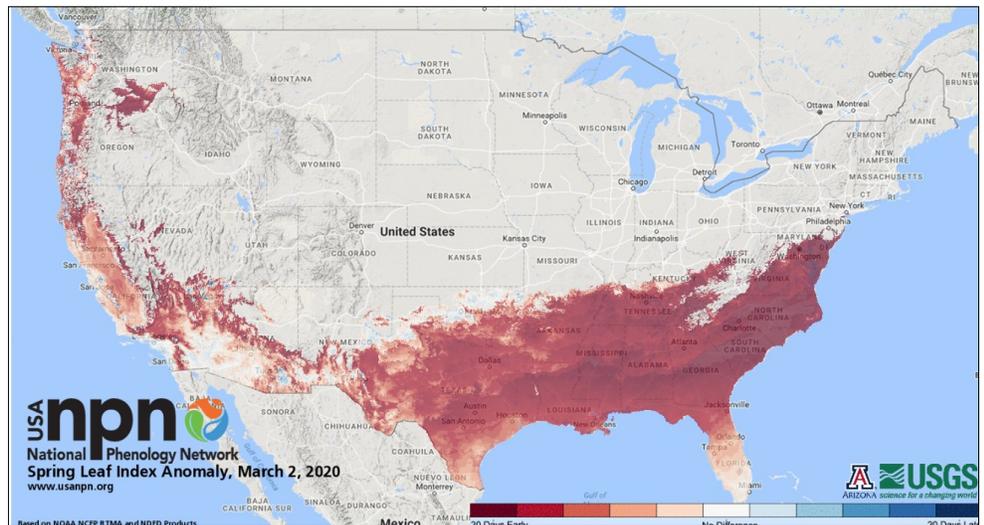
Images from High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC), Online Data Services: [ACIS Climate Maps](#). Generated: 3/2/2020



Impacts

Harvest continues in the northern plains. Harvest (as of February 29, 2020) in North Dakota reached 61% (corn) and 79% (sunflower). These numbers were decent increases from January. A few isolated acres were unharvested in other states.

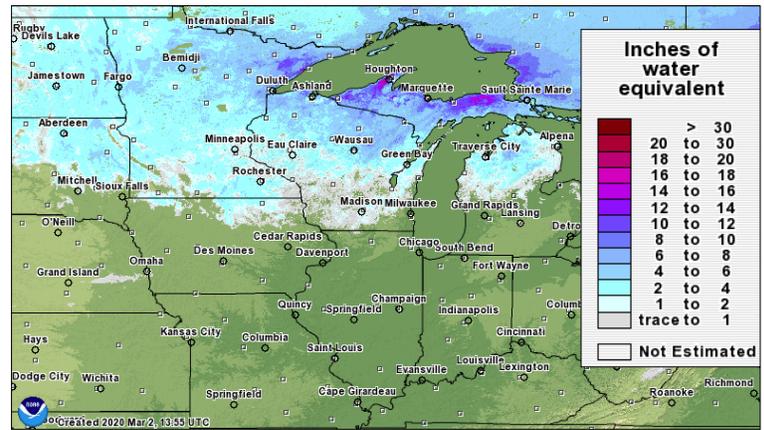
The warm conditions in the eastern Corn Belt have led to reports of green-up wheat, pastures, horticultural plants and trees starting to begin activity in Ohio. These conditions are of serious concern because the region is well before potential last freeze. Spring leaf index from National Phenology Network has reached close to the Ohio River.



[USA National Phenology Network](#)

(Impacts Cont.) Soil temperatures have been mainly frozen in North Dakota, parts of Minnesota, and South Dakota, while fluctuating around freezing in a band south of there. Frost depths are also relatively shallow over the whole region with the deepest being no more than 2 ft at a few locations in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Snow pack overall is confined to the eastern Dakotas to northern Michigan. What is of concern is the amount of water in the snow and potential for adding to flood issues during spring melt. The risk for flooding is high along with the potential for spring planting delays. Most of the area has an estimated 2" of water with up to 4" or more in northern Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.



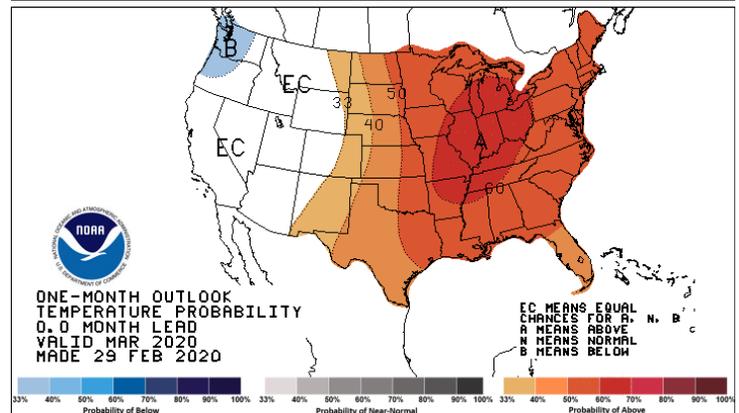
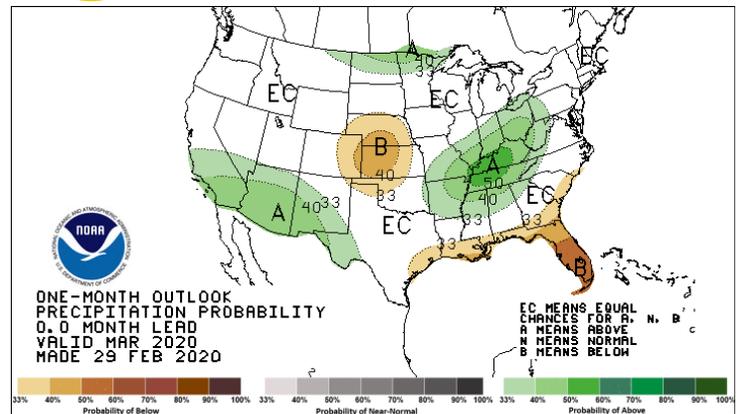
Modeled Snow Water Equivalent (3/2/2020, 22:00 UTC)
[National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center](#)

Outlook



March outlooks have taken a slight turn. Temperatures are likely to be warmer than average over most of the area. This is a change from the mid-month outlook because models have shifted on the temperature outlook. Precipitation is a bit more difficult. The current outlook is slightly likely wetter along the Ohio River and along the Canadian border with a pocket of dryness in the Central Plains. The 90 day outlook (March-May) is fairly similar to previous outlooks with slightly higher wetter chances over most of the region. Temperatures are warmer in an arc from the Great Lakes to Ohio Valley and cooler possibly over Montana/western Dakotas.

The March outlook provides a little optimism for spring planting because of likely some drying during the month along with warming soils. The 90 day probabilities are also slightly better for spring planting progress. Wet soils still have the potential to slow planting progress with even close to average precipitation amounts. The lack of recent precipitation has also helped soil surfaces dry slightly. There is still much to be determined, but the spring planting delay risk has eased slightly.



[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 \(MRCC\)](#)
- [Midwest State Climatologists](#)
- [High Plains Regional Climate Center \(HPRCC\)](#)



For More Information

Charlene Felkley, Coordinator
USDA Midwest Climate Hub
1015 N University Blvd., Ames, IA 50011
515-294-0136
charlene.felkley@ars.usda.gov

For more information, please visit:
<https://www.climatehubs.oce.usda.gov/hubs/midwest>

