



Midwest Ag-Focus Climate Outlook

August 21, 2025

Main Points

- Temperatures were above average across most of the region, and rainfall varied considerably across the area.
- Drought conditions expanded in southern Missouri, southern Illinois, and a swath of Ohio.
- Corn and soybean conditions remain good across the region, though variable rainfall paired with hot temperatures have resulted in crop stress across some states.
- Cooler conditions will be pervasive through the end of August with rainfall chances more focused on the Plains states.

Current Conditions

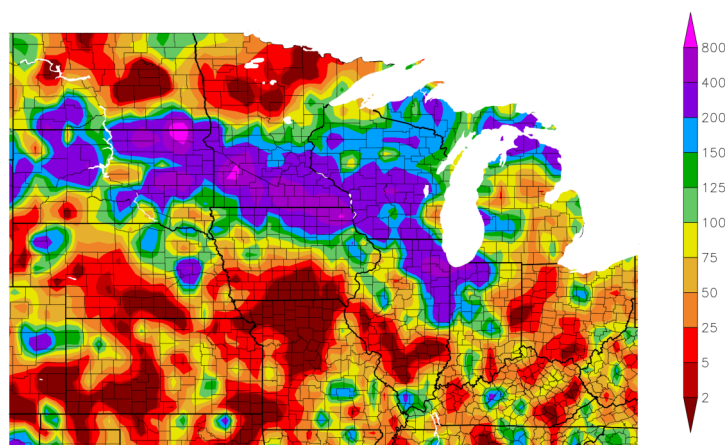
Precipitation over the last seven days has been mostly confined to the northern half of the region. Heavier precipitation (3-4"+) has occurred from the eastern Dakotas to northwest Indiana worsening some wetness issues. Large areas in the southern half of the region received little to no precipitation leading to increased flash drought concerns in far southern areas. Eastern Corn Belt areas continue dry. Warmer than average conditions covered the whole region, running 4 to 6°F or more above average from the central Plains to the Ohio Valley. Northern areas were also warmer but less above average. Higher dew point (humidity) conditions persisted but were not as extreme as mid-summer. The combination of warmer temperatures with the lack of rainfall led to the flash drought concerns.

Impacts

Drought

As of August 19th, 78% of the North Central region is classified as no drought intensity, 17% as abnormally dry (D0),

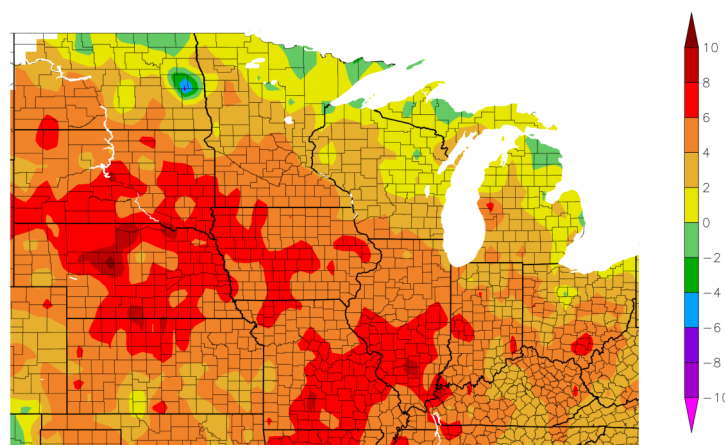
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
8/14/2025 – 8/20/2025



Generated 8/21/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
8/14/2025 – 8/20/2025



Generated 8/21/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

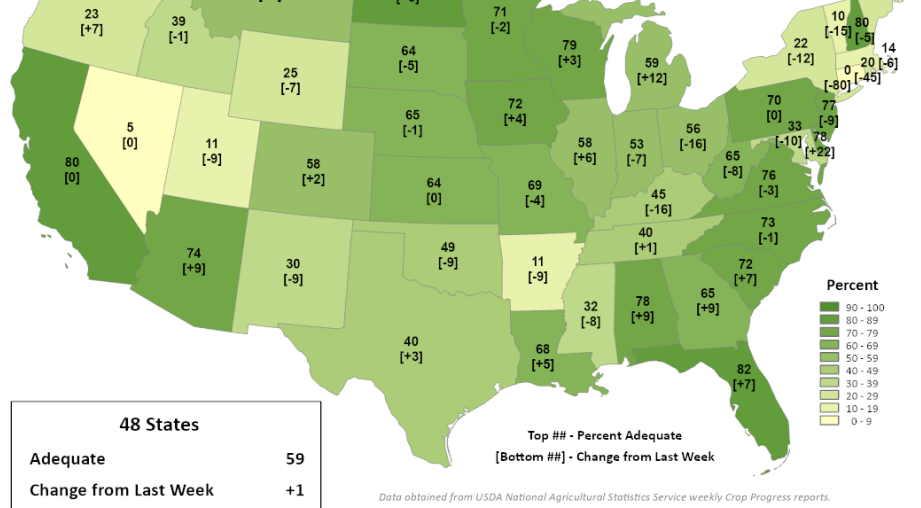
Images from High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC), Online Data Services: [ACIS Climate Maps](https://climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/midwest). Generated: 08/21/2025.

5% as moderate drought (D1), and less than 0.5 % as severe drought (D2). Moderate drought persists in central Michigan, portions of the Plains, central Illinois and southern Missouri. Compared to last week, drought conditions improved by 1-class across northern North Dakota and northern Illinois. However, drought conditions degraded by 1-class from southern Missouri across to central Ohio – where the flash drought conditions were noted. That being said, only about 5% of corn and 9% of soybean production nationally are in an area experiencing drought.

As of the week ending August 17th, 53 to 81% of topsoil moisture is adequate across states in the region. Wet conditions persist in parts of the upper Midwest, and according to USDA-NASS, 26 and 27% of topsoil moisture is surplus in Iowa and Minnesota, respectively. On the other end of the spectrum, states along the eastern edge of the region are feeling the impact of dry conditions. In Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio, 40, 42, and 43% of topsoil is short to very short, respectively.

Soils, Crops and Livestock

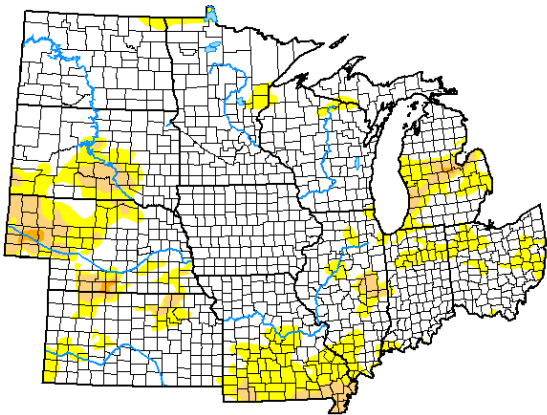
Across the Corn Belt, 11 to 50% of corn is dented and corn in the southern portion of the region is beginning to reach maturity. Approximately 69 to 89% of soybeans are setting pods, with the eastern portion of the region is tracking slightly above the 5-year average while northwest states lag the 5 year average. As of August 17th, 24 to 70% of spring wheat and 30 to 93% of oats are harvested across the region.



Maps generated by the [National Drought Mitigation Center](#) and [United States Department of Agriculture](#)

U.S. Drought Monitor North Central States

August 19, 2025
(Released Thursday, Aug. 21, 2025)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
Current	77.75	16.59	5.31	0.35	0.00	0.00
Last Week	77.34	17.45	4.76	0.45	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago	41.62	34.10	16.64	6.14	1.51	0.00
Start of Calendar Year	30.52	24.01	31.13	11.66	2.68	0.00
Start of Water Year	18.32	46.64	26.11	7.47	1.02	0.43
One Year Ago	64.46	22.93	8.68	3.22	0.71	0.00

Intensity
None D2 Severe Drought
D0 Abnormally Dry D3 Extreme Drought
D1 Moderate Drought D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author
Lindsay Johnson
National Drought Mitigation Center



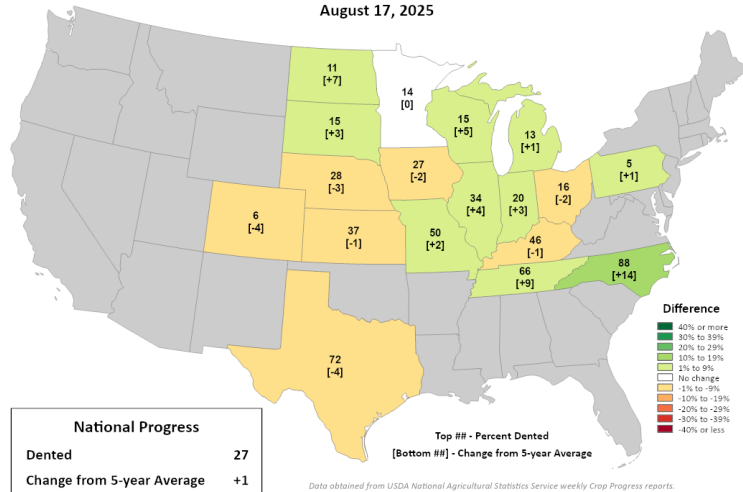
Crop conditions remain generally good across the region, with 48 to 86% of corn and 56 to 82% of soybeans in good to excellent condition. Corn and soybean crops look particularly good across Iowa. Compared to last week, pasture and rangeland conditions have worsened in Ohio, Michigan, Missouri, and parts of the Plains, likely a result of the dry period. Generally, 40 to 83% of pasture and rangeland is in good to excellent condition.

Reports of tight tasseling in corn across the region continue, though this doesn't ap-

Corn Progress

Percent Dented

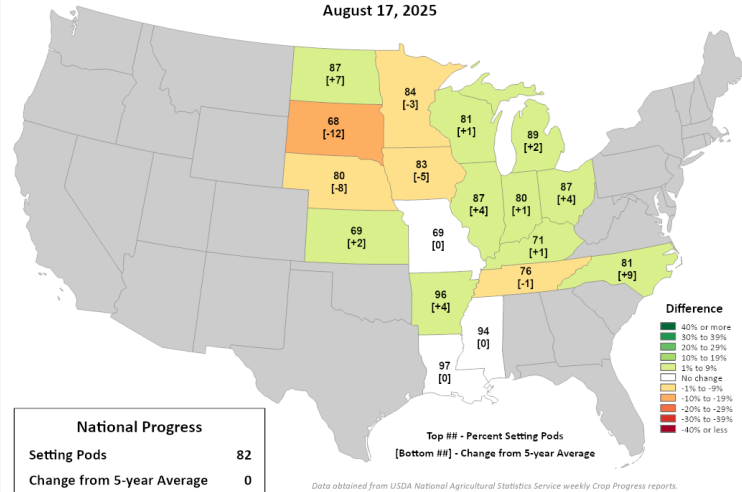
August 17, 2025



Soybeans Progress

Percent Setting Pods

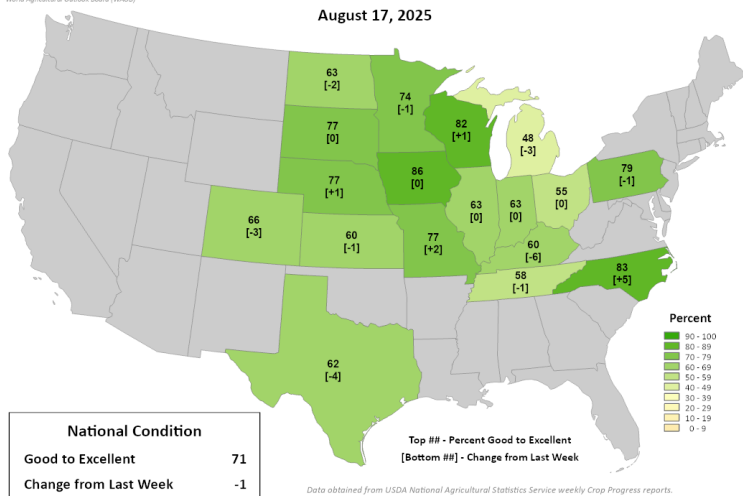
August 17, 2025



Corn Conditions

Percent Good to Excellent

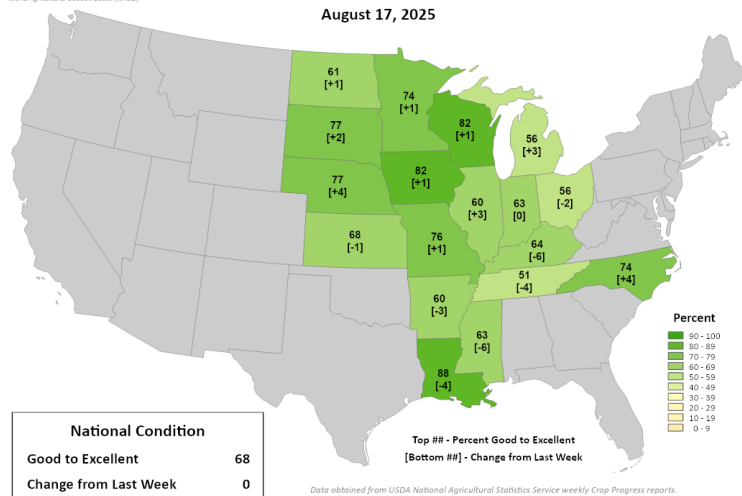
August 17, 2025



Soybean Conditions

Percent Good to Excellent

August 17, 2025



Maps generated by the [United States Department of Agriculture](https://www.usda.gov/).

pear to be a major issue at the moment. In southwest Missouri, crops and livestock are experiencing stress due to the development of drought conditions. Drought conditions in Michigan are also impacting tree leaf drop and blueberry production. High temperatures and humidity have led to southern rust and other disease development across the region, posing a potential concern for corn yield. Continued scouting and monitoring will be required.

Fire

According to the National Interagency Fire Center, the northeast portion of the region has no risk for significant wildland fire and portions of the Northern Plains and southern Missouri and Illinois are at low risk this weekend. Western Nebraska faces moderate risk Friday.

Outlook

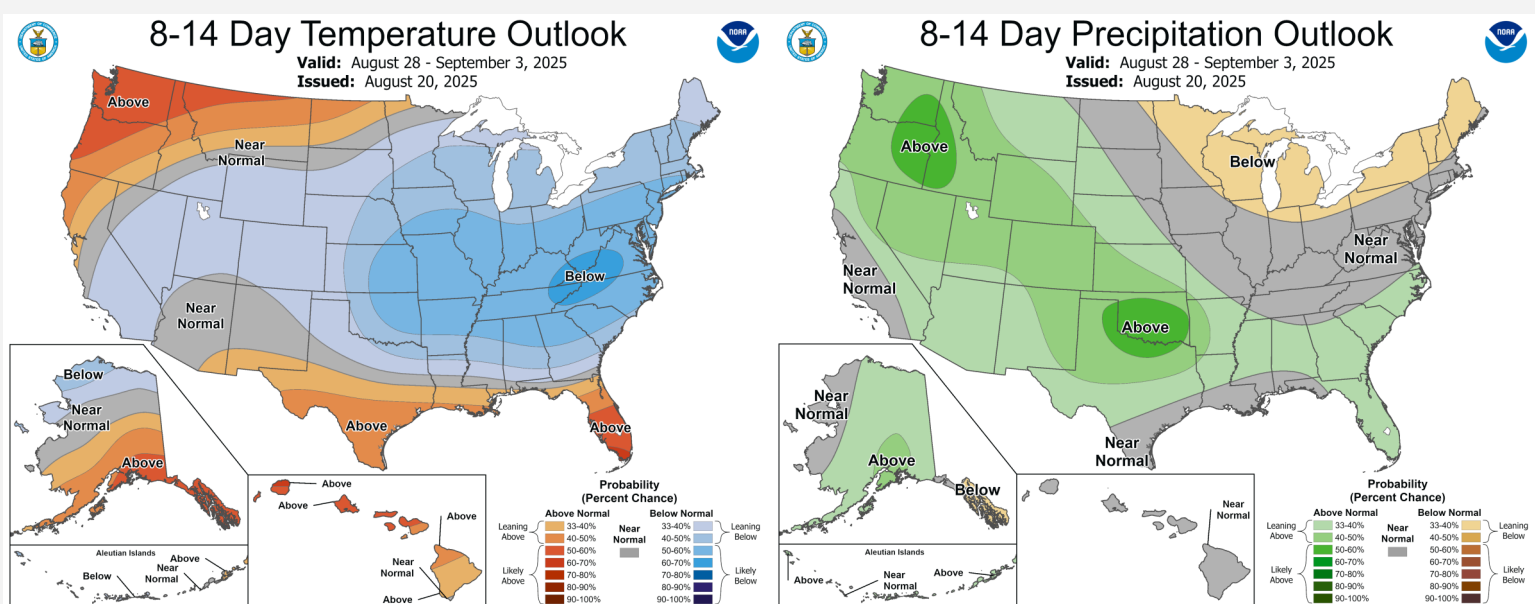
The precipitation focus moves south for the next seven days with an unusual heavier rainfall area expected from Colorado to southern Missouri and northern Arkansas. Most of the rest of the Corn Belt expects little to no precipitation. For some of the wetter areas in the central Corn Belt and Dakotas, the dryness is welcomed. In the eastern

Corn Belt, the drying conditions are starting to cause some early maturity and crop drying issues taking a top off some yields. The precipitation area will also ease part of the flash drought concern area in Missouri but leave some concern in southern Illinois and Kentucky.

The North Central region will likely be cooler than average through the end of the month, indicated in both the 6-10 and 8-14 day outlooks. The cooler conditions will ease crop stress slightly in the dry locations but will also slow some crop development. At this point, the delayed development doesn't seem to be too much of a concern. The cool also doesn't seem to indicate any potential frost conditions further north.

The 6-10 and 8-14 day outlooks hint toward better precipitation chances in the central Plains to lower Ohio Valley and hints towards drier around the Great Lakes.

The new seasonal outlooks were released this week looking into the fall. Overall warmer than average conditions are more likely with no indications (below/above average) on precipitation for nearly all the Corn Belt. A weak short-lived La Niña is expected to influence the outlooks in the late fall into winter.



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

Dennis Todey
Director

USDA Midwest Climate Hub
1015 N University Blvd.
Ames, IA 50011

Dennis.Todey@usda.gov