



Satellite image with enhanced low ground and cloud-top temperatures for 6:45 a.m. EST (NOAA)

Agricultural Weather Highlights – Wednesday - February 20, 2013

- In the *West*, widespread precipitation is occurring across the *southern half of the region*. *Southwestern* precipitation is boosting high-elevation snow packs and aiding rangeland and pastures.
- On the *Plains*, precipitation is falling across the *southern half of the region*, benefiting rangeland, pastures, and winter wheat. Frozen precipitation (snow, sleet, and freezing rain) is falling in *northwestern Oklahoma* and *southwestern Kansas*, while most other areas are receiving rain. Farther north, bitterly cold weather prevails in the *Dakotas*, where a few locations reported minimum temperatures of -20°F or below.
- In the *Corn Belt*, bitterly cold conditions are maintaining stress on livestock in the *upper Midwest*, where this morning's temperatures locally fell below -20°F. Elsewhere, cold, dry weather prevails, except for lingering snow showers downwind of the *Great Lakes*.
- In the *South*, rain showers are breaking out in areas *west of the Delta*. Cool, dry weather covers the remainder of the region. USDA reports that *Florida's* "citrus and other fruits and vegetables appear to have weathered the [recent] cold snap." Despite recent showers, *Florida's* topsoil moisture was reported as 55% very short to short on February 17, while half (50%) of the state's pastures were rated very poor to poor.

Outlook: Cold weather will continue to dominate much of the nation, except for some late-week warmth across the *Deep South*. Meanwhile, a complex storm system emerging from the *Southwest* will provide the majority of the mid- to late-week precipitation. Significant snow can be expected from the *central Plains into the middle Mississippi Valley*, while freezing rain will affect portions of the *Mid-South*. Elsewhere, showers and thunderstorms will sweep across the *southern Plains* and into the *Southeast*, where storm-total rainfall could reach 2 to 5 inches. Liquid totals (rain and melted snow) of 0.5 to 1.5 inches should provide drought relief on the *central and southern Plains*. Toward week's end, storminess will increase across the *Northwest*, with snow overspreading the *northern Plains* during the weekend. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for February 25 – March 1 calls for near- to below-normal temperatures nationwide, except for warmer-than-normal weather in the *lower Great Lakes region* and the *Atlantic Coast States*. Meanwhile, below-normal precipitation across much of the *western half of the U.S.* will contrast with wetter-than-normal conditions from the *Mississippi River to the East Coast*.

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Web Site: <http://www.usda.gov/oce/weather/pubs/Daily/TODAYSWX.pdf>