

Midwest Ag-Focus Climate Outlook

Main Points



- La Niña in the Pacific is affecting current and projected conditions
- There are several ongoing agricultural impacts in some areas, including wind, dust, fire, and excessive wetness
- Early winter was very warm in much of the Midwest
- Drought is ongoing in the Midwest, with limited changes

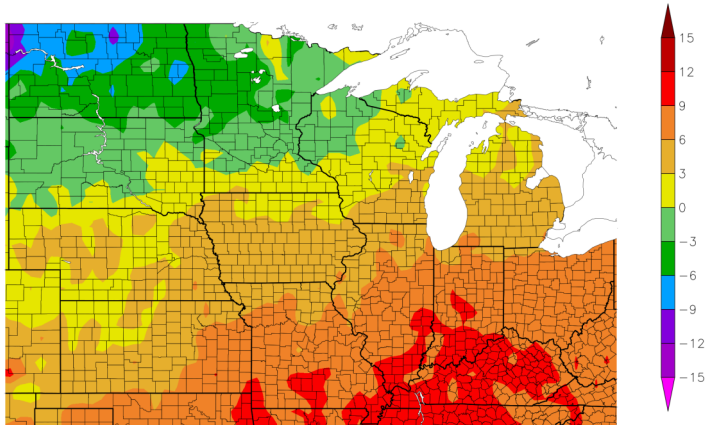


Image from Dennis Larson, NRCS Photo Gallery



Current Conditions

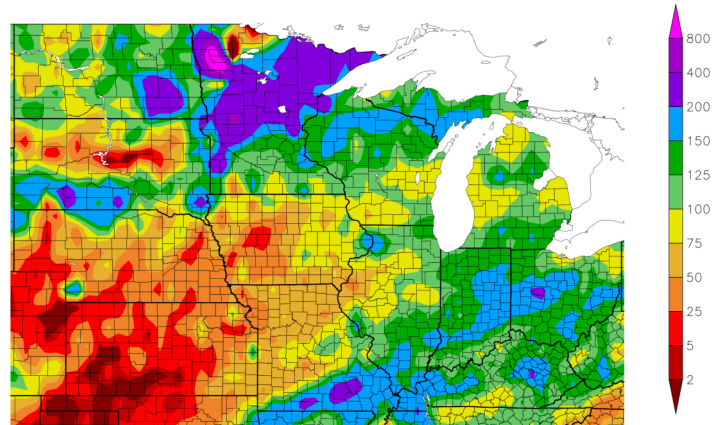
Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
12/6/2021 – 1/4/2022



Generated 1/5/2022 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
12/6/2021 – 1/4/2022



Generated 1/5/2022 at HPRCC using provisional data.

NOAA Regional Climate Centers

Despite recent colder temperatures, the last 30 days have been well above average in most of the region. December overall was very warm throughout the area. Final rankings will not be available for several days, but record or near-record temperatures dominated most of the month throughout the region except for the northern Plains. Southern areas ranged up to 12°F above average while the northern Plains was close to average. Precipitation has taken on La Niña characteristics with above-average precipitation in the northern Plains and Ohio Valley and with two to four times the average precipitation in some areas (though December's overall average precipitation is lower). Dry conditions predominated in the central Plains and into parts of Iowa and Missouri.

Images from High Plains Regional Climate Center (HPRCC), Online Data Services: [ACIS Climate Maps](https://www.acisclimate.com/). Generated: 1/5/2022.



Impacts

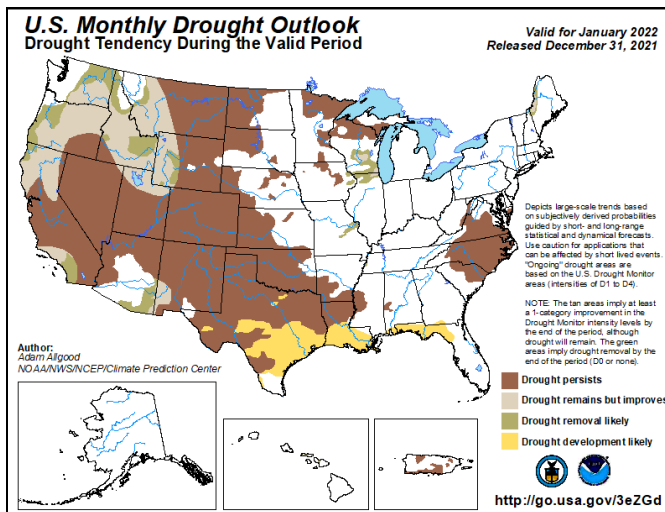
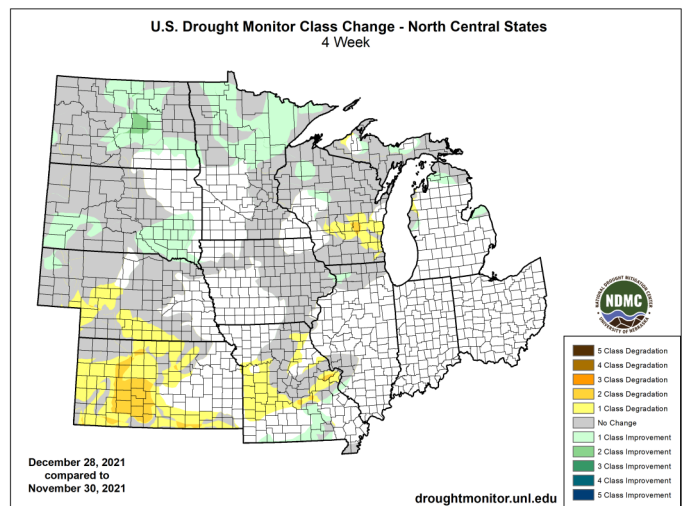
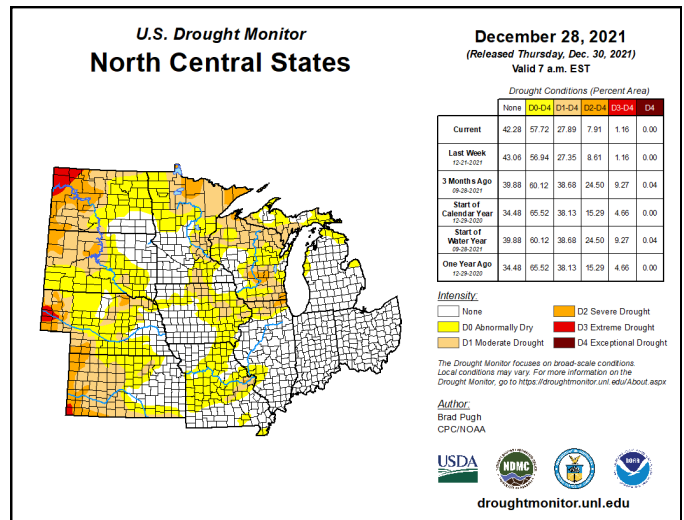
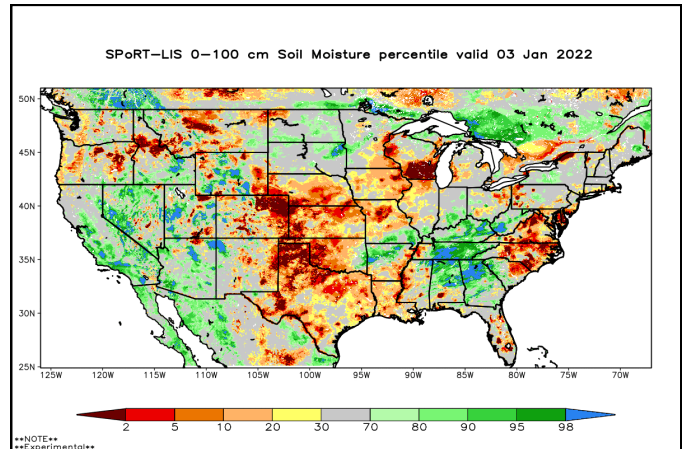
Despite being outside the growing season, several agricultural impacts have occurred in December. A strong storm system in mid-December created several issues. Severe weather occurred in several states, leading to some structural damage. Winter wheat in parts of Kansas was damaged by strong winds and a dust storm. Fires also damaged farm structures and killed livestock—an estimated 2,000 head—in Kansas. The strong winds caused a variety of damage to hoop barns in Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, blowing off plastic and exposing less hardy crops, like lettuces, to colder temperatures.

Excess wetness has damaged winter wheat in Indiana and Ohio. The overall warmth kept cover crops from being killed in some southern areas.

Cold temperatures have pushed soil temperatures (not pictured) below freezing into parts of Nebraska, Iowa, Wisconsin, and northern areas. Some relatively dry surface soils are causing soil temperatures to bounce around quickly as a response to the fluctuating air temperatures. Eastern areas have seen soil temperatures near 50 still recently.

Drought conditions are largely unchanged, because changes in winter tend to occur more slowly. Extreme drought conditions (D3) still exist in the Plains with spotty severe drought (D2) in others areas. A few areas have experienced improvements in northern areas and degradation (i.e. worsening) in the central plains and Wisconsin. Soil moisture conditions generally reflect the overall drought conditions.

The [Midwest Climate Hub](#) would like to hear reports of damage to any crop or horticultural in your region.



Maps Generated by [NASA SPoRT](#), the [Climate Prediction Center](#), and the [National Drought Mitigation Center](#).

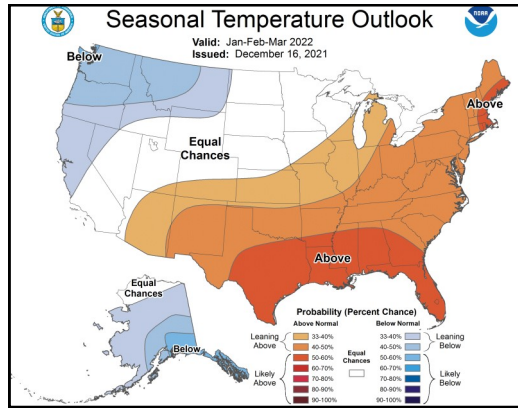
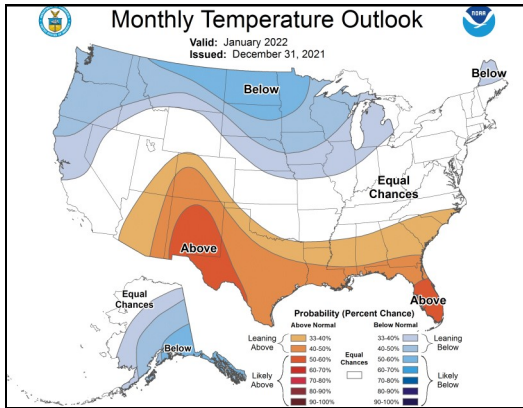
For more information, please visit:
<https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/midwest>

Outlook

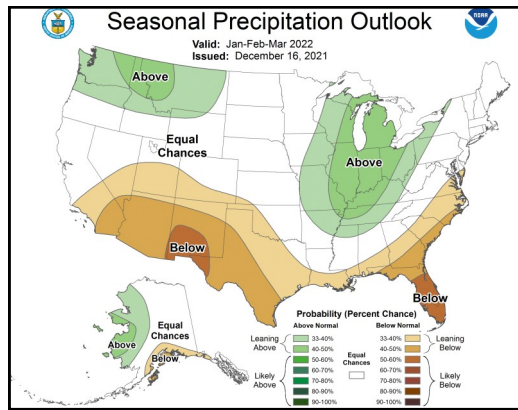
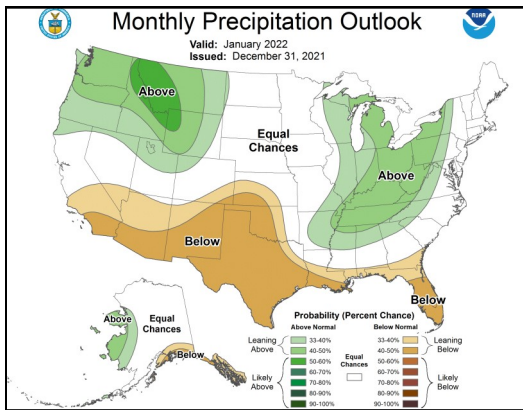


The January and January-March outlooks from the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center continue to reflect the La Niña conditions that persist in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Both the monthly and seasonal outlooks show typical La Niña conditions.

Looking ahead to January, colder-than-average conditions are more likely in the northern Plains and in the Upper Midwest. Early January has been cold with several more cold outbreaks expected this month. There are slightly increased chances for precipitation in the Great Lakes/Ohio Valley and the northwest Plains.



The seasonal outlooks also follow La Niña patterns for precipitation and limit the chances for cold in the far northwest Plains. Slightly increased chances for warmer conditions exist for the Midwest, which would indicate better chances for warmth in late winter following the January outlook.



Drought changes are likely to be minimal given overall precipitation amounts during the winter. Some improvement is possible in Illinois and Wisconsin where higher precipitation totals may occur. The rest of the region is unlikely to see much change throughout January.

Email the [Midwest Climate Hub](#) to join our list of subscribers.

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

Partners and Contributors



- [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#)
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- [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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For more information, please visit:
<https://www.climatehubs.usda.gov/hubs/midwest>