Wisconsin State Climatology Office
Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

Extension
University of Wisconsin-Madison

USDA Midwest Climate Hub
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NRCS
Natural Resources Conservation Service

AgWOW

Ag Weather Outlook for Wisconsin

Week of August 5, 2025

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Key Points

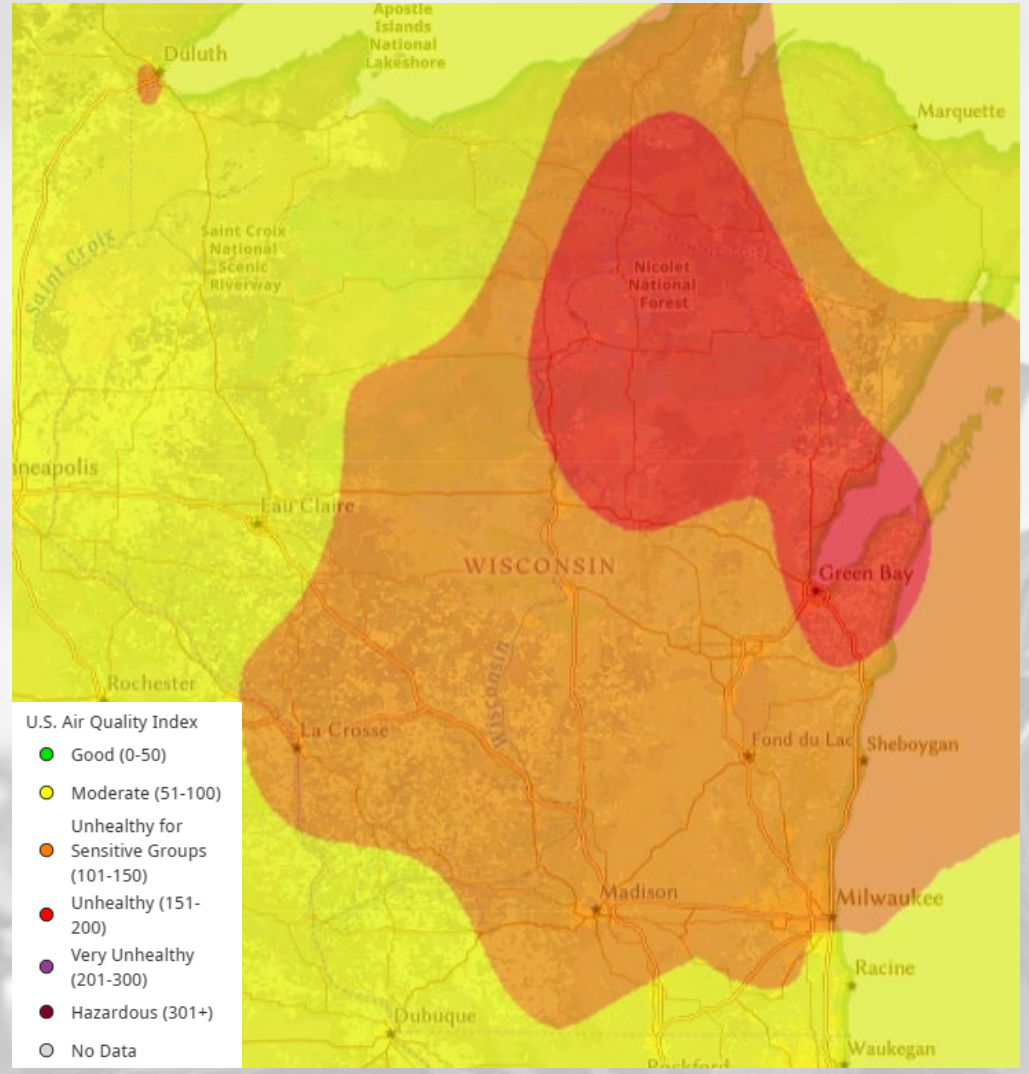
Navigate to select slides by clicking on the links below.

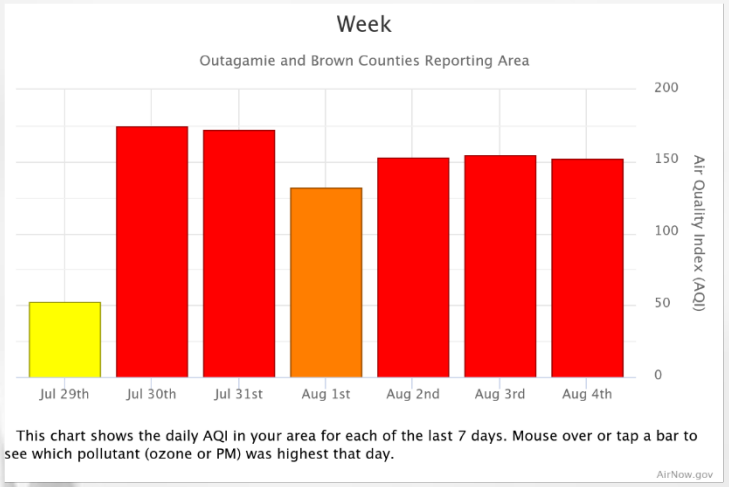
1) Last week was characterized by smoky skies and cooler-than-normal temps.
2) Precip was concentrated in the southern counties last week, with totals of 0.5-1.5" common.
3) Soils dried out some from last week's report, but drought is still non-existent in WI.
4) Mid-August is showing a stronger probability to be warmer than normal statewide.

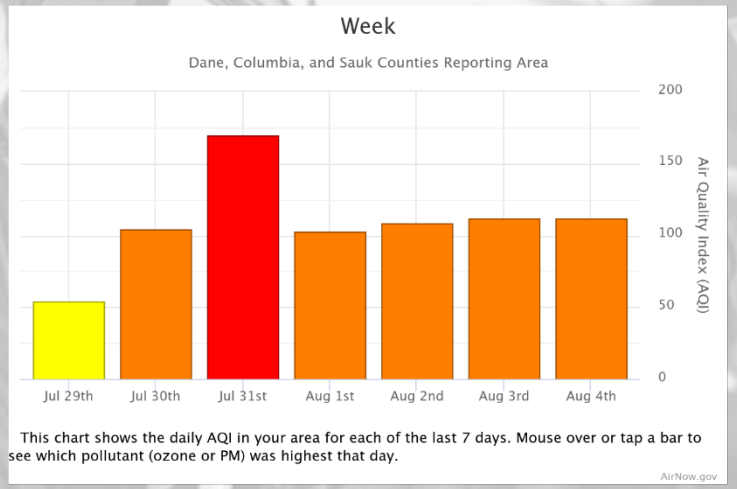
- *For this week's agronomic recommendations from UW Extension, click here.*
- *For this week's crop progress updates from USDA NASS, click here.*

Wx Highlight: Smoky Skies

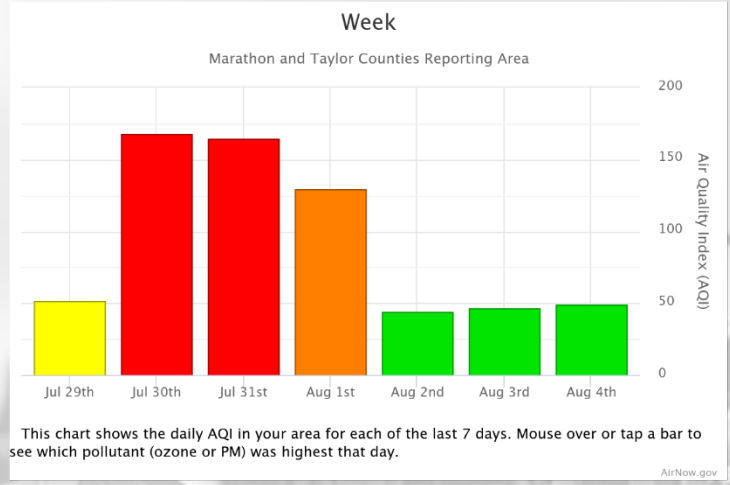
Air quality map for August 4, 2025







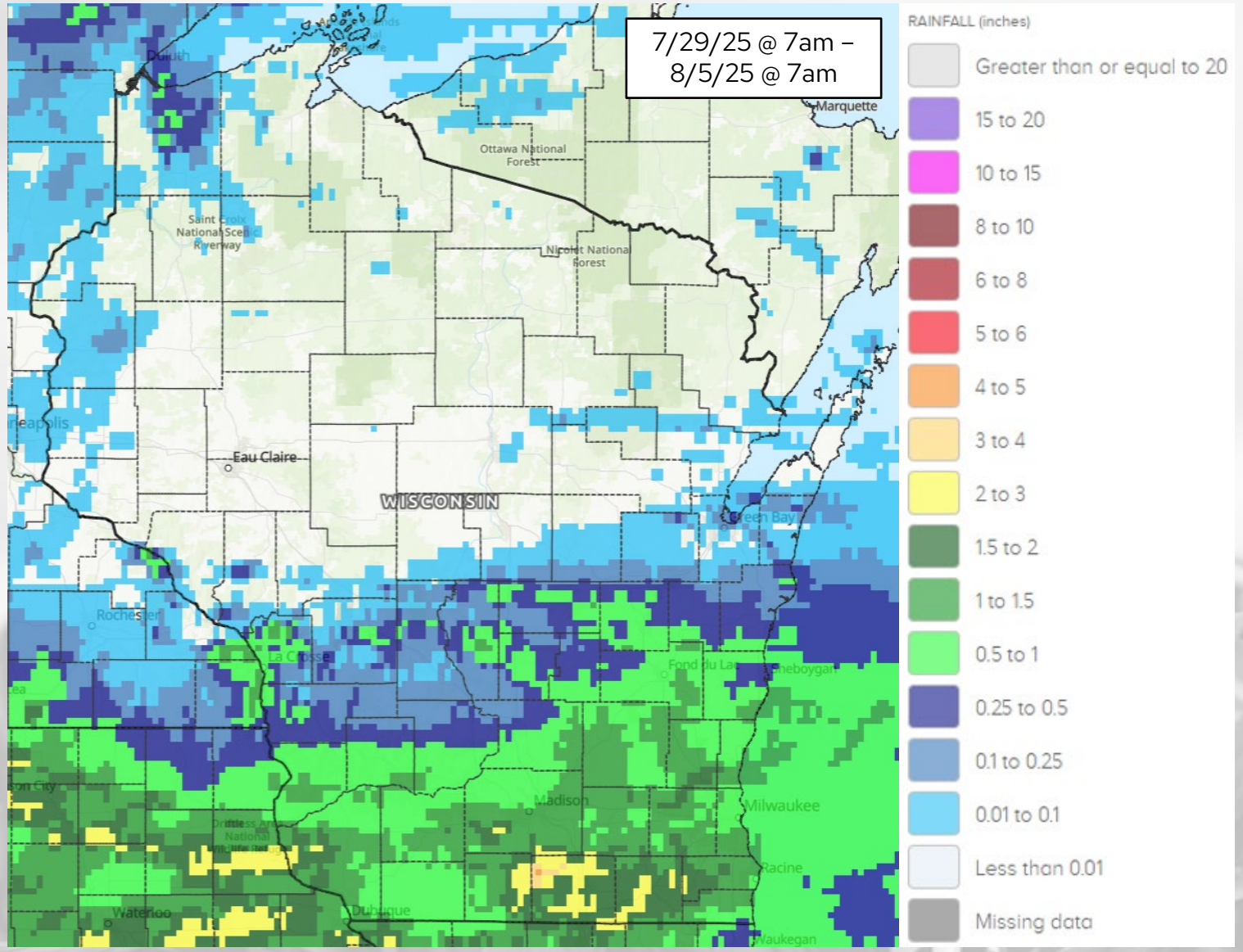
- Multiple days of unhealthy air quality in the state from wildfire smoke.



- Wisconsin has experienced 17 days this year where air quality has been degraded by wildfire smoke sinking to the surface (Source Link)

https://www.airnow.gov/

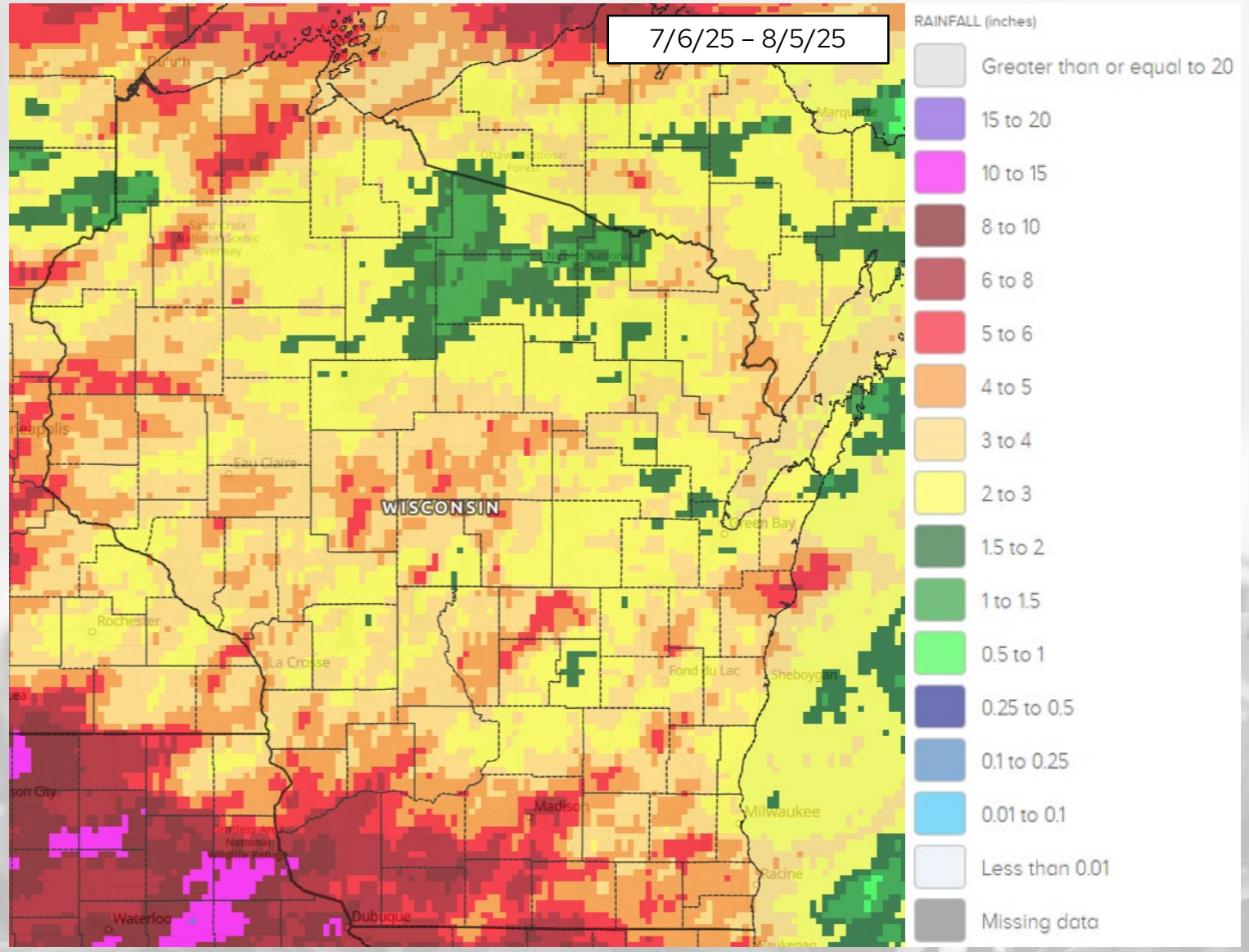
7 Day Precip



- Highest totals in the southern tiers of counties.
  - At least **0.5”**, with pockets of **2” or more**.
  - Highest total → Albany, Green Co. (**2.42”**)
- **Little to no precip** in the northern half of the state.

https://water.noaa.gov/

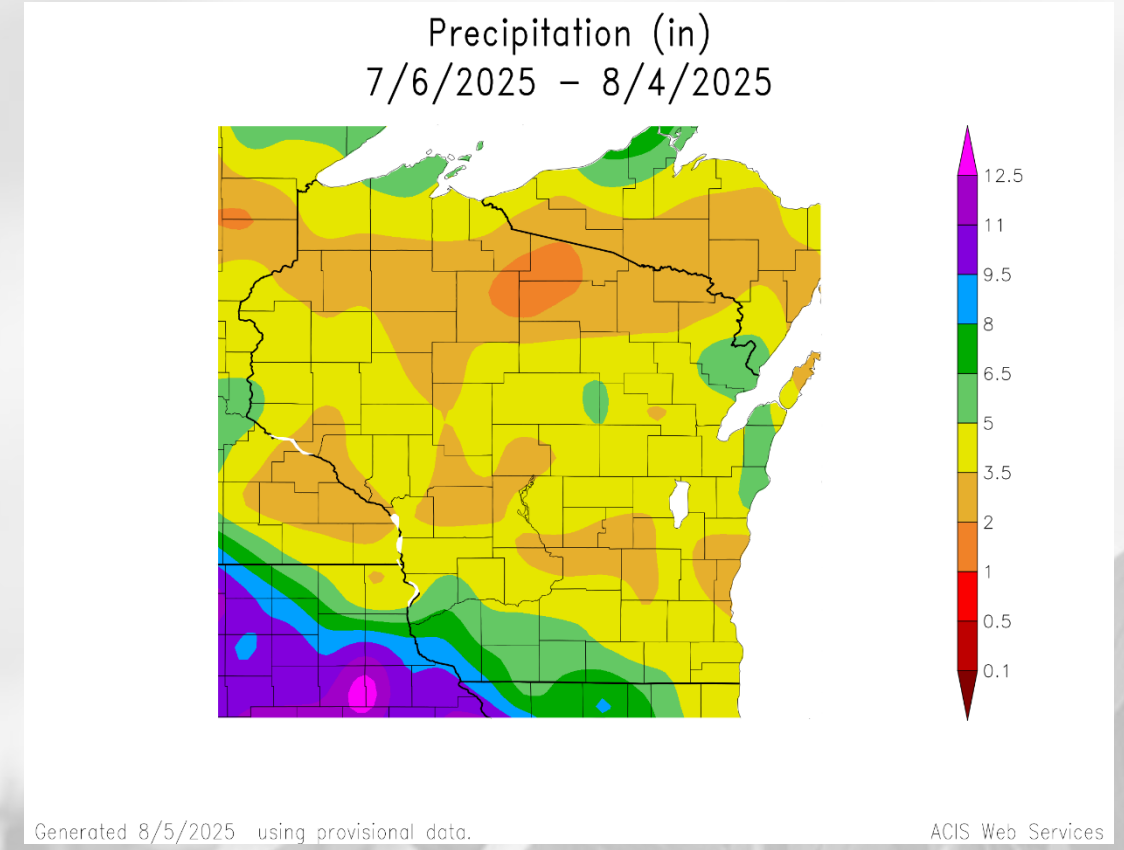
30 Day Precip

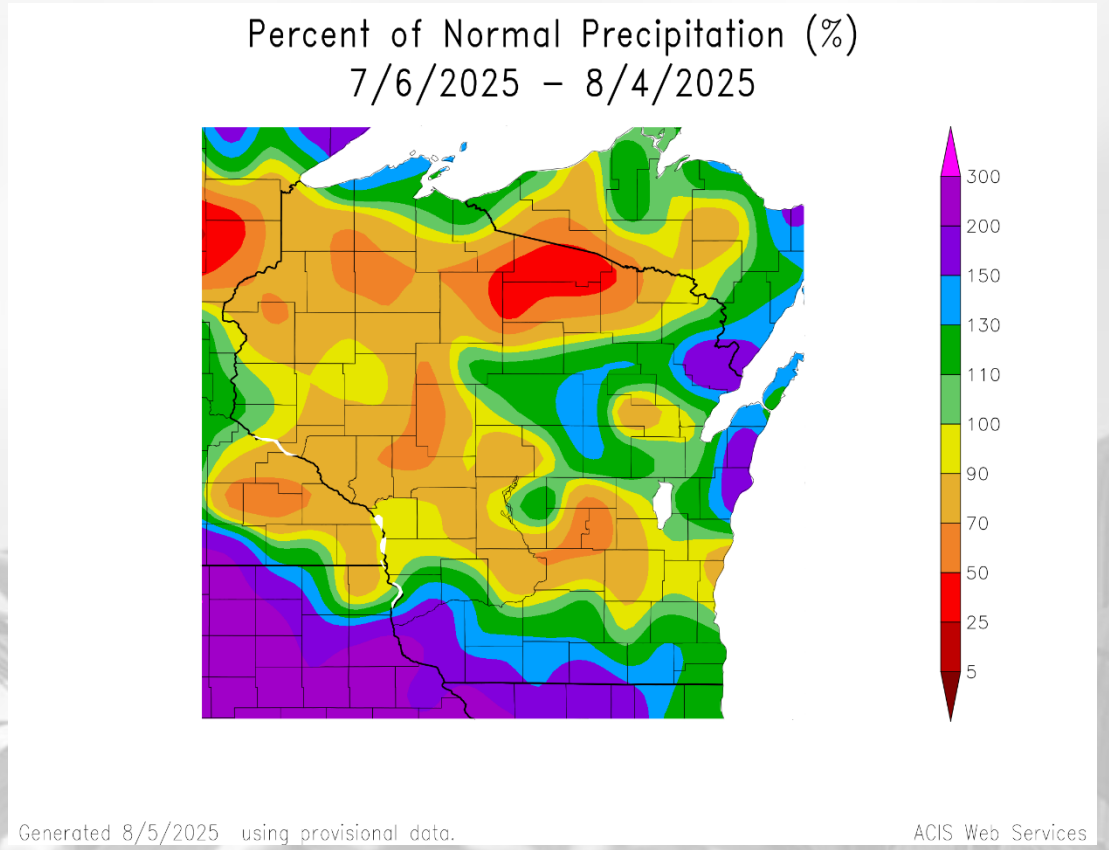


- **3-5" common** across the western, central, and southern regions.
- Localized areas of **6" or more** in the southwest, south-central, and far northwest counties.
- Much lower amounts (**1-3"**) in the north-central region.

https://water.noaa.gov/

30 Day Precip Total/Percent Avg.

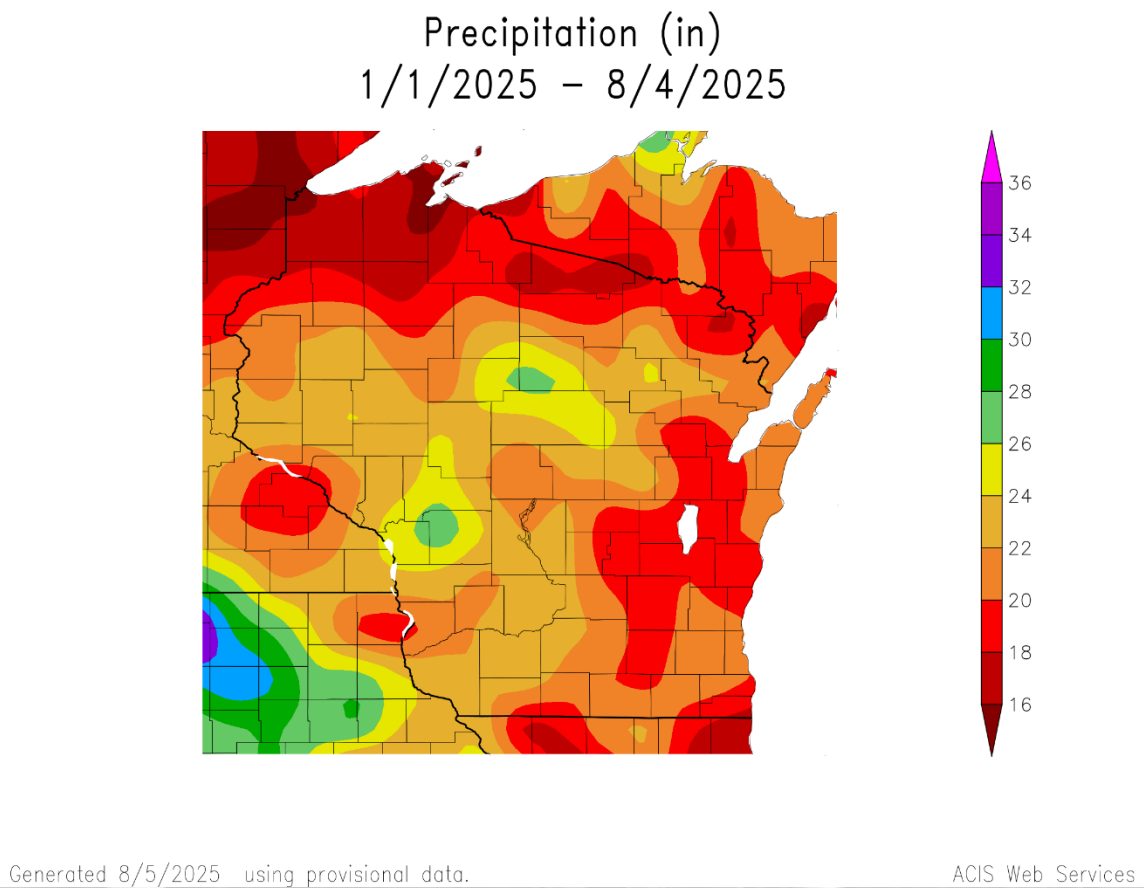


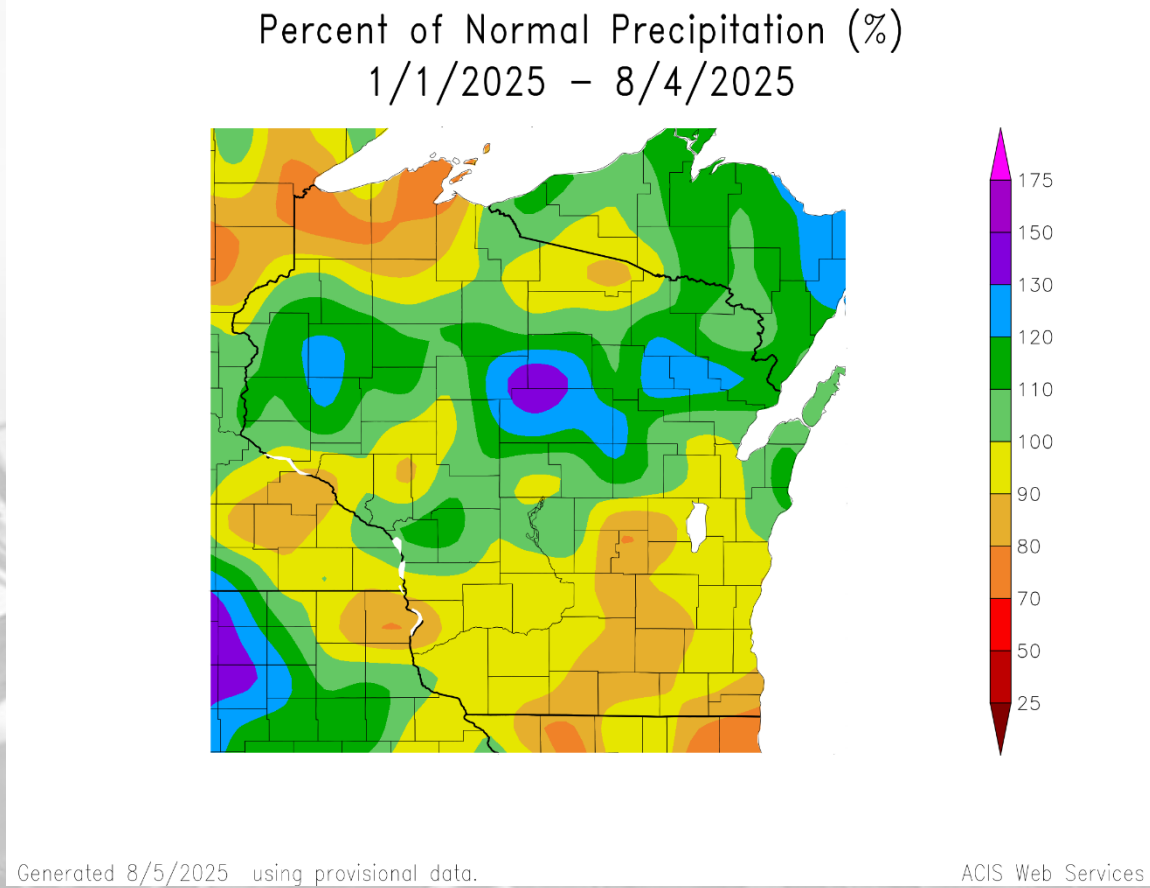


- Significant local variation in precipitation across the state.
- **150% or more** of normal in isolated parts of the south and northeast regions – totals **5" or more**.
- **Near or below normal** across the west, central, and north – totals of **2-5"**.

https://hprcc.unl.edu/maps.php?map=ACISClimateMaps

2025 Precipitation (so far)





https://hprcc.unl.edu/maps.php?map=ACISClimateMaps

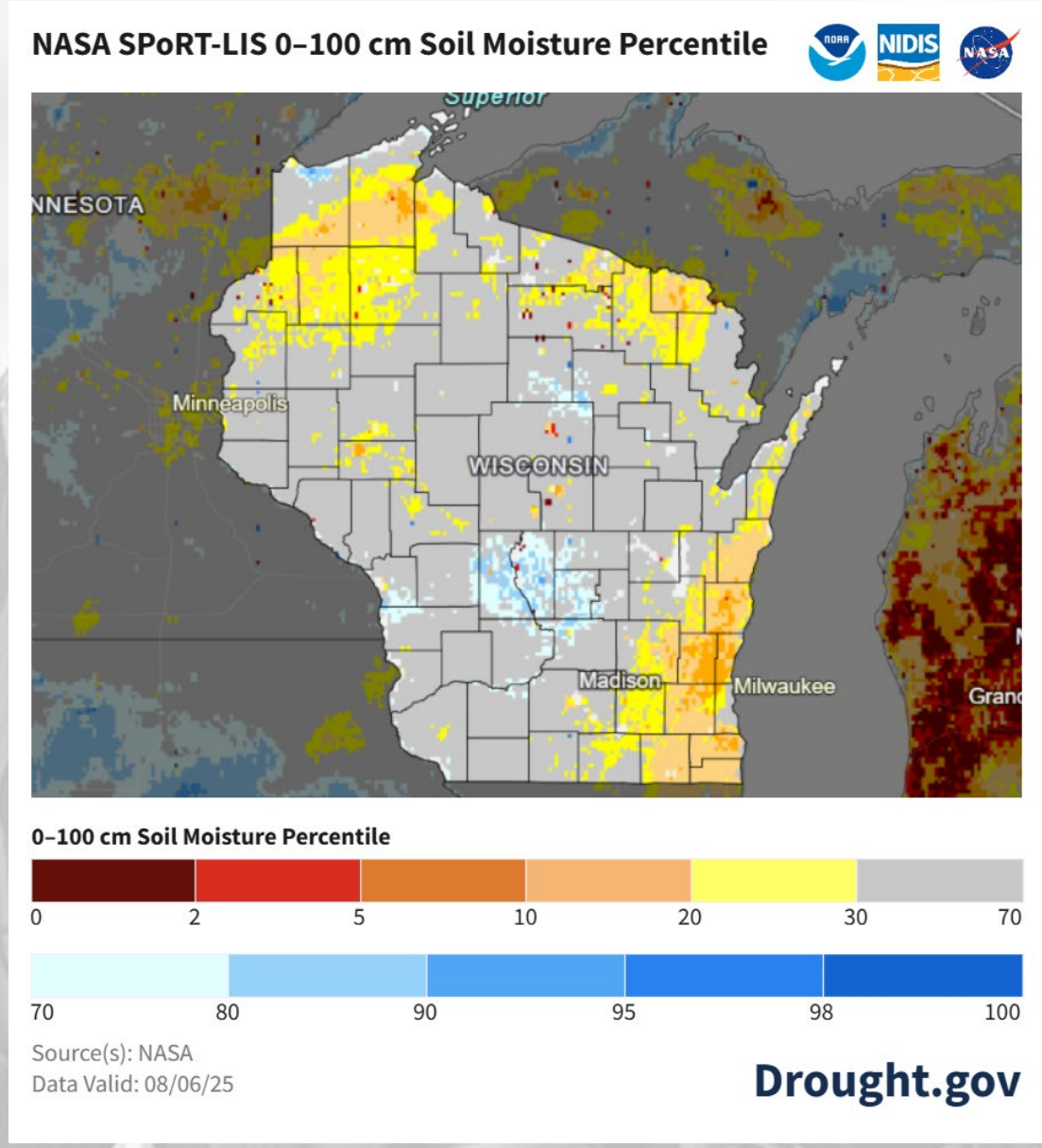
Soil Moisture Models

- **Near-normal soil moisture levels** in the top 1 meter of soil across most of WI, with instances of above normal moisture in central WI.

- **Below normal** in parts of the north after low precip totals over the past 2 weeks. The east remains below normal despite last week's rainfall.

Model Notes:
Red areas = top 5 driest in 100 years.
Dark red areas = top 2 driest in 100 years.
Blue areas = top 2 wettest in 100 years.

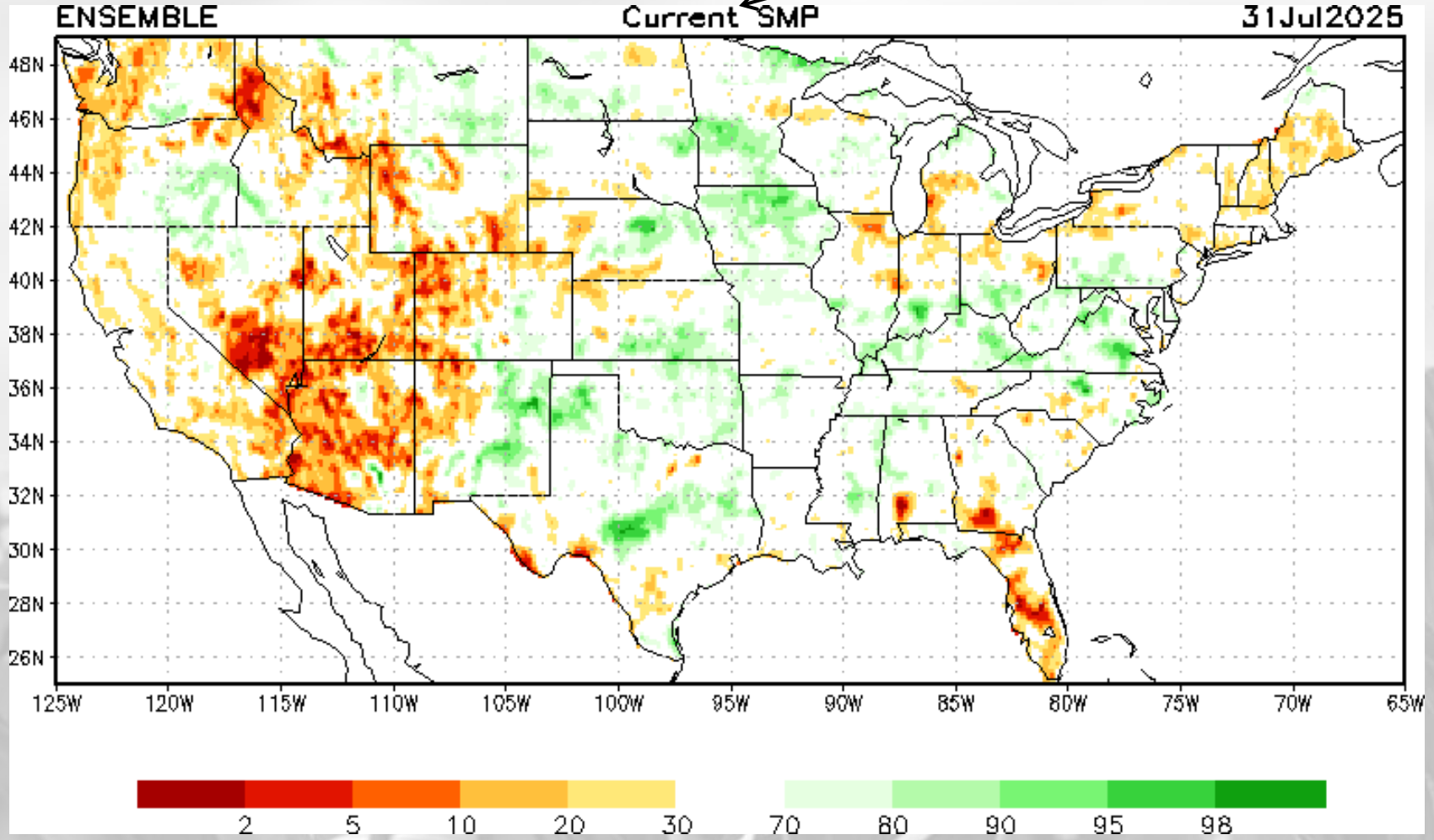
It's worth noting that each soil moisture model has their own characteristics and input variables, so there tends to be variation between models. Thus, it's worthwhile to look at multiple models opposed to just one.



https://weather.ndc.nasa.gov/sport/case_studies/lis_CONUS.html
https://www.drought.gov/states/wisconsin

Soil Moisture Models

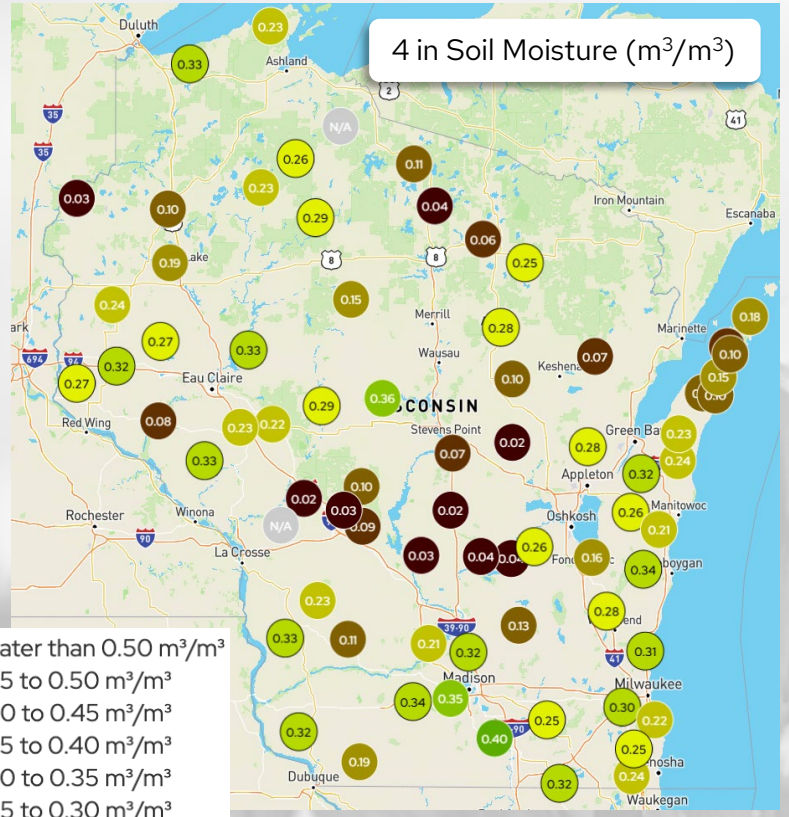
NOTE: this map displays the soil moisture percentile for July 31. It was the most recent update as of August 5.

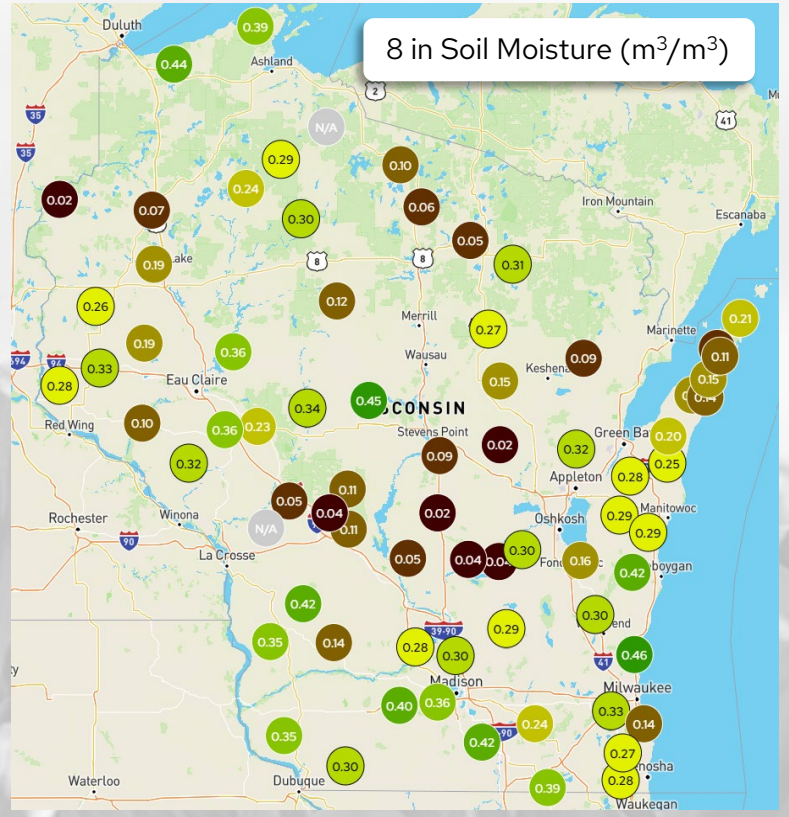


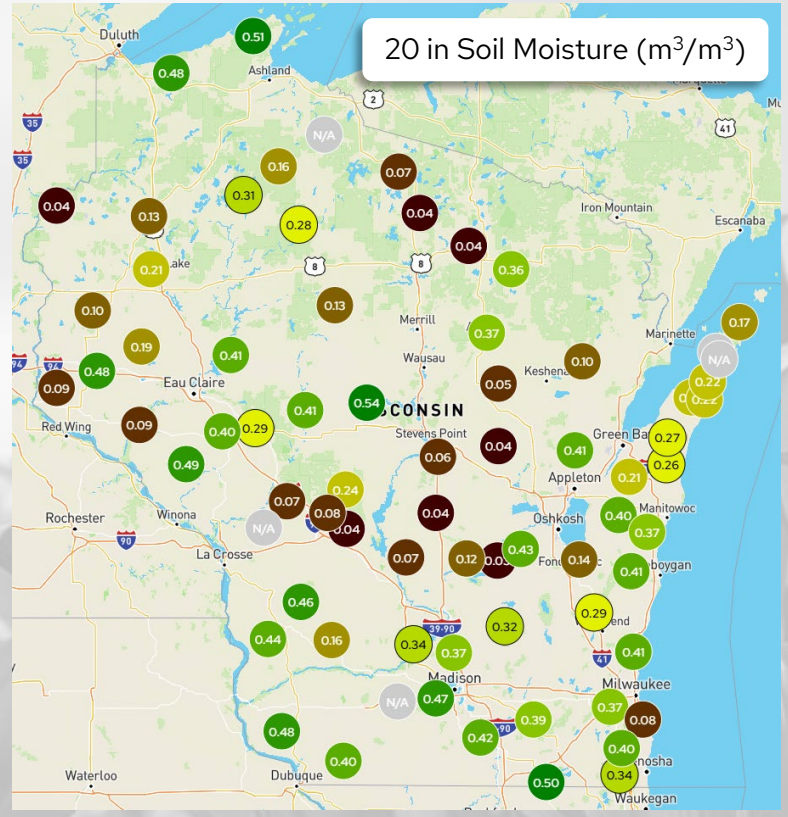
https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/Drought/Monitoring/smp_new.shtml

Wisconet Soil Moisture

Maps showing soil moisture conditions on August 5th @ 10am.
Units of map values are {Volume of water}/{Volume of soil}.







- greater than 0.50 m^3/m^3
- 0.45 to 0.50 m^3/m^3
- 0.40 to 0.45 m^3/m^3
- 0.35 to 0.40 m^3/m^3
- 0.30 to 0.35 m^3/m^3
- 0.25 to 0.30 m^3/m^3
- 0.20 to 0.25 m^3/m^3
- 0.15 to 0.20 m^3/m^3
- 0.10 to 0.15 m^3/m^3
- 0.05 to 0.10 m^3/m^3
- 0.00 to 0.05 m^3/m^3

https://wisconet.wisc.edu/

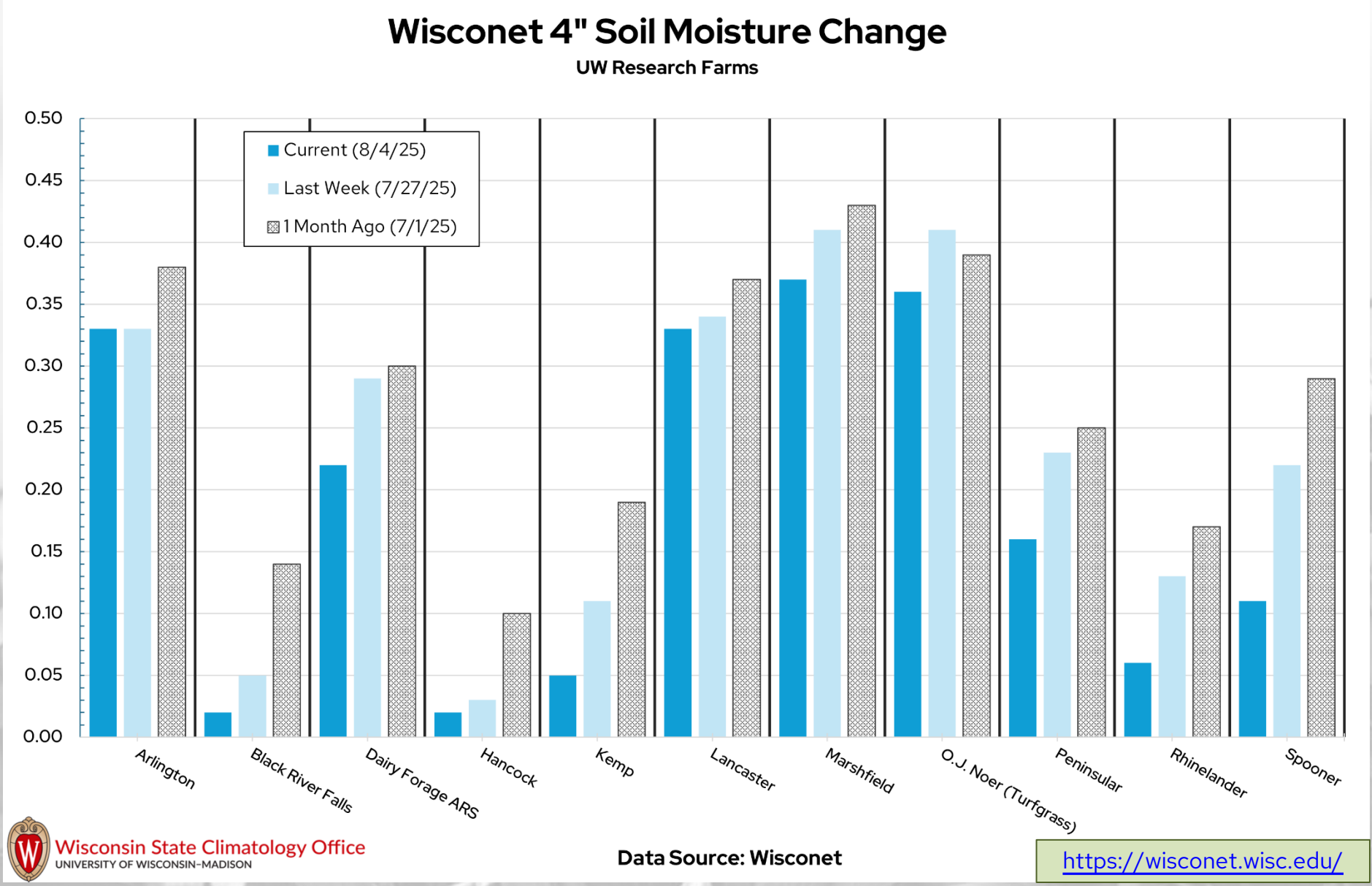
Wisconet Soil Moisture

Change in soil moisture from July 28th (Start) to August 4th (End).
Units of change values are {Volume of water}/{Volume of soil}.

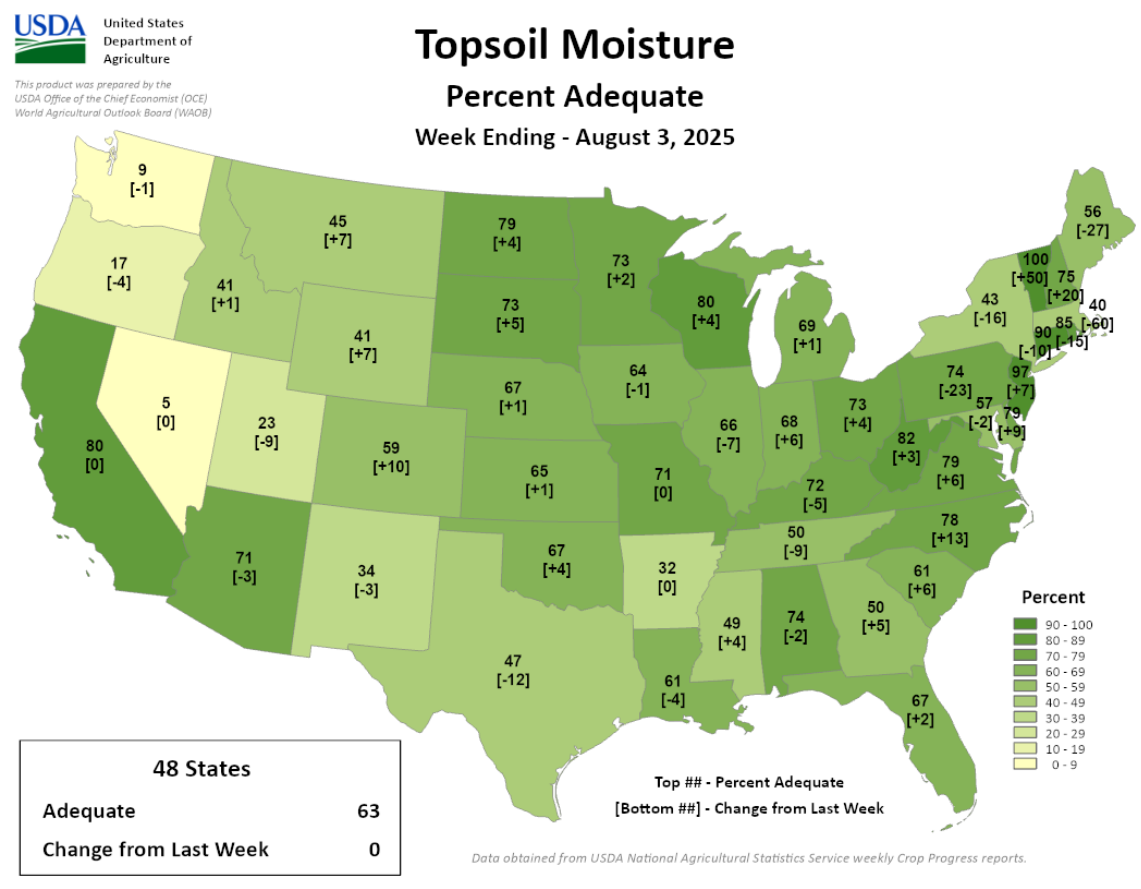
Research Farm	County	Total Precip (in)	4" Change (Start)	4" Change (End)	8" Change (Start)	8" Change (End)	20" Change (Start)	20" Change (End)
Arlington	Columbia	0.52	0.31	0.33	0.31	0.30	0.37	0.37
Black River Falls	Jackson	0.34	0.04	0.02	0.08	0.06	0.08	0.07
Dairy Forage ARS	Sauk	0.52	0.28	0.22	0.33	0.29	0.34	0.34
Hancock	Waushara	0.24	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.04
Kemp	Oneida	0.03	0.09	0.05	0.10	0.06	0.04	0.04
Lancaster	Grant	1.43	0.34	0.33	0.36	0.36	0.49	0.48
Marshfield	Marathon	0.77	0.40	0.37	0.47	0.46	0.55	0.54
O.J. Noer *(Turfgrass)*	Dane	1.91	0.40	0.36	0.38	0.37	0.48	0.47
Peninsular	Door	0.00	0.21	0.16	0.19	0.16	0.24	0.23
Rhinelander	Oneida	0.01	0.12	0.06	0.11	0.05	0.05	0.04
Spooner	Washburn	0.10	0.20	0.11	0.13	0.08	0.14	0.13

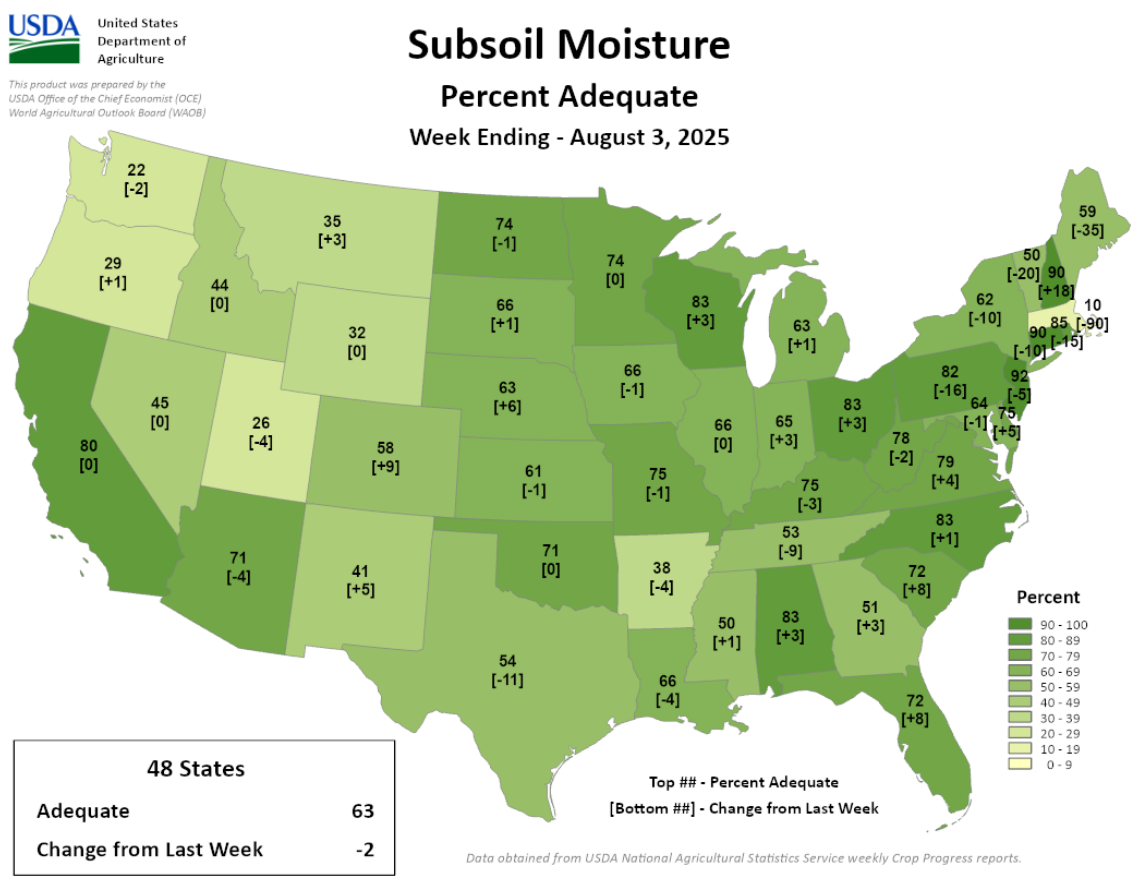
https://wisconet.wisc.edu/

Wisconet Soil Moisture



Adequate Soil Moisture



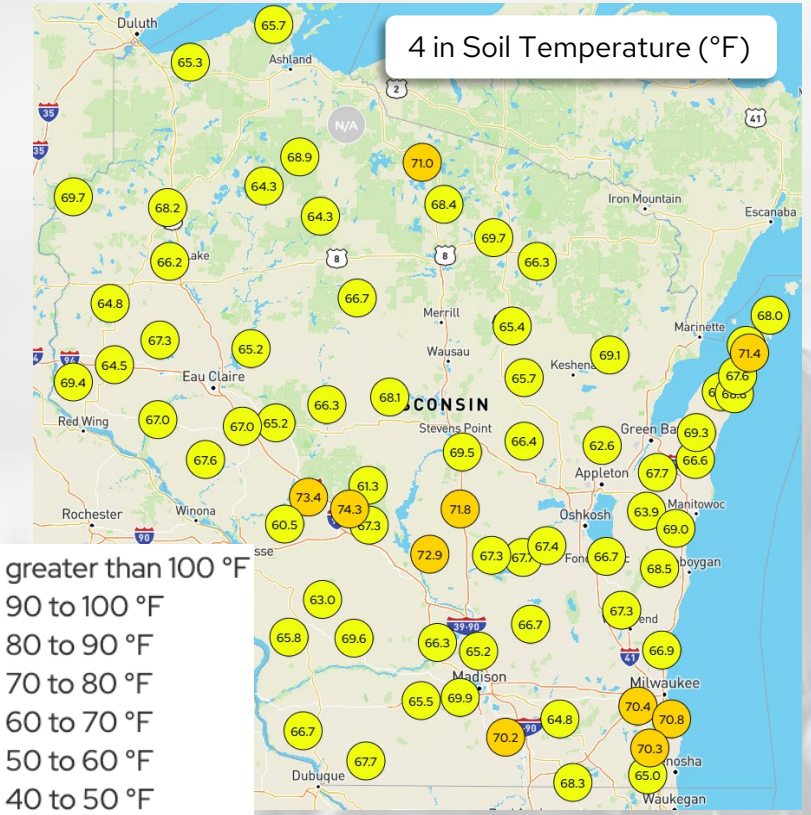


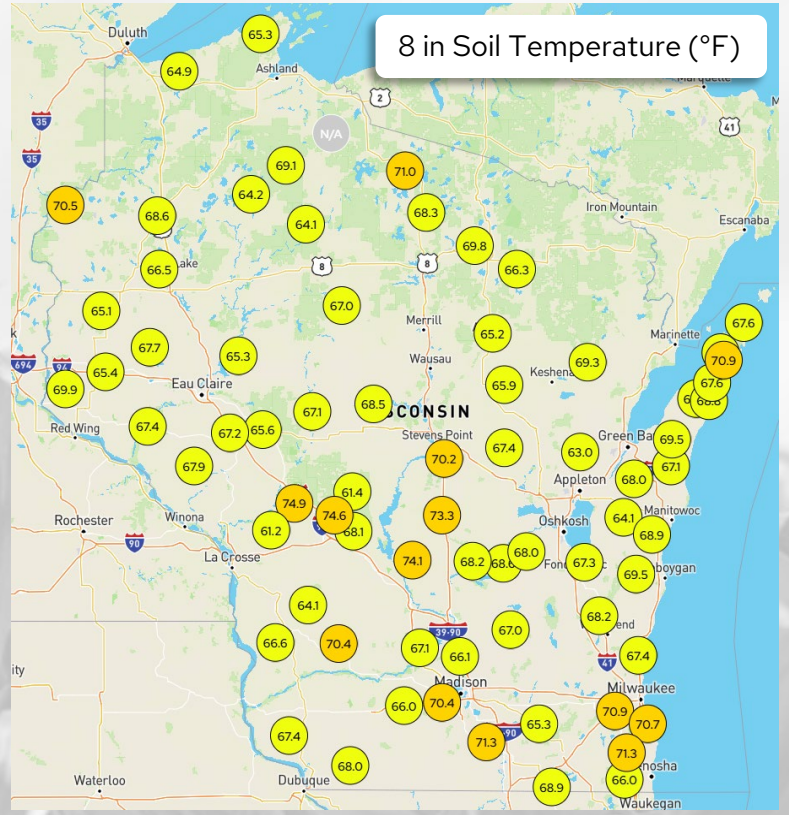
- **80-83%** of agricultural soils in the state reporting adequate topsoil and subsoil moisture.
- **11%** of fields in the state are reported as having short to very short topsoil moisture, a **small increase** from last week.

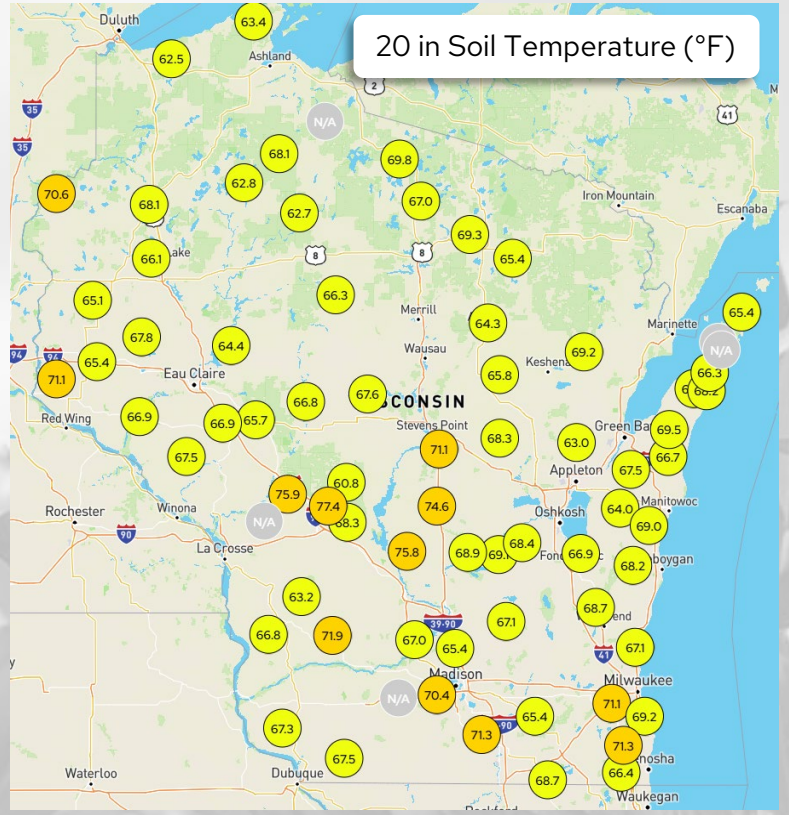
https://agindrought.unl.edu/Other.aspx

Wisconet Soil Temperature

Maps showing soil temperature conditions on August 5th @ 10am.



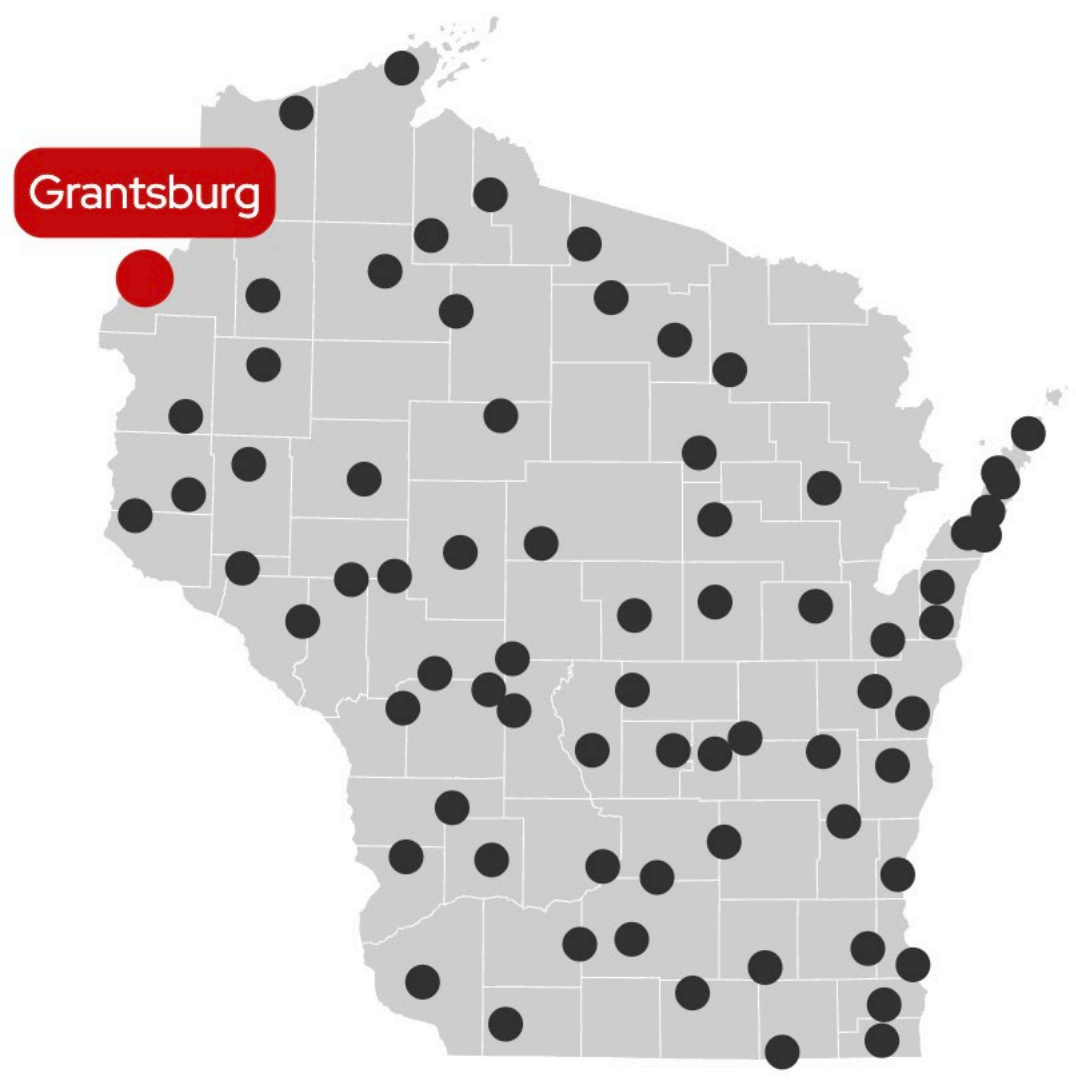




- greater than 100 °F
- 90 to 100 °F
- 80 to 90 °F
- 70 to 80 °F
- 60 to 70 °F
- 50 to 60 °F
- 40 to 50 °F
- 30 to 40 °F
- 20 to 30 °F
- 10 to 20 °F
- less than 10 °F

https://wisconet.wisc.edu/

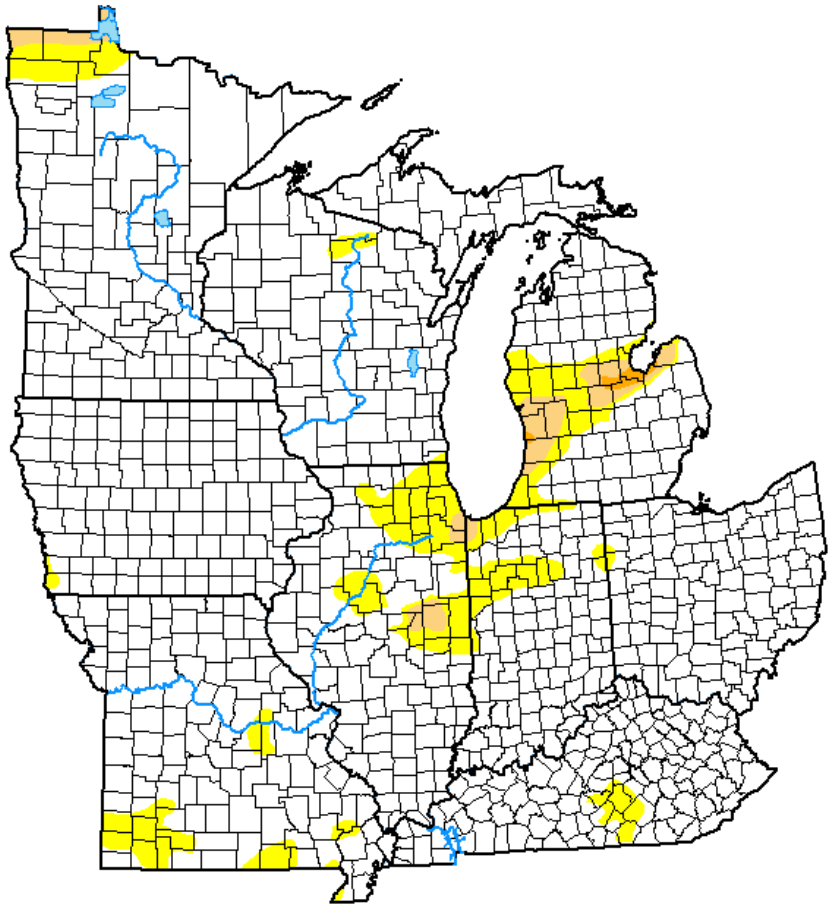
Wisconet Stations



- As of August 5, 2025, there are **73 Wisconet stations** across the state.
- To find data for the station nearest to you, **click this link** to go to a webpage with an interactive Wisconet station map.
- **Stations added since January 1, 2025**:
  - Taycheedah, Fond du Lac County (4/23/25)
  - Brigham, Iowa County (5/7/25)
  - Westboro, Taylor County (5/13/25)
  - Shanagolden, Ashland County (5/28/25)
  - Darlington, Lafayette County (5/29/25)
  - Grand Marsh, Adams County (6/12/25)
  - River Falls, Pierce County (6/17/25)
  - Flambeau, Price County (6/18/25)
  - Hunter, Sawyer County (6/18/25)
  - Bayfield, Bayfield County (6/19/25)
  - Mindoro, La Crosse County (7/1/25)
  - Hay River, Dunn County (7/2/25)
  - Rice Lake, Barron County (7/2/25)
  - Grantsburg, Burnett County (7/3/25)

https://wisconet.wisc.edu/

US Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor

Midwest

August 5, 2025

(Released Thursday, Aug. 7, 2025)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	90.30	9.70	1.83	0.16	0.00	0.00
Last Week *07-29-2025*	91.50	8.50	2.41	0.04	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago *05-06-2025*	67.29	32.71	6.10	0.11	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year *01-07-2025*	44.12	55.88	29.47	3.56	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year *10-01-2024*	21.78	78.22	28.15	6.40	1.46	0.66
One Year Ago *08-06-2024*	82.04	17.96	3.36	1.15	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme 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:

Richard Tinker

CPC/NOAA/NWS/NCEP

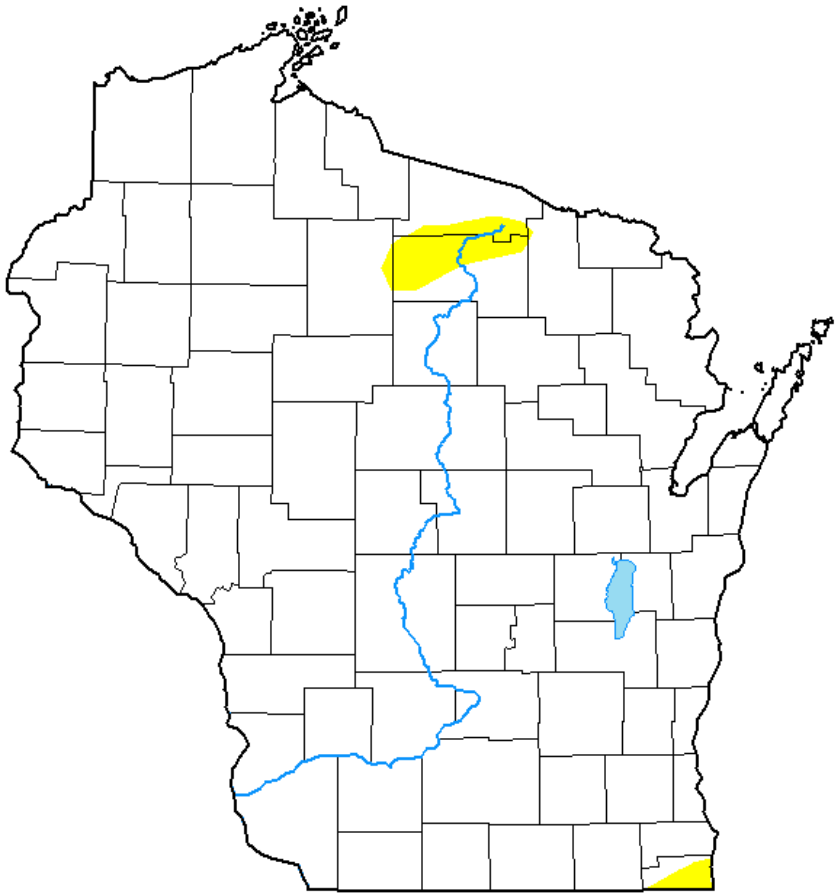
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

- Midwest: Compared to last week:
  - **Increase** in drought-free coverage.
  - **Decrease** in D1-D4 coverage.
- Midwest: **1 class improvement** in northern IL, southern WI, and northern IN. Drought is most common in central MI.
- Wisconsin: The state is still **drought-free!** Isolated pockets of D0 still remain in the far SE and in/around Oneida County.
- **98%** of the Midwest is drought free (2% in D1 or D2).

Note: D0 is not considered drought.

http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

US Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor

Wisconsin

August 5, 2025

(Released Thursday, Aug. 7, 2025)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	98.22	1.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 07-29-2025	99.24	0.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 05-06-2025	67.75	32.25	2.41	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year 01-07-2025	36.12	63.88	39.54	0.00	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year 10-01-2024	18.68	81.32	29.83	8.45	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago 08-06-2024	71.12	28.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme 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

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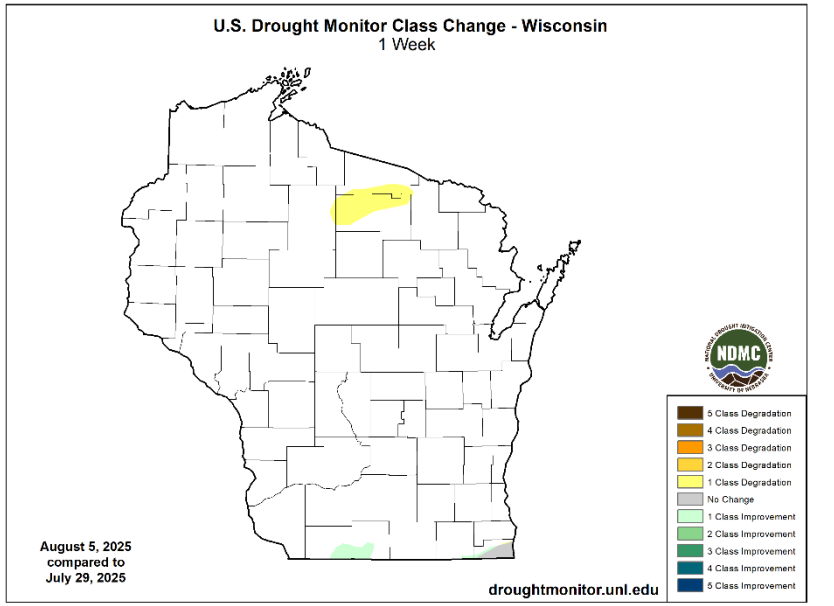
http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

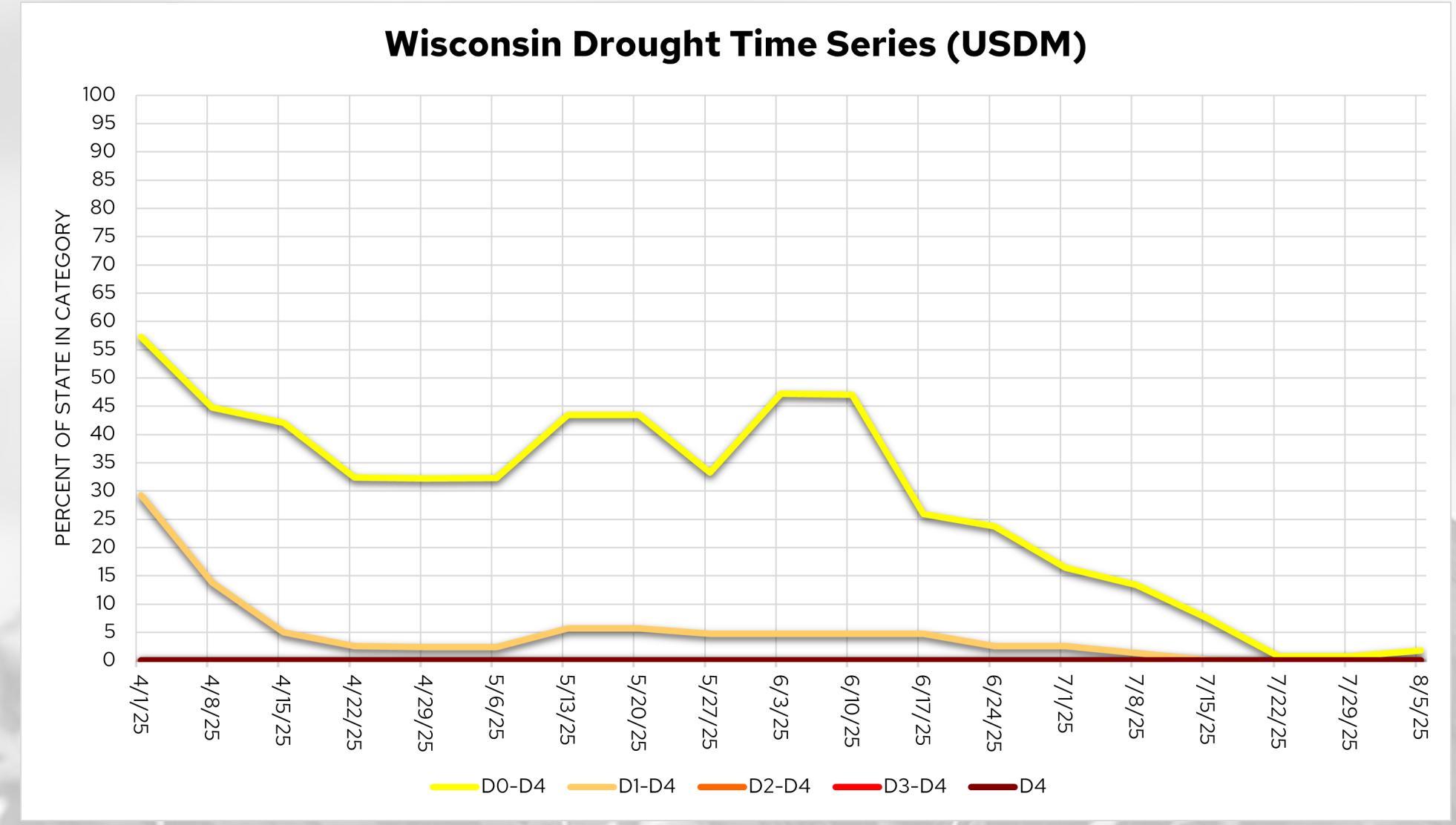
Amount of state in:

- D1-D4 – 0.0% --
- D2-D4 – 0.0% --
- D3-D4 – 0.0% --
- D4 – 0.0% --

Note: ↑↓ indicate change from last week. Red up arrows indicate increase in drought area; vice-versa for green arrows. -- indicates no change from last week.



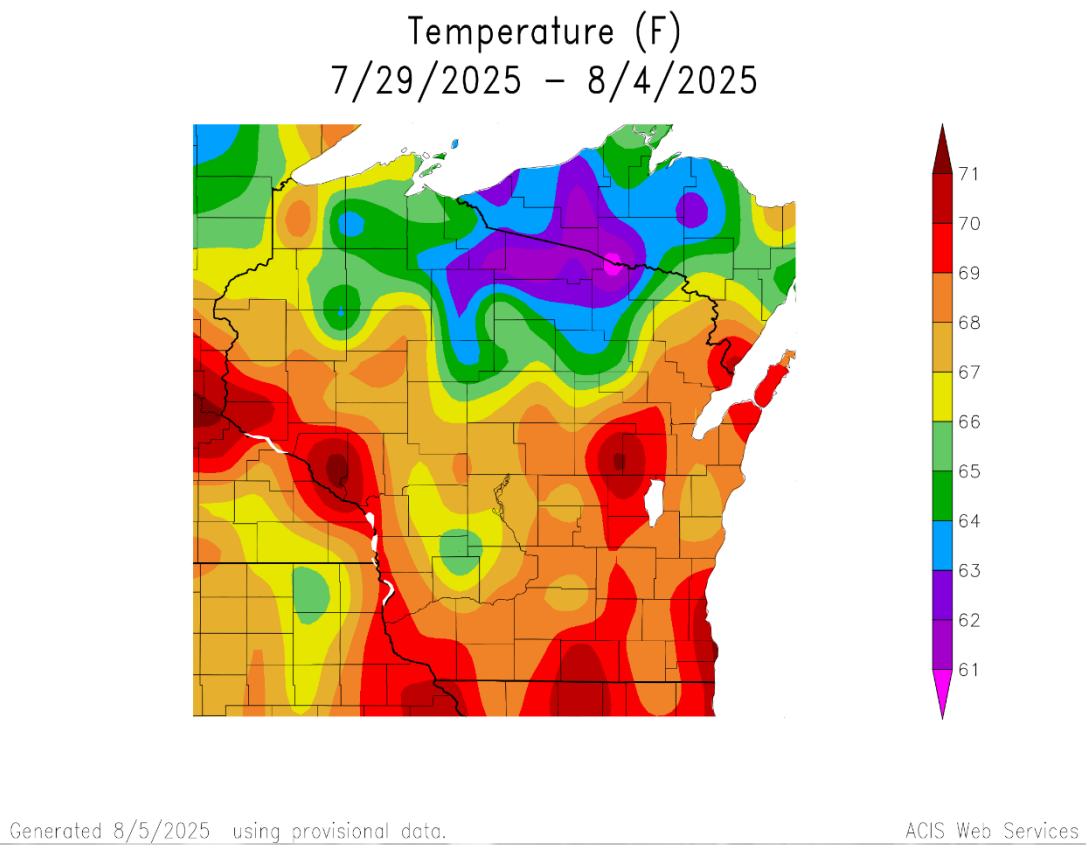
USDM Time Series

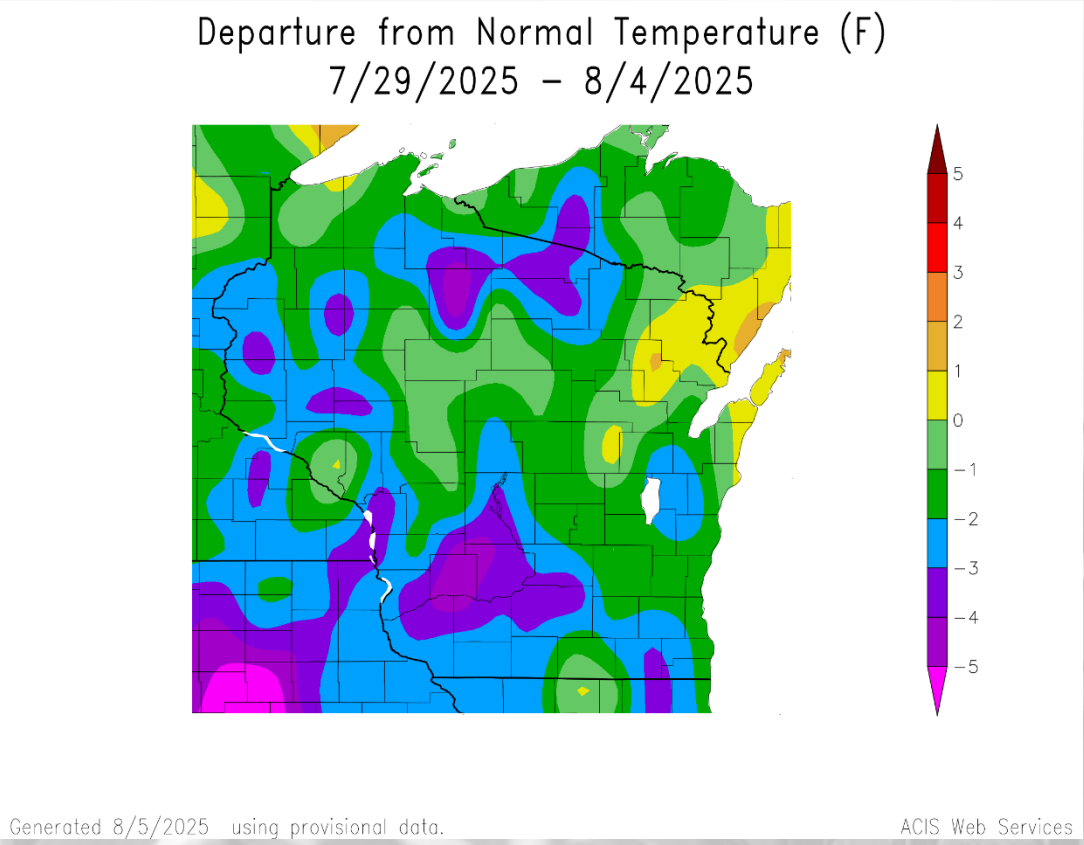


Minimal change in conditions since last week, with a slight increase in D0 coverage.

http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/

7 Day Temperatures

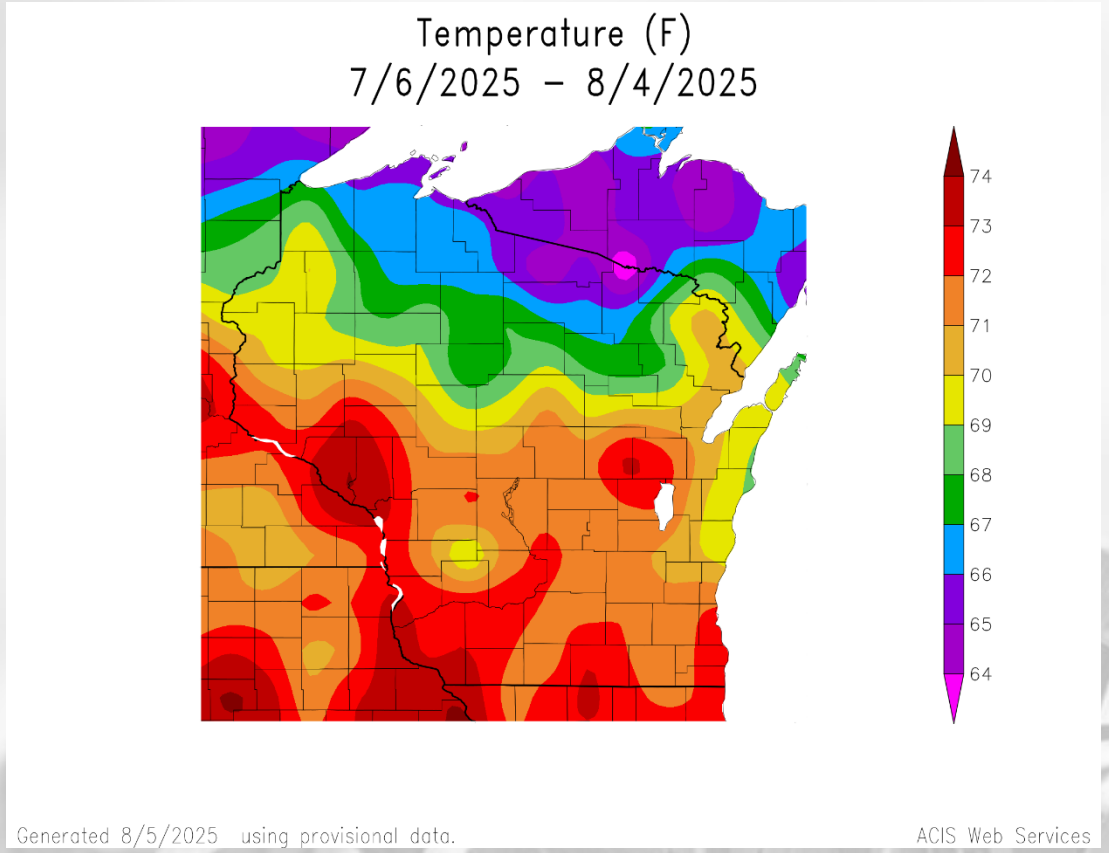


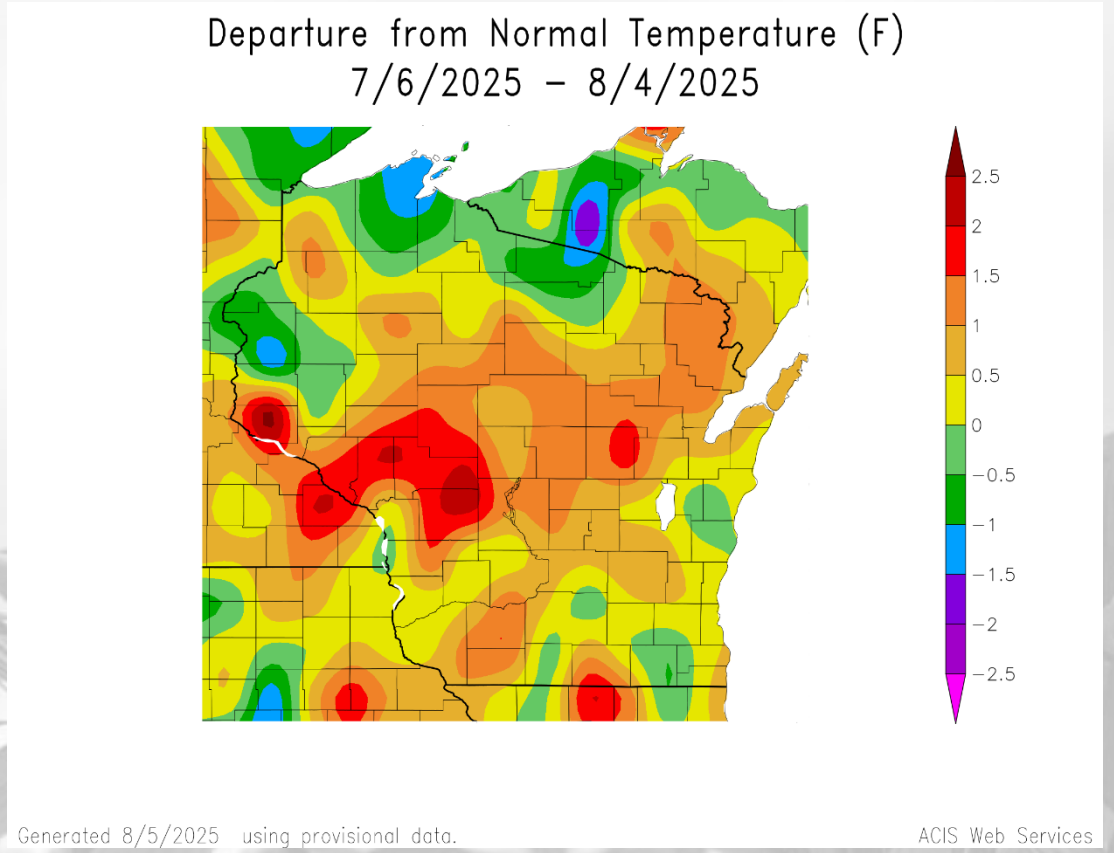


- Average temp. range of **68-71+°F** in much of the south, west, and central; to **61-64°F** in the north.
- **Below normal** conditions were common statewide, especially in the west and north (**2-4°F below normal**).
- Nearer to normal in the northeast.

https://hprcc.unl.edu/maps.php?map=ACISClimateMaps

30 Day Temperatures

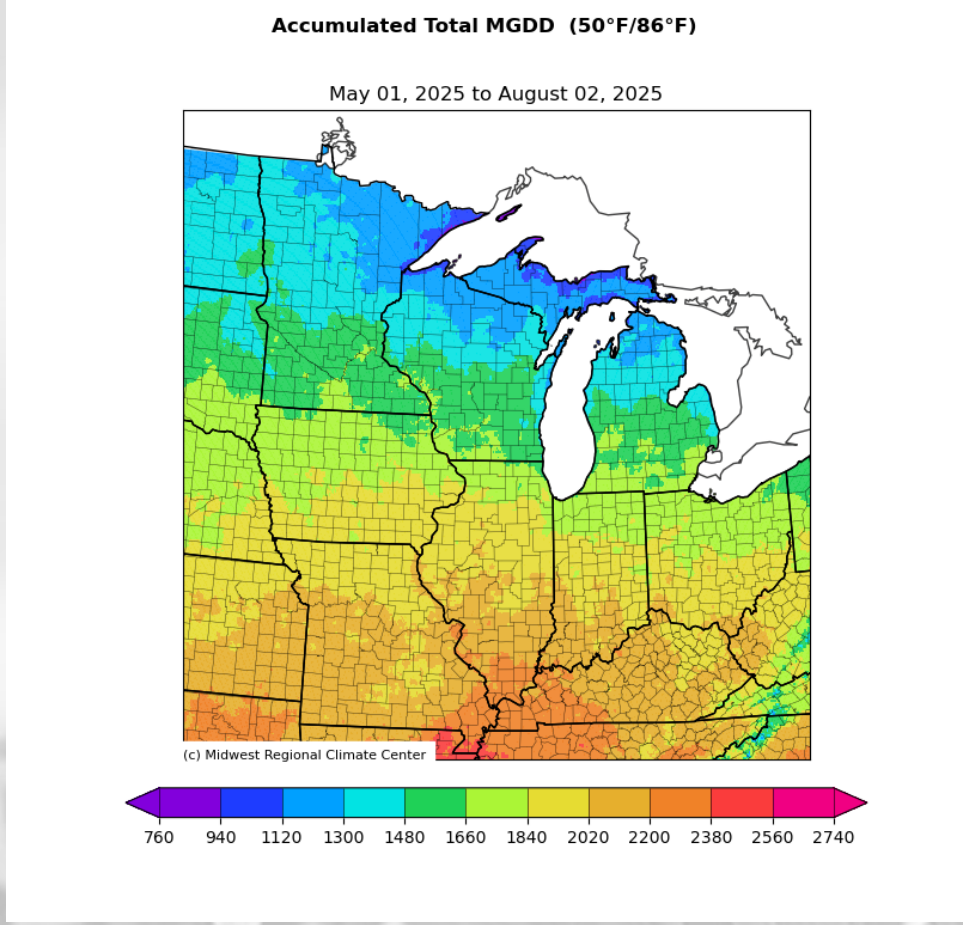


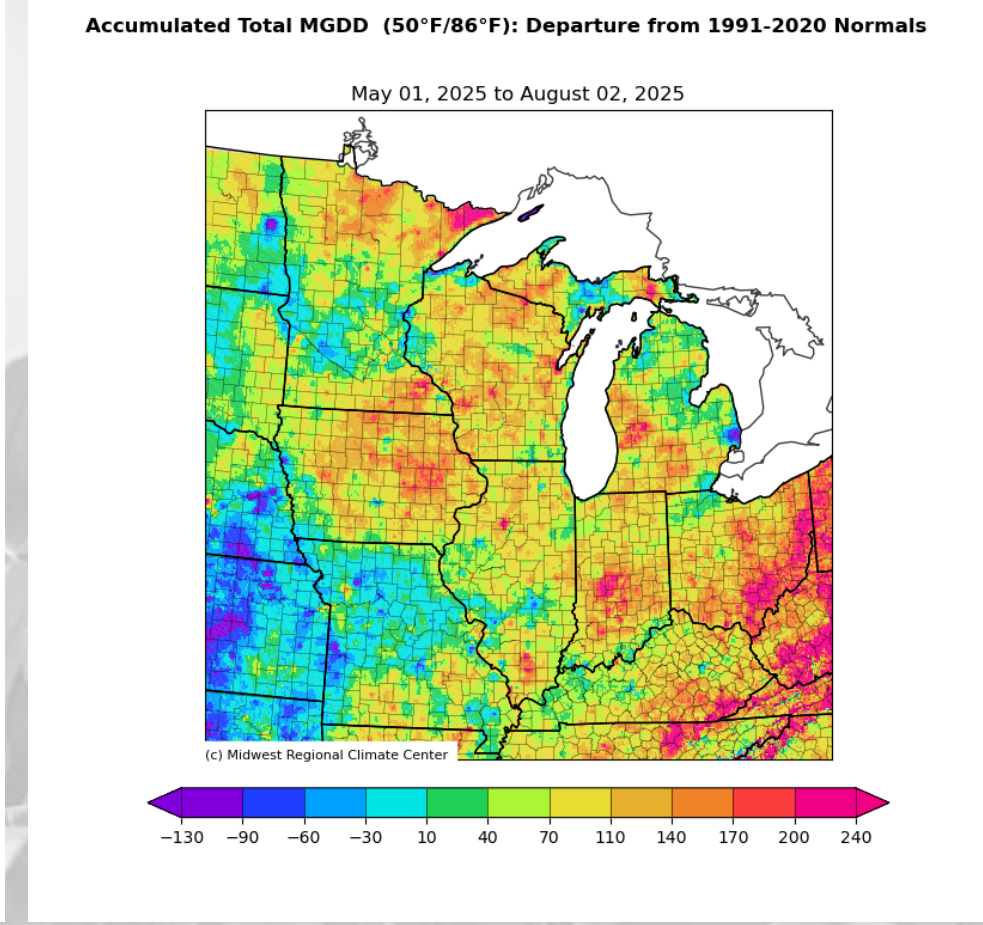


- Average temps. ranged from **72-74°F** in the south and west, to **64-67°F** in the north.
- **Within -/+1°F of normal** for most of the state.
- **1°F or more above normal** in a belt from the west-central to northeast

https://hprcc.unl.edu/maps.php?map=ACISClimateMaps

Growing Degree Days (Base = 50°F; Since May 1)





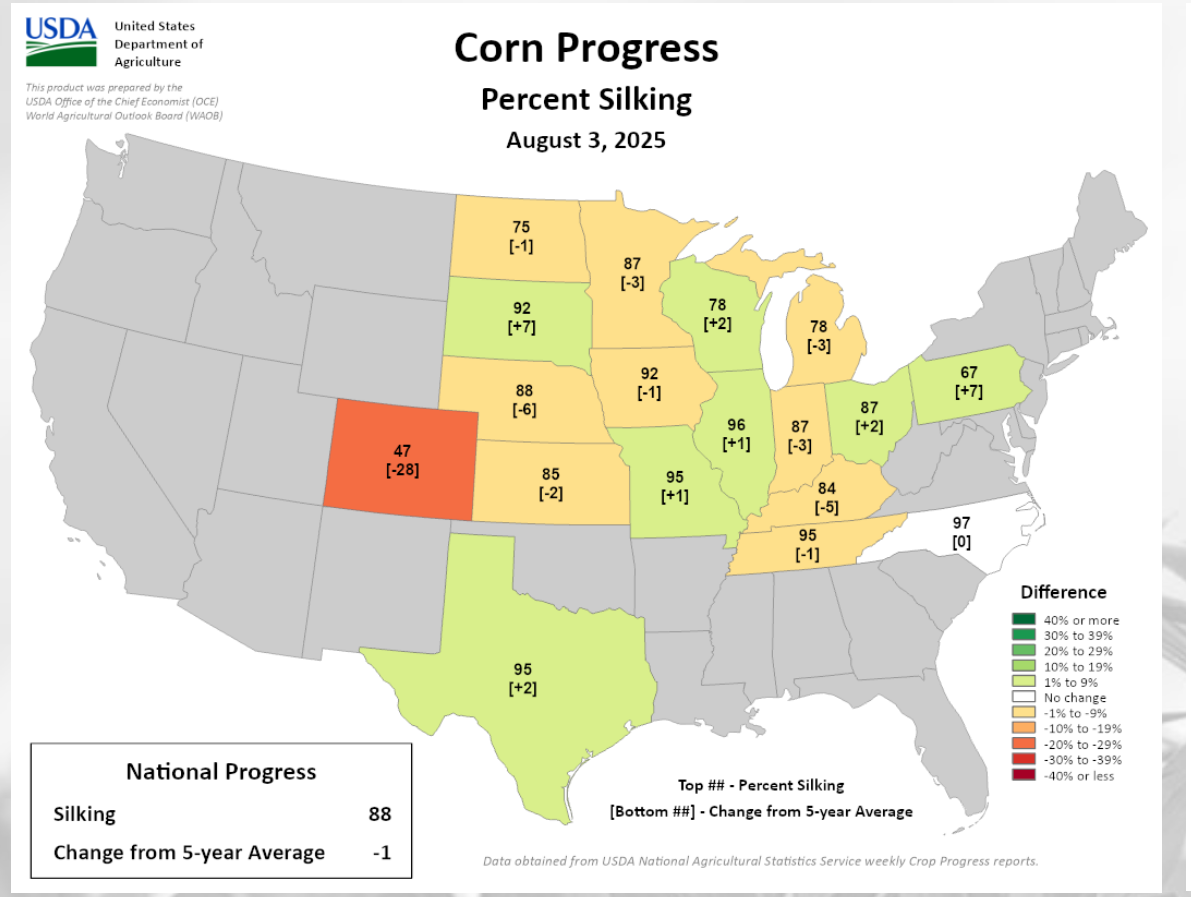
- Range from **1600-1800 GDD** in the SW to **1200-1400 GDD** in the N and E.
- GDD accumulation is running **70+ GDD ahead of schedule** across most of WI. Nearer to normal in the east and far NW.

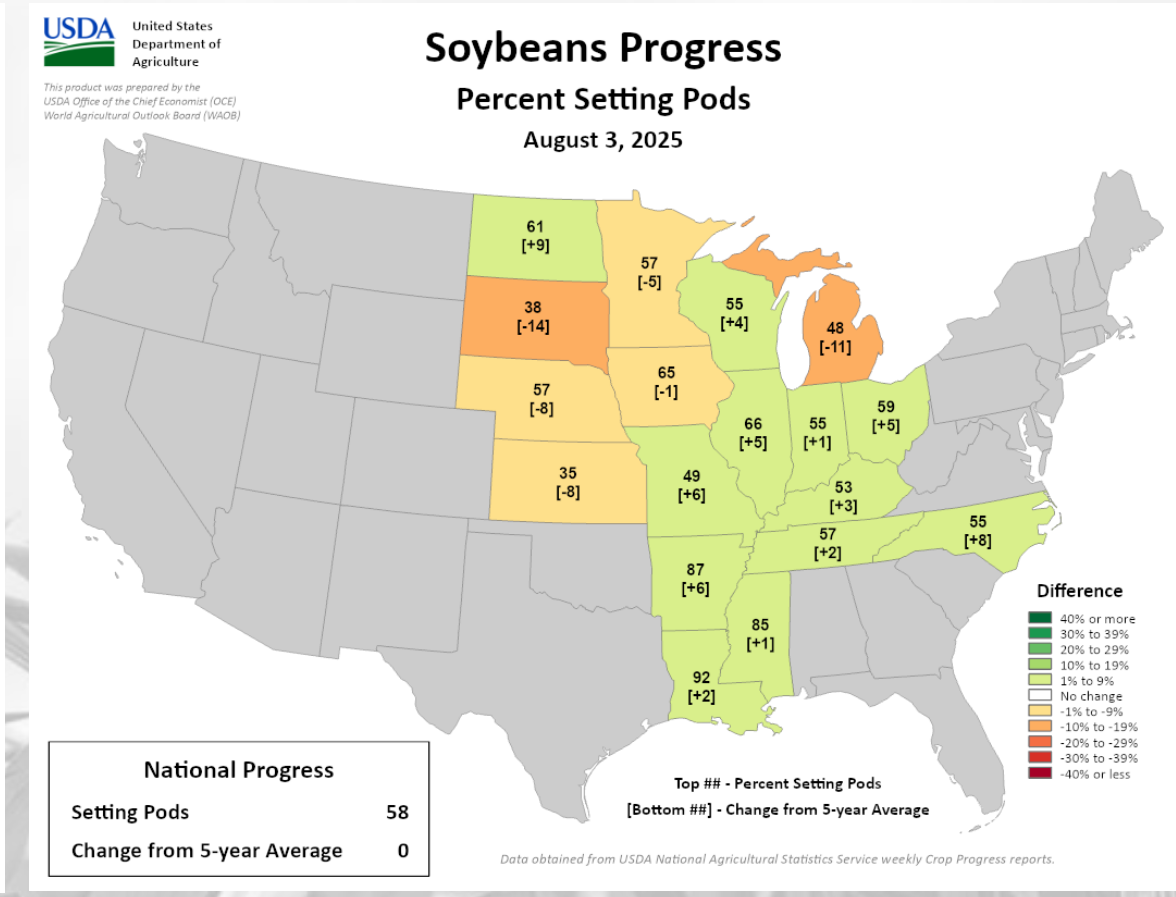
To calculate GDD for your corn variety and planting date, use this tool.

To see specific degree models for pests in your location, use the Vegetable Disease & Insect Forecasting Network.

https://mrcc.purdue.edu/climate_watch

Corn & Soybean Progress

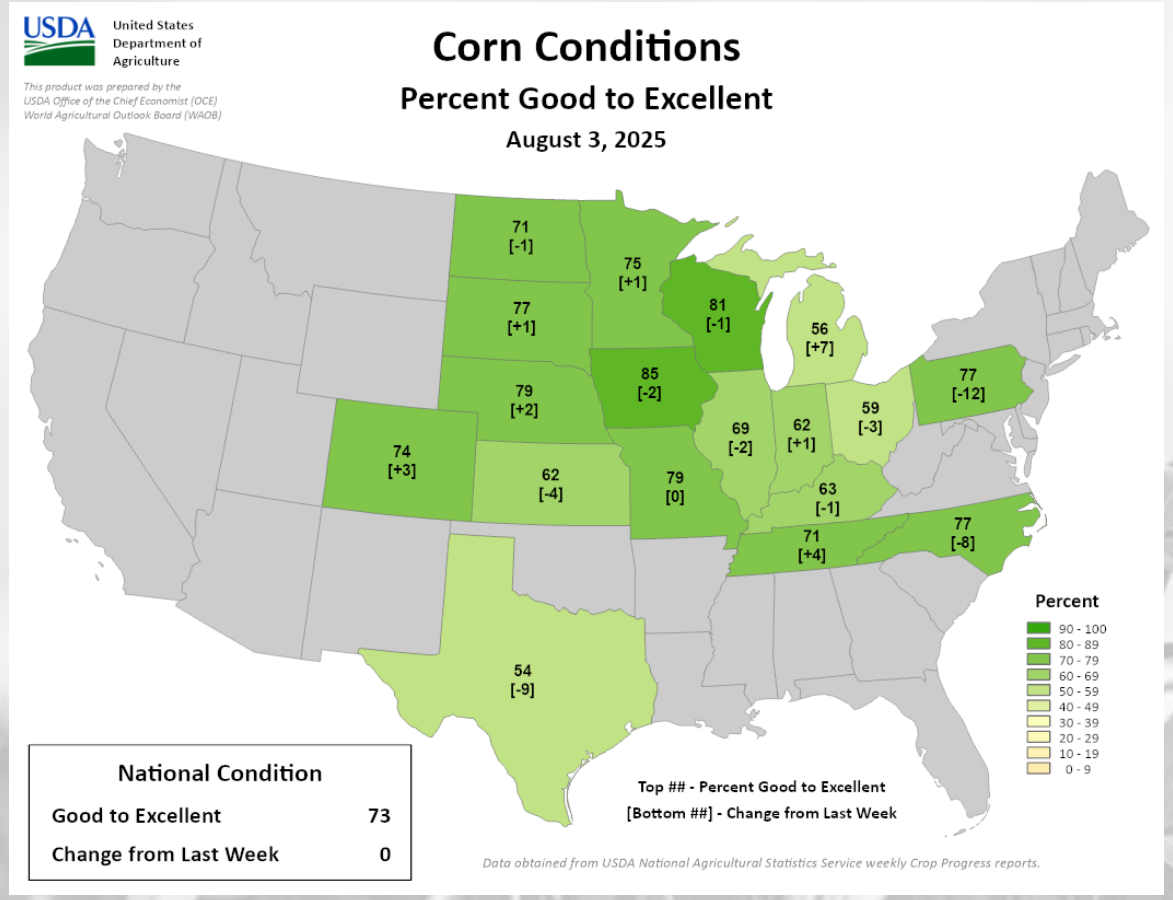


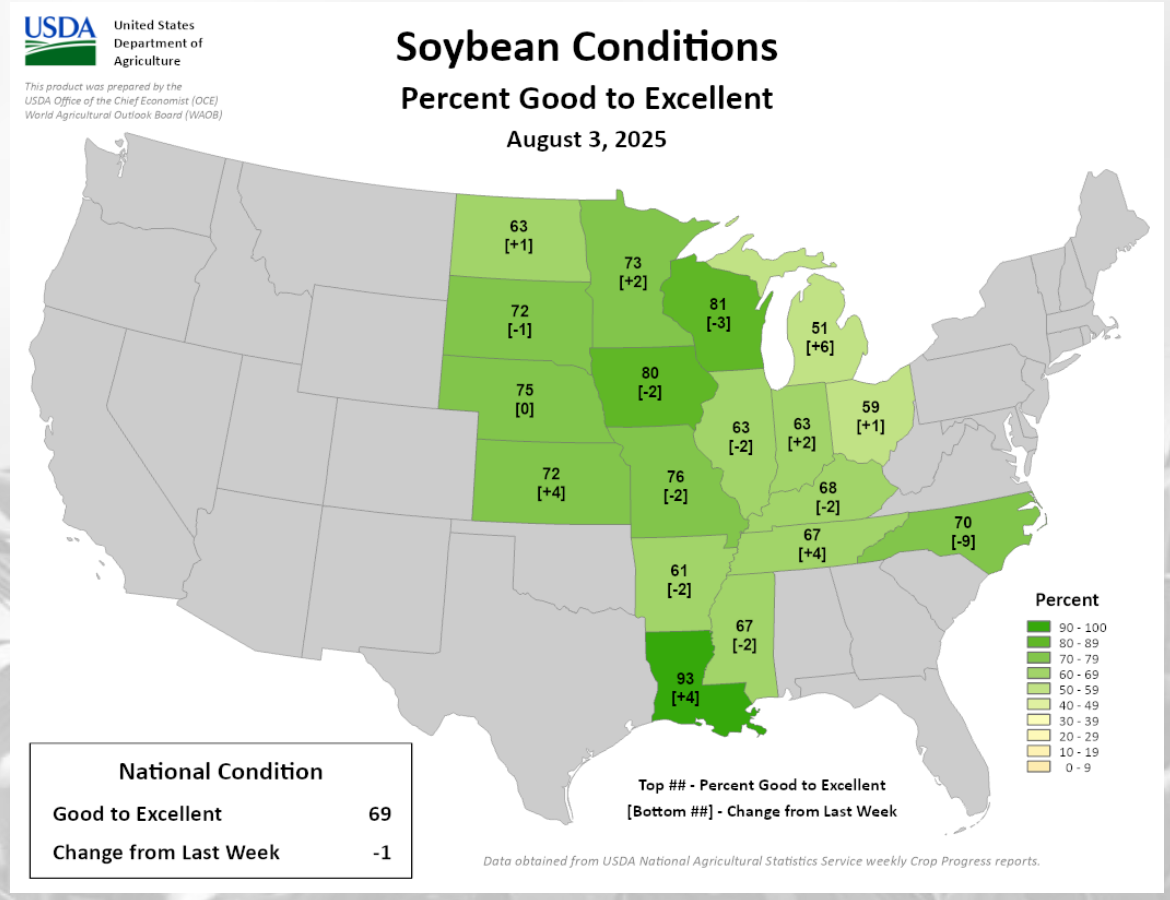


- Corn silking **56% complete** in WI fields which is ahead of normal pace for early August.
  - Doughing is being reported in **19%** of corn fields in WI (near normal pace).
- Soybean pod setting is **76% complete** in WI fields which is ahead of normal pace for early August.

https://agindrought.unl.edu/Other.aspx

Corn & Soybean Condition





https://agindrought.unl.edu/Other.aspx

Crop Progress Report

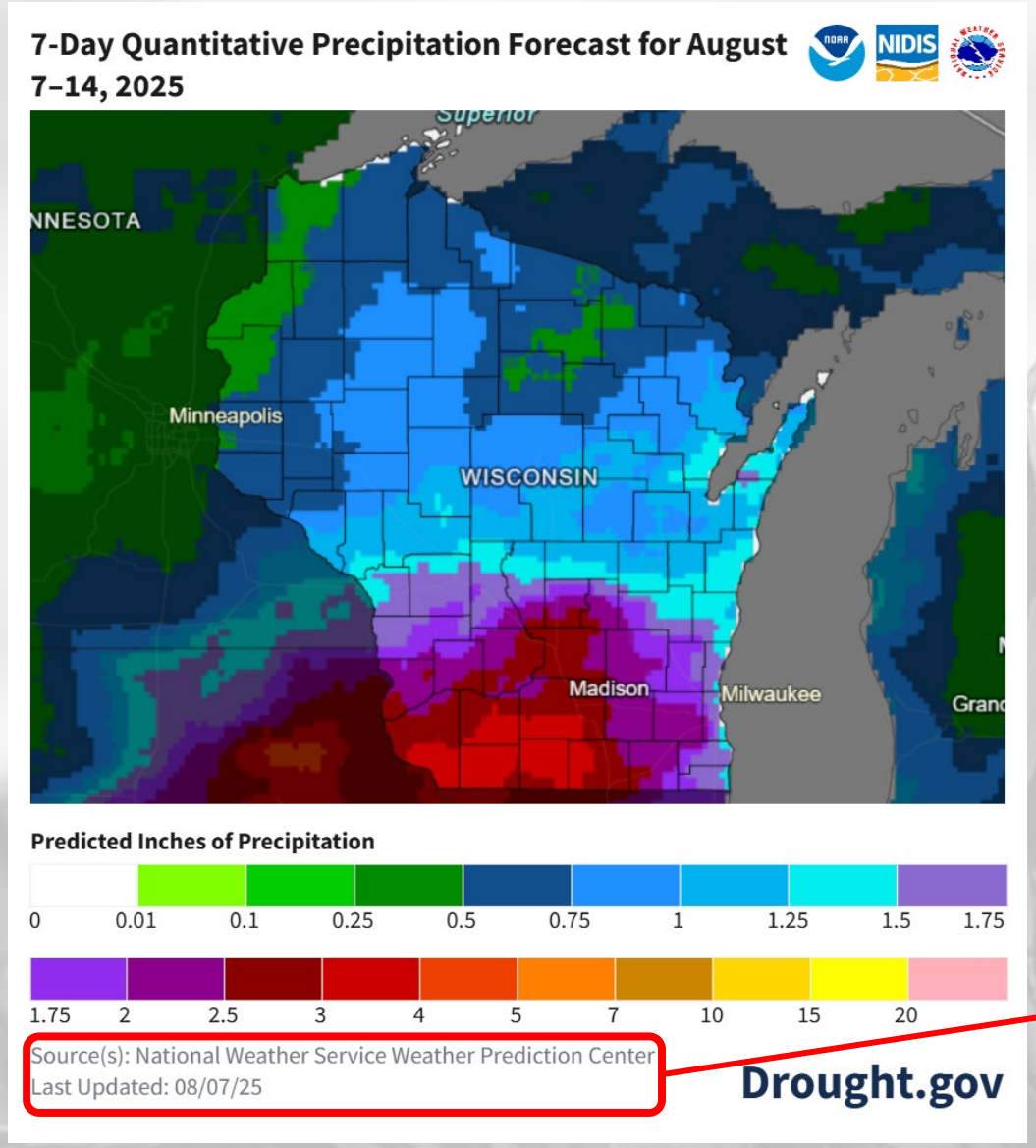
Crop progress report for Wisconsin for the week ending on Aug 4th

- Corn silking is **78% complete** (1 day ahead of the 5-year average). Doughing is **19% complete**.
  - Condition was rated **81%** good to excellent.
- Soybean blooming reported at **83% complete**, with **55%** of soybeans setting pods (2 days ahead of the 5-year average).
  - Condition was rated **81%** good to excellent.
- Winter wheat harvest is **67%** complete and is rated **74%** good to excellent.
- The second cutting of alfalfa hay was **95%** complete, with the third cutting at **52%** complete (2 days ahead of the 5-year average).
- Pasture and range conditions are rated **75%** good to excellent (**down 4%** from last week).
- Oats are **92%** coloring with harvest at **37%** complete (2 days ahead of average).

Full report: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Wisconsin/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/2025/WI-Crop-Progress-08-04-25.pdf

https://agindrought.unl.edu/Other.aspx

7 Day Precip Forecast

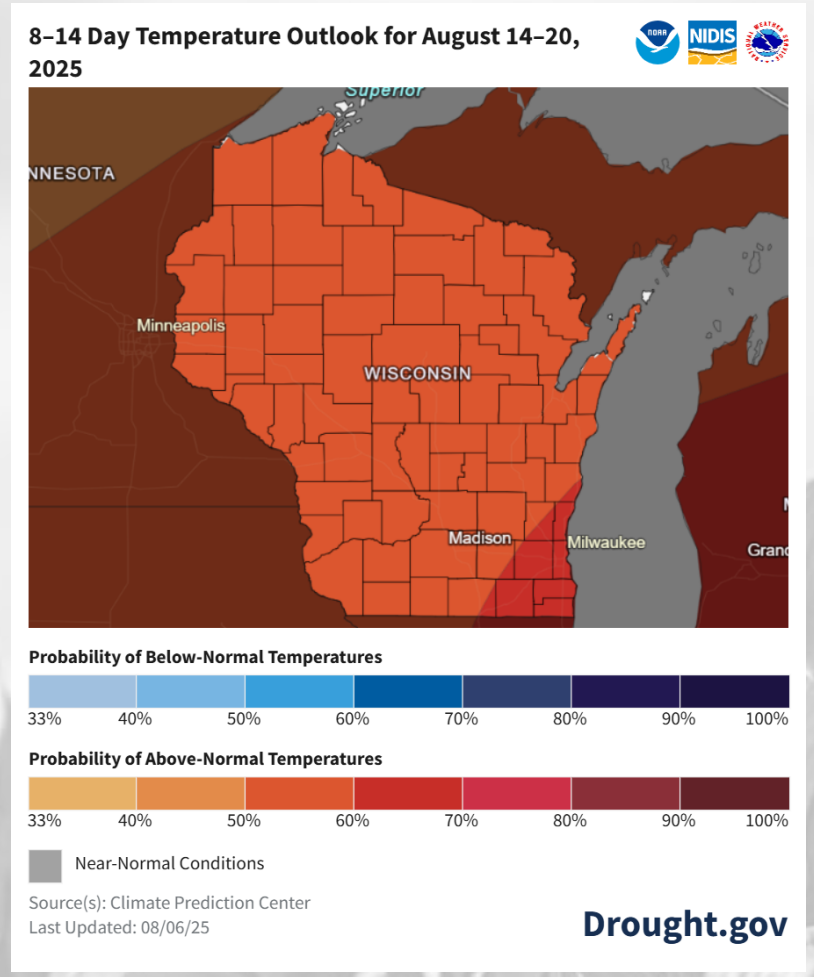


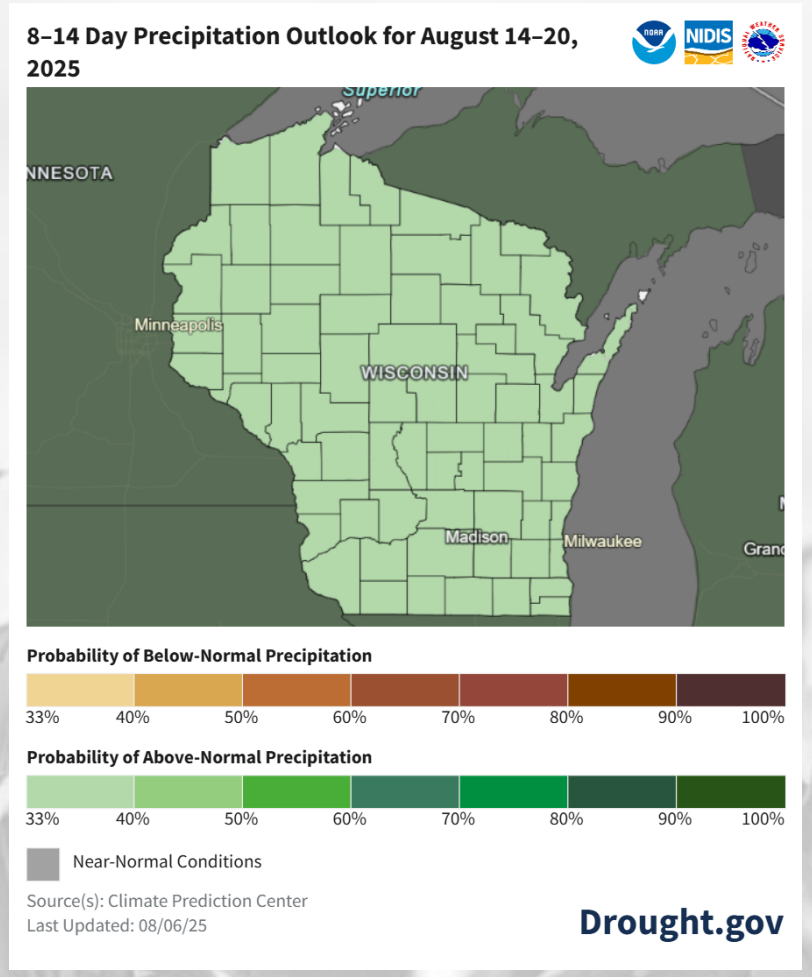
- **When?** → chances for rain from Thursday thru Tuesday of next week
- **Where?** → highest chances in the south/southwest
- Statewide Normal (1991-2020) for this upcoming week: **1.01"**
- Check your local forecast for details on totals and timing.

Forecast for 8/7/25 thru 8/14/25
(Begins at 7am CDT)

https://www.wpc.ncep.noaa.gov/qpf/p168i.gif
https://www.drought.gov/states/wisconsin

8-14 Day Temp & Precip Outlook



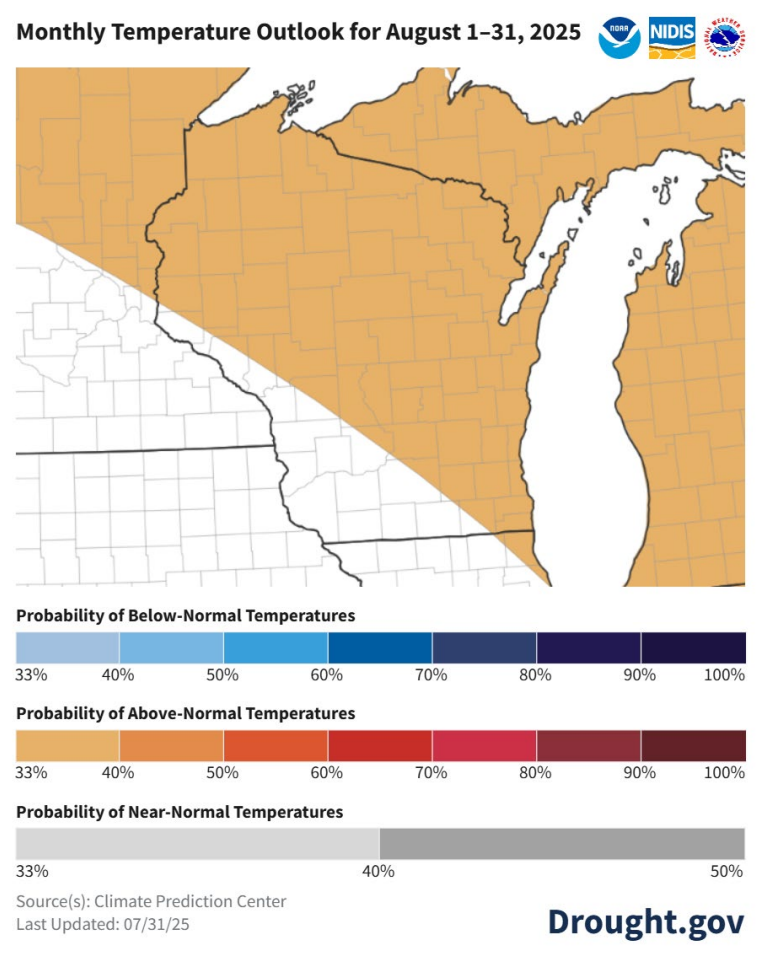


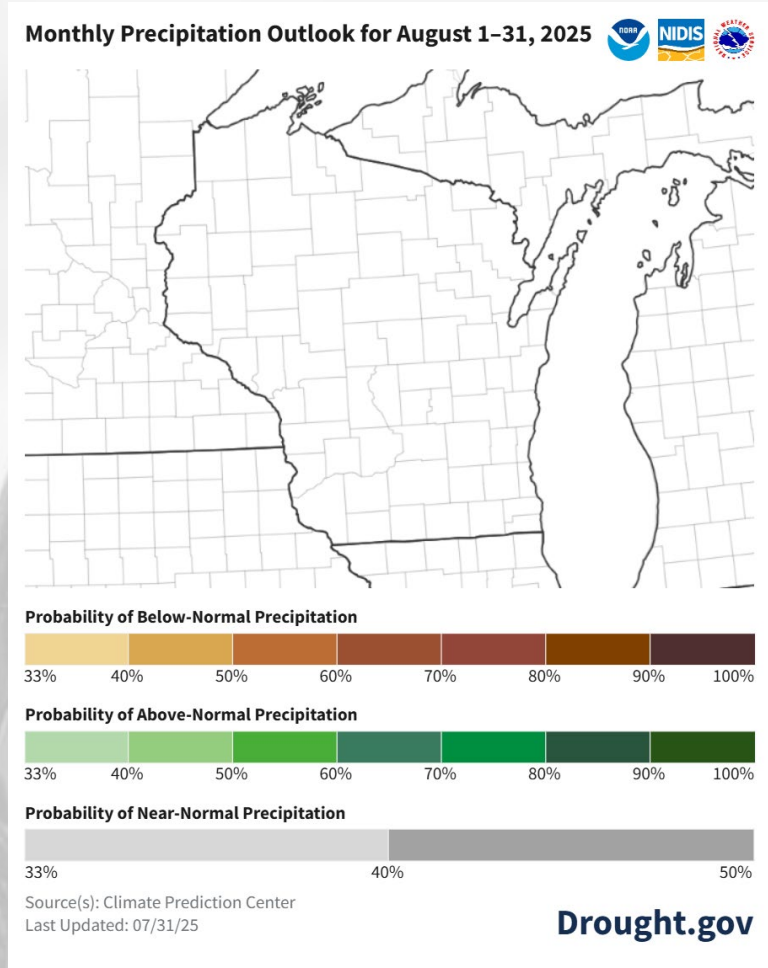
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/
https://www.drought.gov/states/wisconsin

Middle of August: Higher probability of warmer-than-normal temperatures for all of WI, especially in the east. Precipitation is leaning slightly towards above normal across the state.

- Statewide normals (1991-2020) for August 14-20 are **67.1°F** and **0.98”**.

30 Day Temp & Precip Outlook



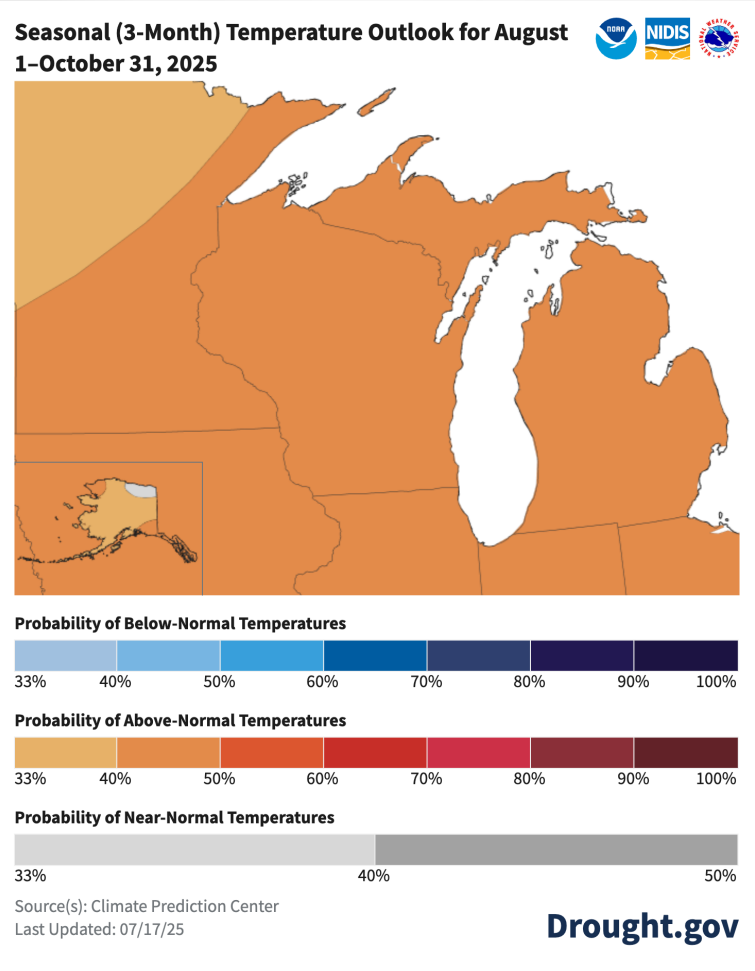


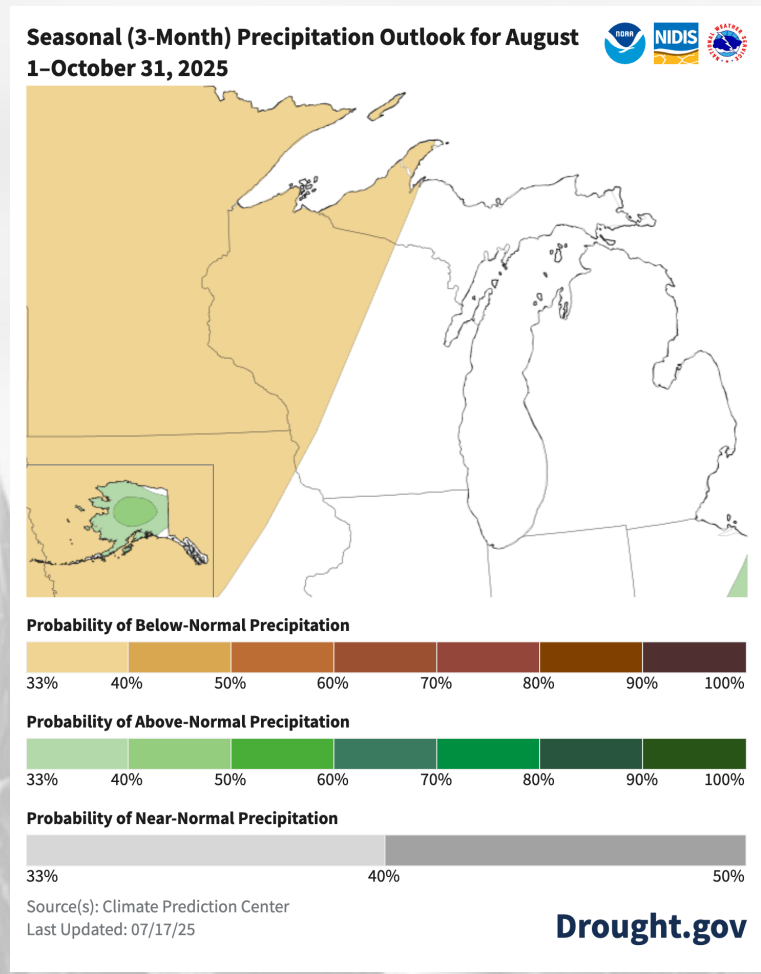
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/
https://www.drought.gov/states/wisconsin

Month of August: Temperatures are leaning slightly towards above normal for most, with uncertainty for the southwest/far west (equal chances). Precipitation is uncertain.

- Statewide normals (1991-2020) for August are **67.2°F** and **4.24”**.

90 Day Temp & Precip Outlook





http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/
https://www.drought.gov/states/wisconsin

Late Summer into Fall: Temperatures are leaning towards above normal. Precip is uncertain in the east & south, with a slight lean towards below normal to the north and west.

- Statewide normals (1991-2020) for Aug-Oct are **57.6°F** and **10.55”**.

Take-Home Points

Current Conditions

- Precip was **concentrated in the south** last week, with localized areas topping 2". Overall, the last 30 days in WI have been **at or below average for most**, with above normal totals in the SW and NE.
- August has gotten off to a **cooler-than-normal start** for most of WI, with average temperatures for the last 7 days **lagging normal by 1-3°F**. However, GDD accumulation (since 5/1) is still running **well ahead of normal pace**.

Impact

- After a relatively quiet week of precip last week, soil moisture is estimated to be at **near normal levels** for most of WI. Wisconet research farm stations show **slight decreases in 4" soil moisture** from last week.
- Wisconsin remains **drought-free**, with isolated pockets of D0 covering <2% of the state.
- Crop progress for the major field crops in WI continue to run at **near-normal pace** as we head into August, with some **corn beginning to hit dough stage**. Crop condition reports indicate **no major changes from last week** (NASS).

Outlook

- **Multiple rain chances** are forecasted thru early next week, with the best chances for rain in the **south/southwest**.
- Climate probabilities for Mid-August show a lean towards **above-normal temperatures** for all of WI (**50-70% likelihood**).
- The outlook for all of August *(updated 7/31)* **does not indicate strong probabilities** of above- or below-normal conditions, but hints at the chance of warmer than average temperatures.

Agronomic Considerations

Field Work and Conditions

- Avoid trafficking fields in moist conditions to prevent compaction.

Manure Applications

- Reminder of Wisconsin's NR 151 Runoff Rules with the timing of manure spreading and current runoff levels. Check DATCP Runoff Risk Advisory Forecast.

Pest Management

- Scout fields to note which weed species escaped herbicide application.
- As corn and soybean crops grow, note growth stages to time future applications and sampling.
- Check moth trap catches in your region with the DATCP Pest Survey. Sign up for insect pest alerts specific to your region.
- Routine scouting in corn to watch for corn earworm. Pay close attention to sweet corn.
- Second generation true armyworm populations are present with several heavy infestations reported. Be actively scouting for this pest!
- Note Japanese beetle populations in soybean fields.
- Use the VDIFN model to see risk in your region for several economically important pests.
- Scout for soybean aphid and soybean gall midge (SGM not presently in Wisconsin; however, the pest has been located in nearby states).
- Scout for tar spot as it has been reported in Wisconsin. Have a plan in place to deal with tar spot if it becomes an issue. Northern regions of the state still have fungicide application opportunity. Check out the latest disease update.
- Be vigilant for white mold in soybean as plants flower in northern regions. See risk forecast here. Check out the new White Mold ROI calculator.

Forage Management

- Alfalfa stands are varying between second and fourth cuts depending on location in the state. Scout for potato leafhopper. Also scout for pea aphid.
- Use the alfalfa cutting tool to plan remaining alfalfa harvests for persistence.
- Recording when silage tassels can help predict harvest date. Consider in-field management strategies to reduce mycotoxins in silage. Begin sampling and estimating moisture as silage matures.

Small Grains

- Winter wheat and oat harvest is well underway. As you harvest, remember the importance of combine cleaning to prevent weed seed spread from field to field.
- Consider planting a cover crop after small grain harvest. Review Cover Crops 101 for a list of viable species and seeding recommendations. Cover crops can also be an opportunity for grazing.

Fruit Considerations

General

- Sanitation: remove and destroy (chop/compost) fallen fruit ~weekly to prevent any internally developing larvae from reaching maturity, and to limit the spread of disease.
- Japanese beetle pressure has lessened in Southern WI, though emergence may continue through September. Review best monitoring and management practices here.

Apples

- Apple and grape growers can reference the NEWA weather station network to monitor for disease infection periods in their area. Check out your nearest weather station: NEWA Weather Station Network (Cornell).
- Warm and rainy weather conditions are ideal for bitter rot in apple orchards; see the article on bitter rot management from the July 4 WI Fruit newsletter.
- Sooty blotch and flyspeck has been observed in Southern WI, pushed along by warm, humid conditions. Continue monitoring NEWA models.
- Apple growers should continue monitoring degree-day (base 50°F) accumulation for Codling moth. Several locations in Southern WI have hit 300 degree-days base 50F from second generation biofix.
- Apple maggot pressure is variable across the state. Growers should continue to use red sphere traps to monitor populations.
- Check out the WI DATCP Orchard Insect Pest Bulletin for more information on current insect trap captures across the state.

Grapes

- Several grape varieties (Frontenac, Marquette) have hit veraison in the last week or so. This may translate to increased bird and disease pressure (sour/bunch rot).
- Black rot fruit symptoms have been reported in vineyards around WI. Review this 2022 article by Dr. Leslie Holland on Fruit and Cluster Rots for more information on black rot and fruit rot management.
- Downy mildew foliar symptoms ("oil-stains") have been observed in West Madison. Scout for pale-yellow lesions on the tops of leaves and white downy growth on the underside of leaves.
- Overview of grape insect/mite monitoring and management: Grape Insects and Mite Pests, 2024 Field Season (Cornell, 2024).

Berries

- Grape and berry growers monitoring spotted wing drosophila should continue checking and refreshing traps weekly.

Vegetable Considerations

Pests

- Adults from the second generation of **imported cabbageworm** are emerging in southern WI and large larva are present in central and northern WI. Be on the lookout for eggs through August as they complete a third generation. Management strategies are most effective when based on crop growth stage and caterpillar count to determine the level of infestation.
- Reports of **squash bug** adults have increased in the last week. The predicted damage risk is high across the state.
- **Western bean cutworm** damage risk is high across northern WI. This resource can help distinguish between WBC and other sweet corn pests.
- While overall **true armyworm** activity is decreasing, the risk for crop damage remains high. They primarily feed on grasses like sweet corn, but they can also be a pest of many other vegetables including cabbage, carrot, onion, and pepper.
- Continue scouting for **European corn borer** egg masses. Second generation larva will be starting to hatch and can cause heavy damage to mid and late planted corn. In addition to sweet corn, European corn borer can also cause damage to snap beans, peppers and potatoes.

Diseases

- **Basil downy mildew** has been detected in **Dane and Columbia** counties. Sweet green-leafed varieties are more susceptible than purple-leafed or Thai basil. Initially, symptoms may resemble nitrogen deficiency because of general leaf yellowing of lower leaves. As it progresses, leaves will turn brown, may curl and wilt, and grey velvety fuzz may develop on the underside of leaves. Check out this resource for other problems that can be confused with downy mildew.
- Cucurbit **downy mildew** has now been confirmed on cucumbers in 11 Michigan counties. There are currently no confirmed cases in WI, but early detection is key so be on the lookout for angular lesions that are initially contained within leaf veins. Downy mildew can be confused with many other disease including angular leaf spot, heat stress and herbicide damage. Check out this resource from Michigan State to help ensure you are correctly diagnosing the symptoms.
- While scouting your cucurbits also keep an eye out for **powdery mildew**. Symptoms are pale yellow leaf spots that progress into white powdery spots on both the upper and lower leaf surfaces. Powdery mildew reduces yield and fruit quality because of sunscald, uneven ripening and reduced storability.
- **Septoria leaf spot** was confirmed on tomato plants in **Walworth** county. Disease can survive on infected debris and then is spread by water splashing as well as equipment, people and insects moving through wet leaves. Lesions are tan to grey with dark margins and often a yellow halo.
- **Early blight** risk is high across the state. Lesions can occur on both fruit and stems. One way to distinguish this from other diseases is the larger lesions will have concentric rings. If early blight is problem on your farm, consider planting a resistant variety. While not immune, these varieties will not be as severely impacted.
- **Late blight** of potato and tomato has been confirmed in Pennsylvania and New York. All plantings of potatoes should have preventative fungicide treatments applied.
- ***Nicotianae blight***, a late blight look alike, was identified this past week on potato plants in central WI. The causal pathogen often infects roots and tubers causing pink rot, but occasionally lesions form on leaves. While foliar lesions look very similar to late blight, one way to distinguish between the two is that these lesions do not have the spores that are a symptom of late blight. Photos comparing the lesions can be found here.

User Survey

Are you a regular user of the Ag Weather Outlook for Wisconsin (AgWOW)? Or maybe you are viewing these slides for the first time this week? Either way, we want to hear your feedback on this resource! Please take a few minutes and fill out this survey:

LINK TO SURVEY

Your feedback will help us better serve your ag-weather data needs through AgWOW.

If you have any trouble accessing or filling out the survey, please email Josh Bendorf at jbendorf@wisc.edu.

Thank you!!
-The AgWOW Team

Citizen Science Opportunity

CoCoRaHS – Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, & Snow Network

The Mission

(From cocorahs.org)

- Provide accurate high-quality precipitation data for end-users;
- Increasing the density of precipitation data available throughout the country;
- Encouraging citizens to have fun participating in meteorological science and heightening their awareness about weather;
- Providing weather education opportunities.

Sign Up Here:
https://cocorahs.org/Content.aspx?page=application

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