



Wisconsin State Climatology Office
Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies



Extension
University of Wisconsin-Madison



Midwest Climate Hub
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



AgWOW

Ag Weather Outlook for Wisconsin

Week of September 16, 2025

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Key Points

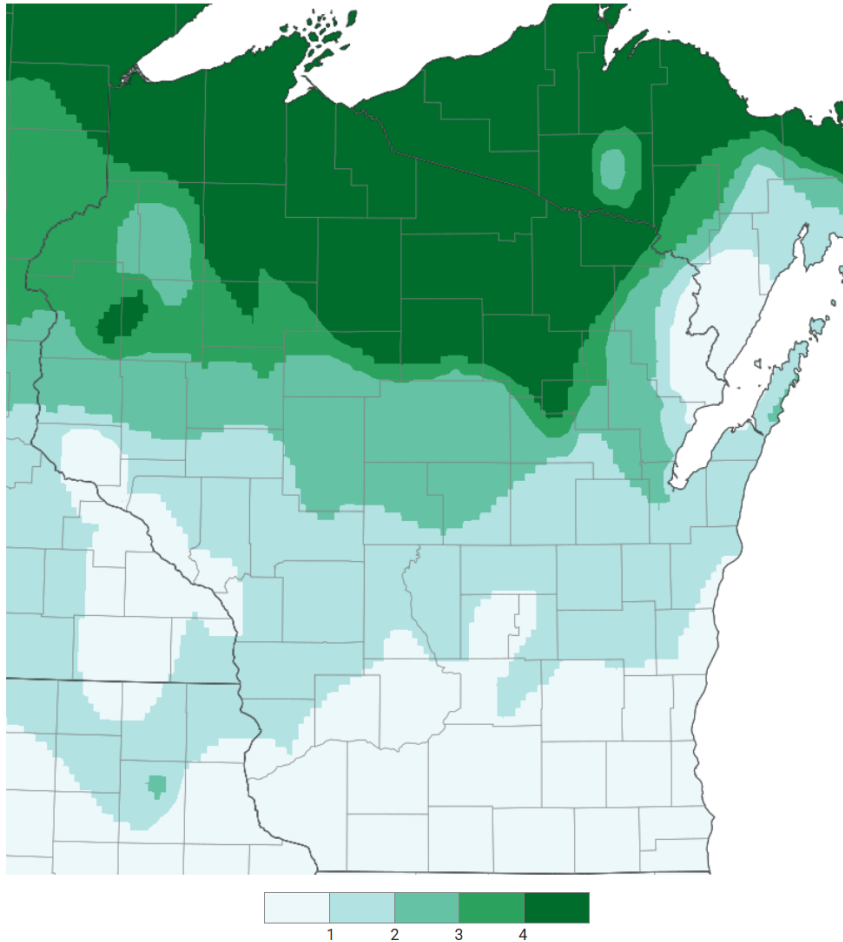
Navigate to select slides by clicking on the [links](#) below.

- 1) [Summertime temps](#) retuned to WI last week following what had been a [cool start](#) to September.
 - 2) Soils [dried out](#) some from last week's report following a relatively [dry week](#) for most.
 - 3) Drought coverage is [increasing to the south](#) of WI, but the state remains drought-free.
 - 4) Outlooks for [late September](#) indicate a strong likelihood 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 → Summer Returns

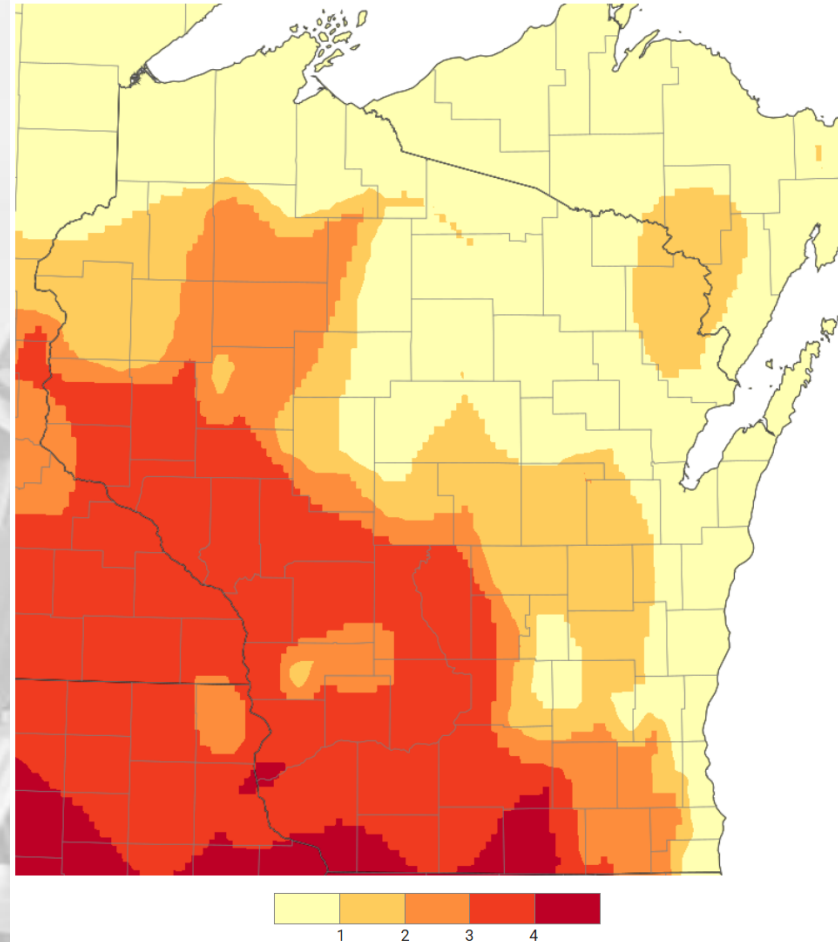
Days with a High Temp of 60°F or below
9/2 thru 9/8

Number of Days Maximum Temperature ≤ 60 degF
Date range: 2025-09-02 through 2025-09-08
Grid: NRCC station



Days with a High Temp of 80°F or above
9/9 thru 9/16

Number of Days Maximum Temperature ≥ 80 degF
Date range: 2025-09-09 through 2025-09-15
Grid: NRCC station



Summer-like conditions returned to the state this past week, with **multiple days topping 80°F** on the western side of the state.

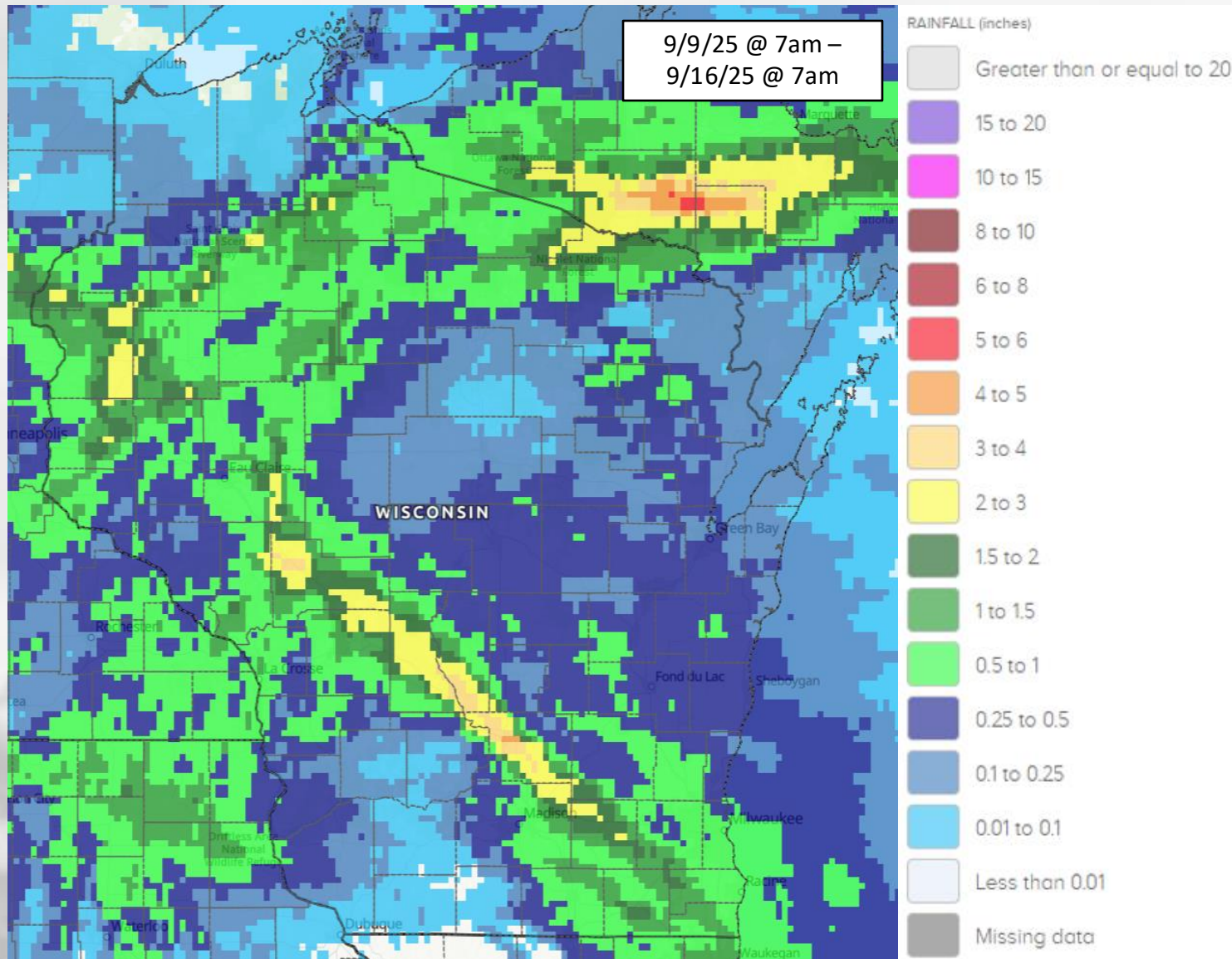
New records set:

- Sept. 12 → 1 station
- Sept. 13 → 3 stations
- Sept. 14 → 7 stations
- Sept. 15 → 2 stations

Highest Wisconet reading:

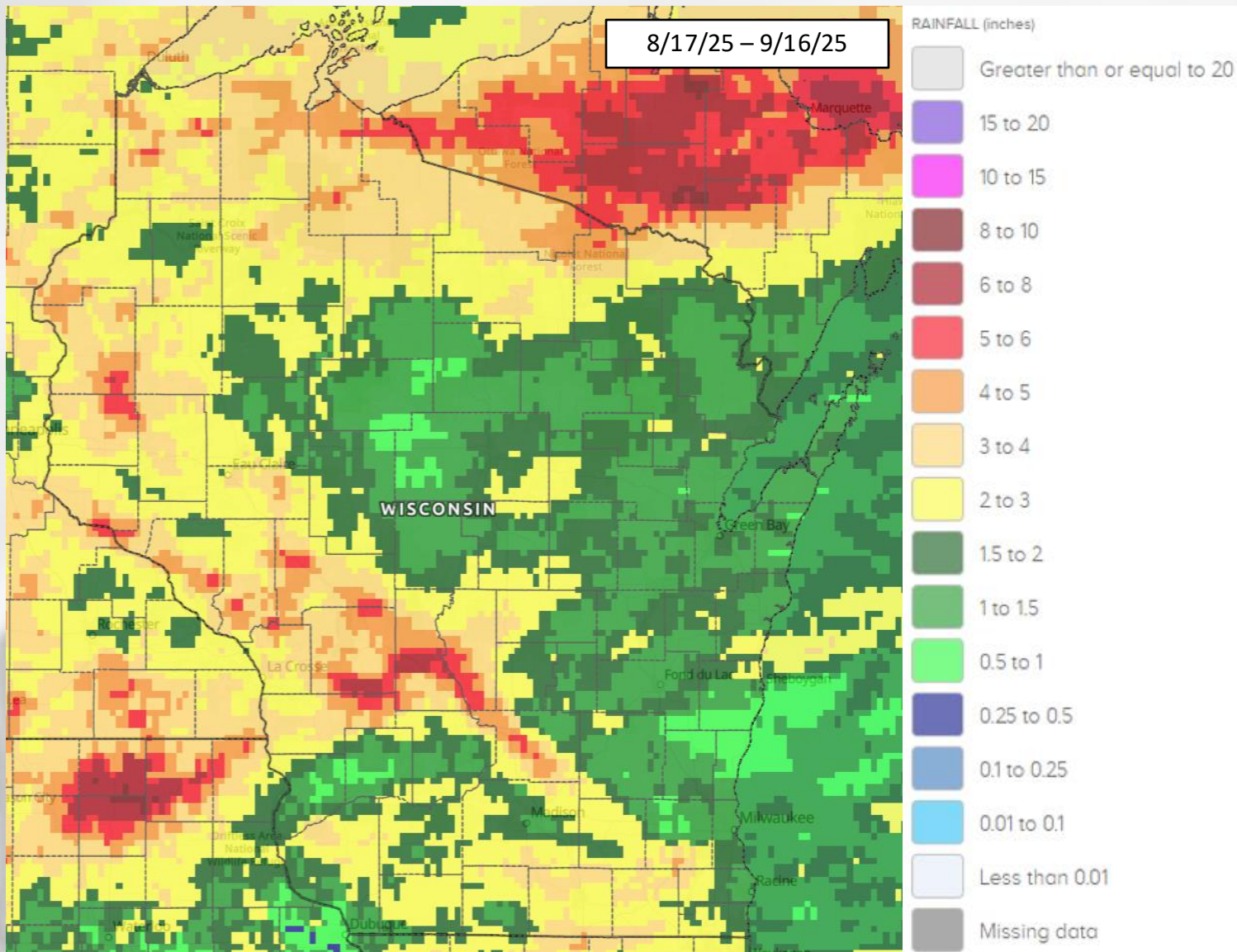
- Blanchardville, Green Co. → 9/15, **86.2°F**

7 Day Precip



- **0.5" or less** across most of the state.
- **Lowest totals** in the SW, far NW, and Door County.
- **Highest totals** in a line from Jefferson to Eau Claire County → **2-4"** in a narrow band
- **0.5"-2"** across NW and NC counties, with pockets of >2".

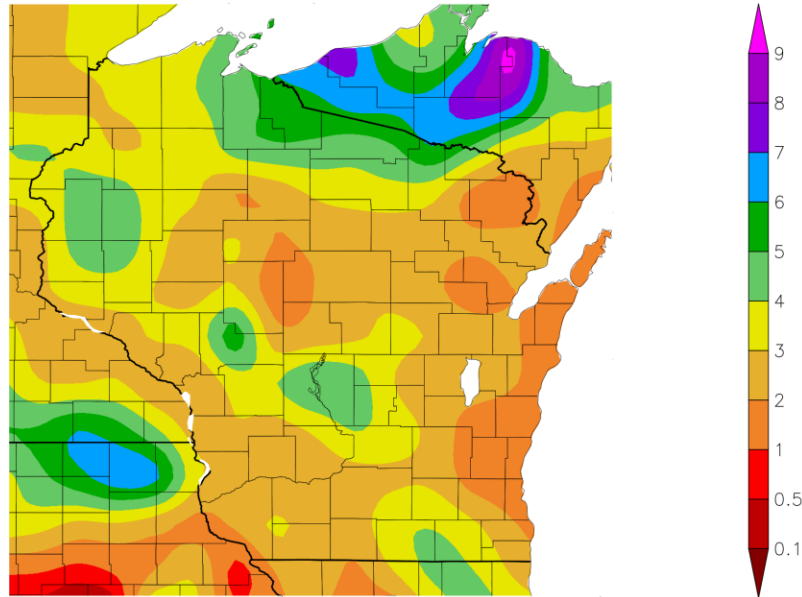
30 Day Precip



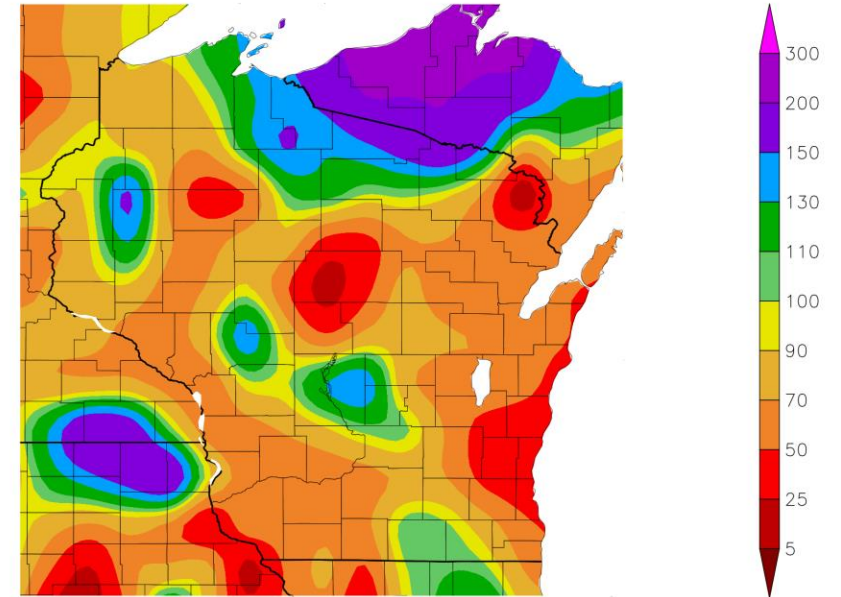
- **1-3"** across most of the state, with higher totals in the west and north.
- Pockets of **4" or more** in the west-central and far north.
- Lowest totals in/around Ozaukee, Marathon, & Richland Counties → **<1"**

30 Day Precip Total/Percent Avg.

Precipitation (in)
8/17/2025 – 9/15/2025



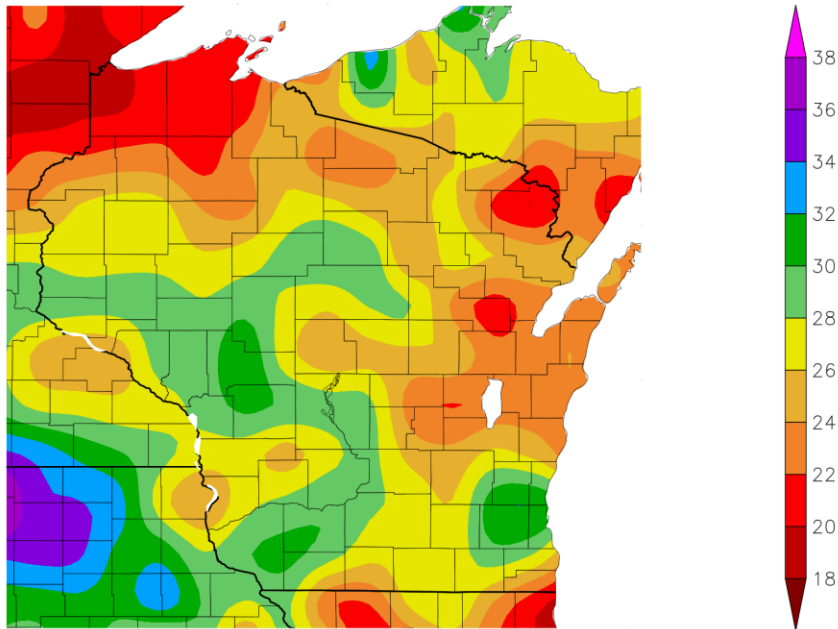
Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)
8/17/2025 – 9/15/2025



- **Below normal** for most of WI over the past 30 days → **90% or less common**, with pockets of 50% or less.
- **Localized areas** of above normal precipitation in regions where totals were **4" or more**.
 - **130-150% of normal** in pockets and in the far north.

2025 Precipitation (so far)

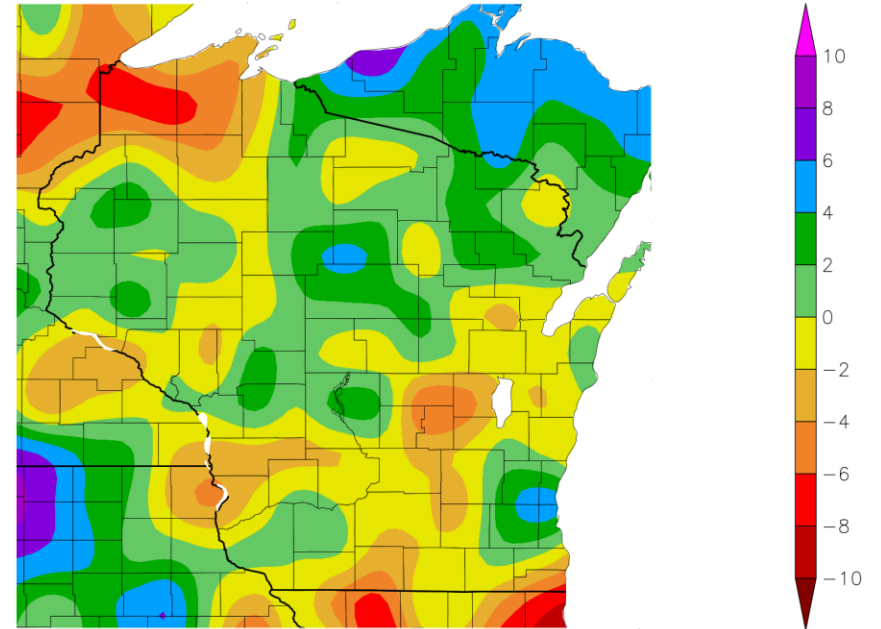
Precipitation (in)
1/1/2025 – 9/15/2025



Generated 9/16/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Departure from Normal Precipitation (in)
1/1/2025 – 9/15/2025



Generated 9/16/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Soil Moisture Models

- **Increasing dryness** (yellow/orange/red shading) in the top 1 meter of soil across most of WI compared to previous weeks.
- **Near normal to minor dryness** indicated by this model across most of the state.

Model Notes:

Red areas = top 5 driest in 100 years.

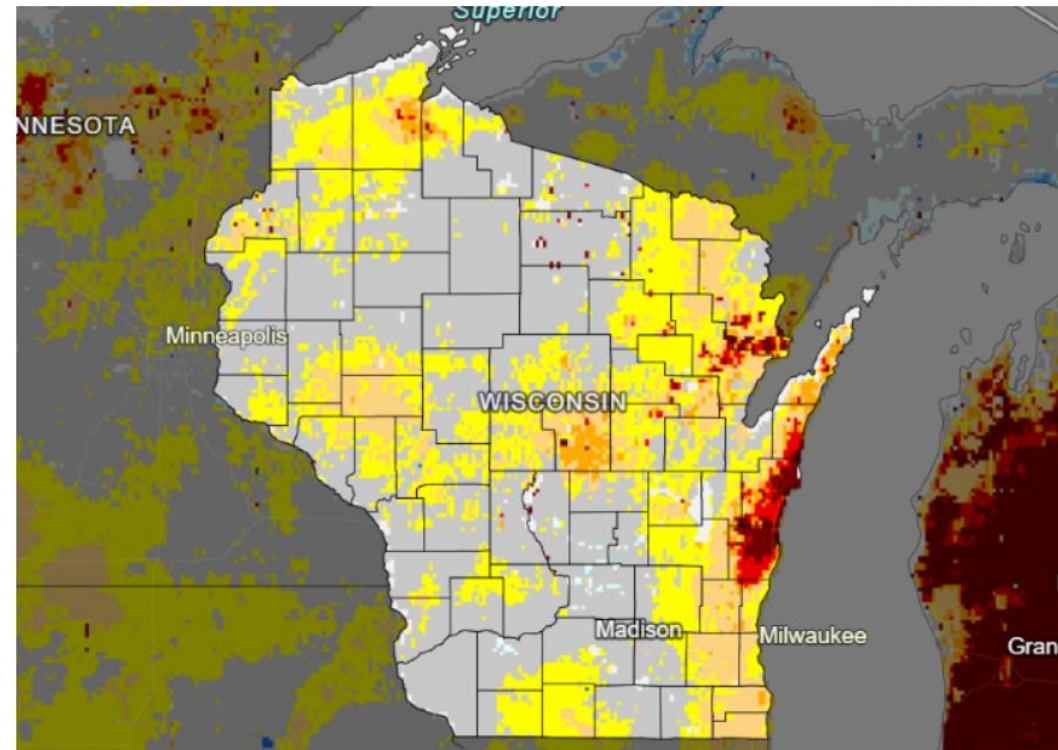
Dark red areas = top 2 driest in 100 years.

Blue areas = top 2 wettest in 100 years.

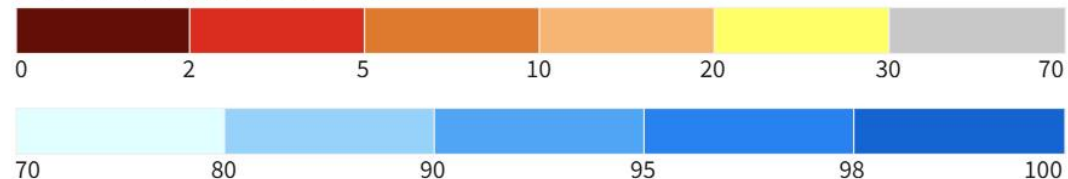
It's worth noting that each soil moisture model has their own characteristics and input variables, so there tends to be variation between models. Thus, it's worthwhile to look at multiple models opposed to just one.

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

NASA SPoRT-LIS 0-100 cm Soil Moisture Percentile



0-100 cm Soil Moisture Percentile

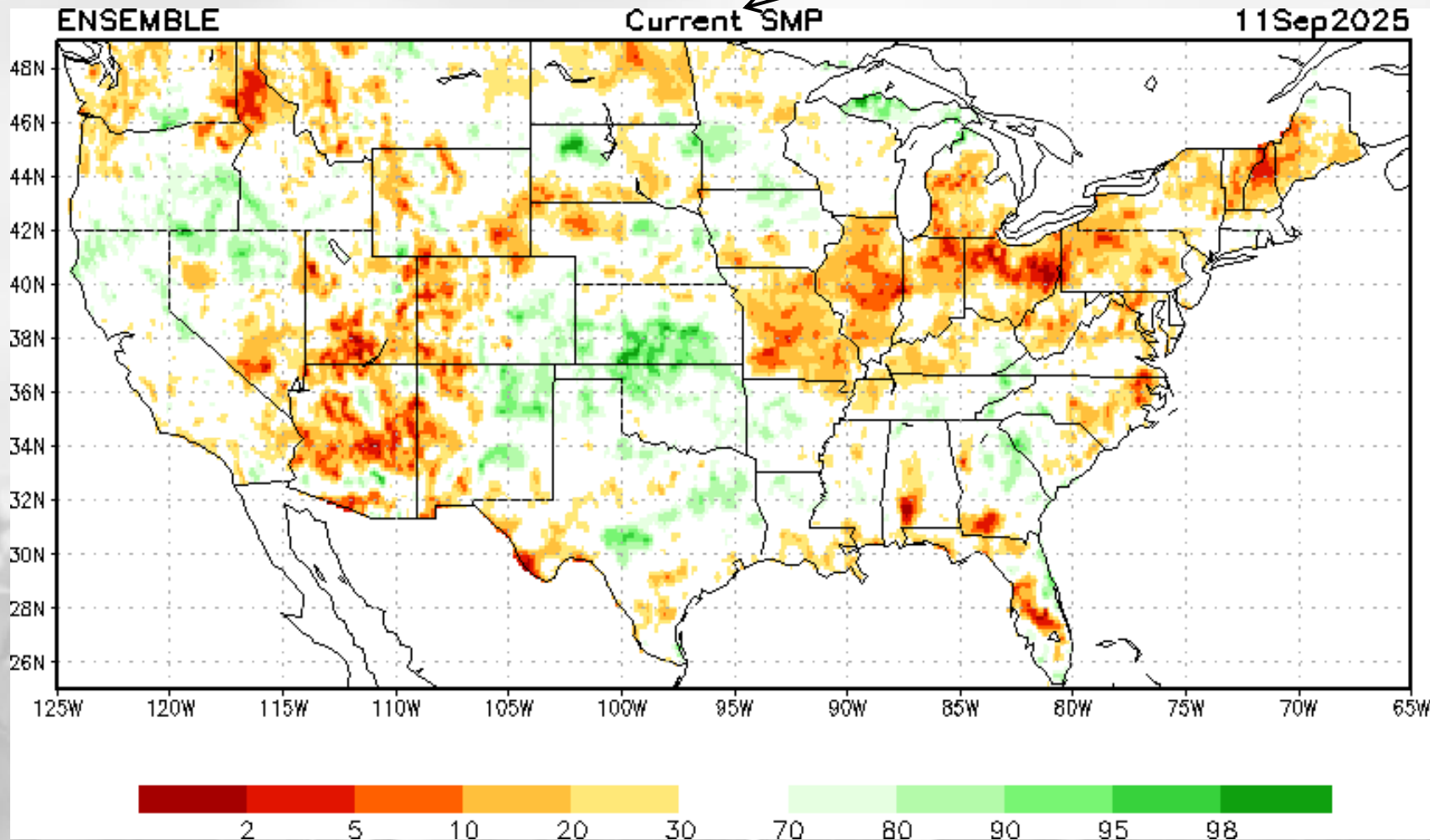


Source(s): NASA
Data Valid: 09/17/25

Drought.gov

Soil Moisture Models

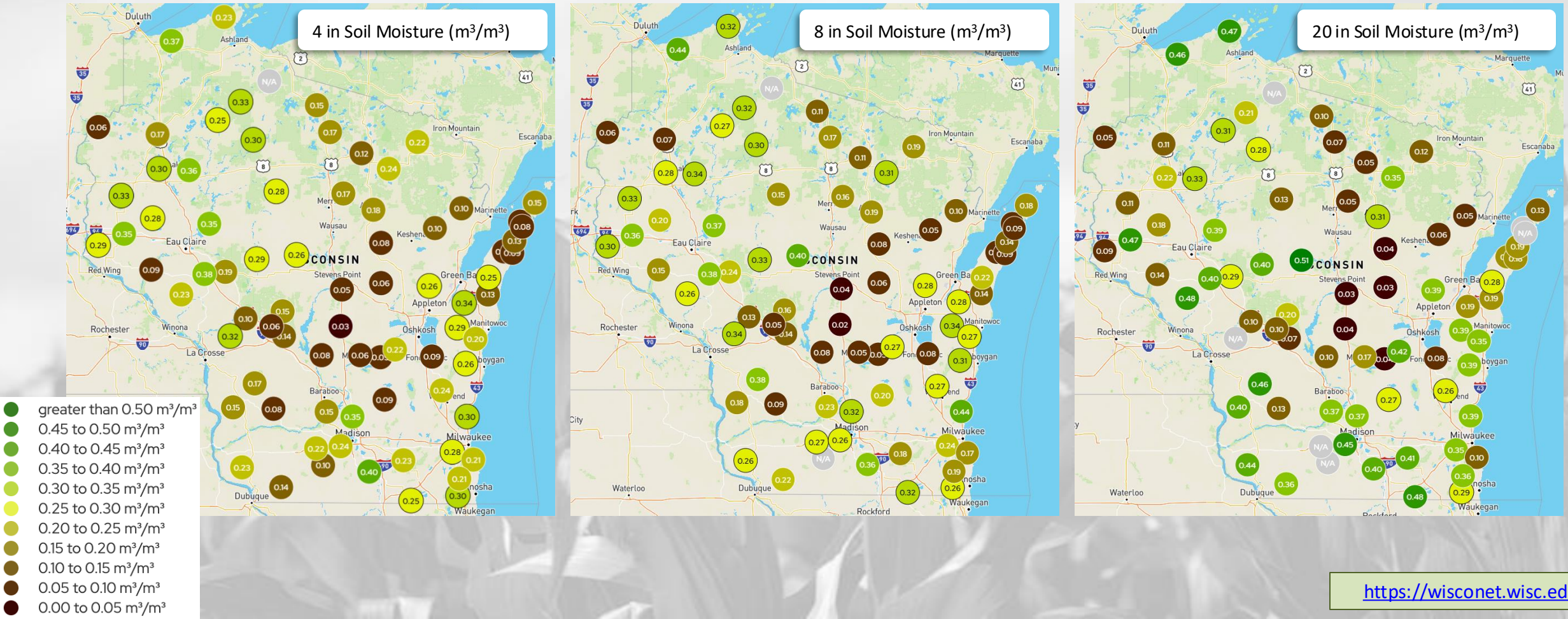
NOTE: this map displays the soil moisture percentile for Sep 11. It was the most recent update as of Sep 16.



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

Wisconet Soil Moisture

Maps showing soil temperature conditions on September 16th @ 1:30 pm.
Units of map values are {Volume of water}/{Volume of soil}.



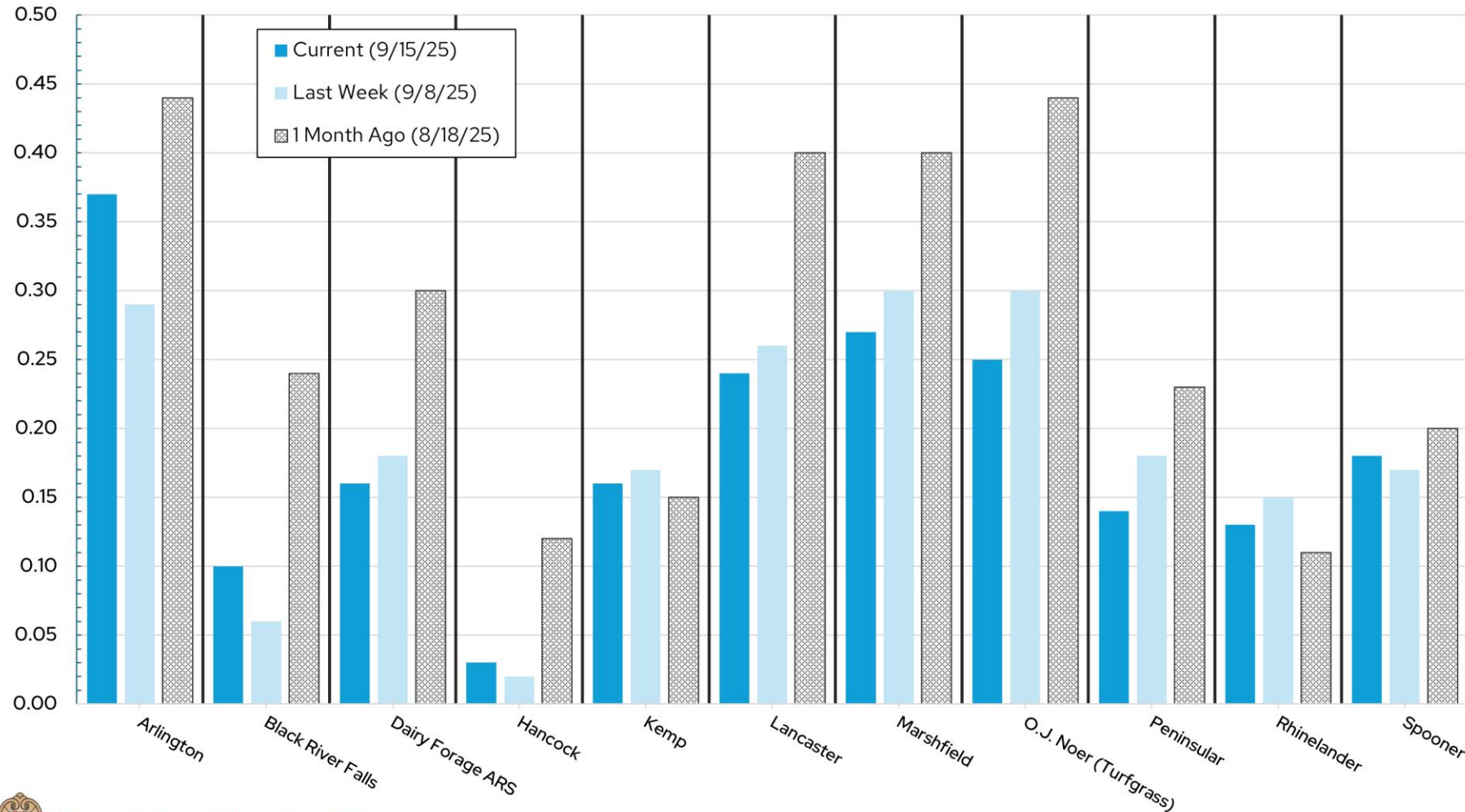
Wisconet Soil Moisture

Change in soil moisture from September 9th (Start) to September 15th (End).
Units of change values are {Volume of water}/{Volume of soil}.

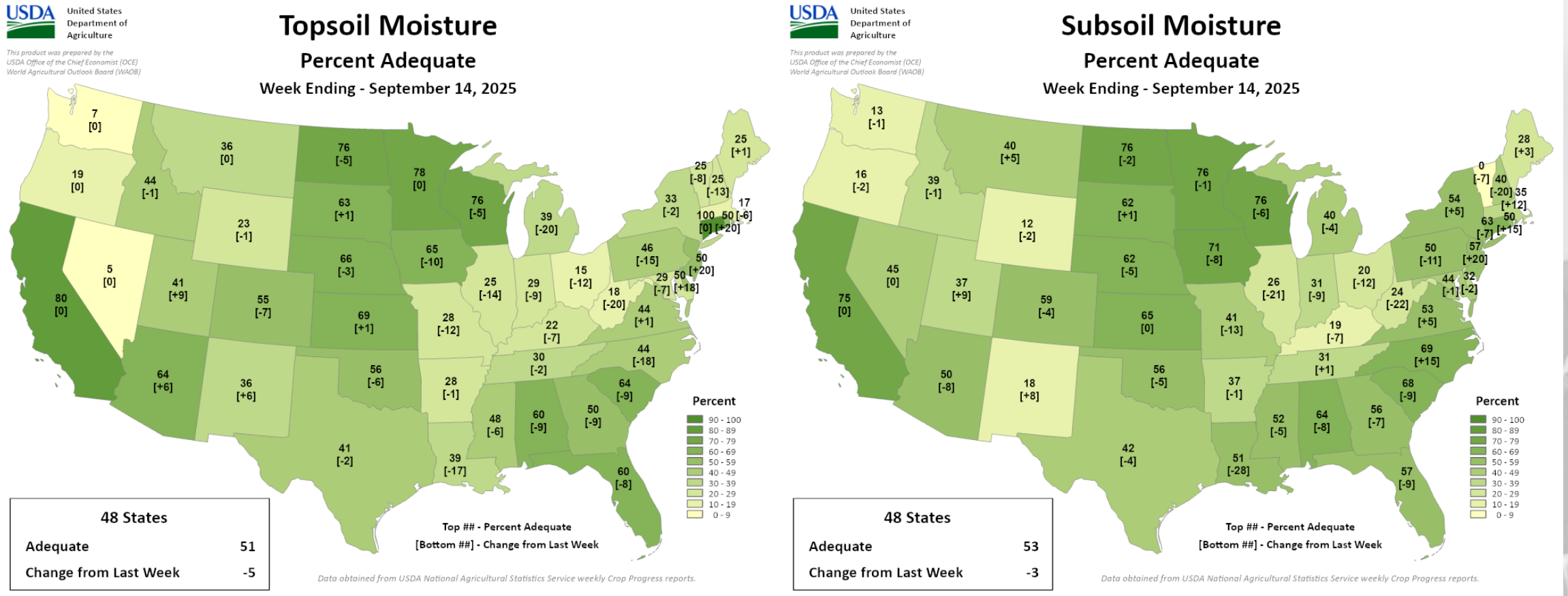
Research Farm	County	Total Precip (in)	4" Change (Start) (End)		8" Change (Start) (End)		20" Change (Start) (End)	
Arlington	Columbia	0.90	0.29	0.37	0.28	0.34	0.38	0.37
Black River Falls	Jackson	1.32	0.05	0.10	0.08	0.13	0.08	0.10
Dairy Forage ARS	Sauk	0.19	0.17	0.16	0.26	0.23	0.38	0.37
Hancock	Waushara	0.30	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.04
Kemp	Oneida	1.38	0.23	0.16	0.23	0.16	0.08	0.07
Lancaster	Grant	0.00	0.26	0.24	0.29	0.27	0.45	0.44
Marshfield	Marathon	0.10	0.30	0.27	0.41	0.41	0.52	0.51
O.J. Noer (<i>Turfgrass</i>)	Dane	0.21	0.29	0.25	0.30	0.27	0.45	0.45
Peninsular	Door	0.12	0.17	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.20	0.20
Rhinelanders	Oneida	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.05	0.05
Spooner	Washburn	0.58	0.20	0.18	0.05	0.07	0.11	0.11

Wisconet Soil Moisture

Wisconet 4" Soil Moisture Change
UW Research Farms



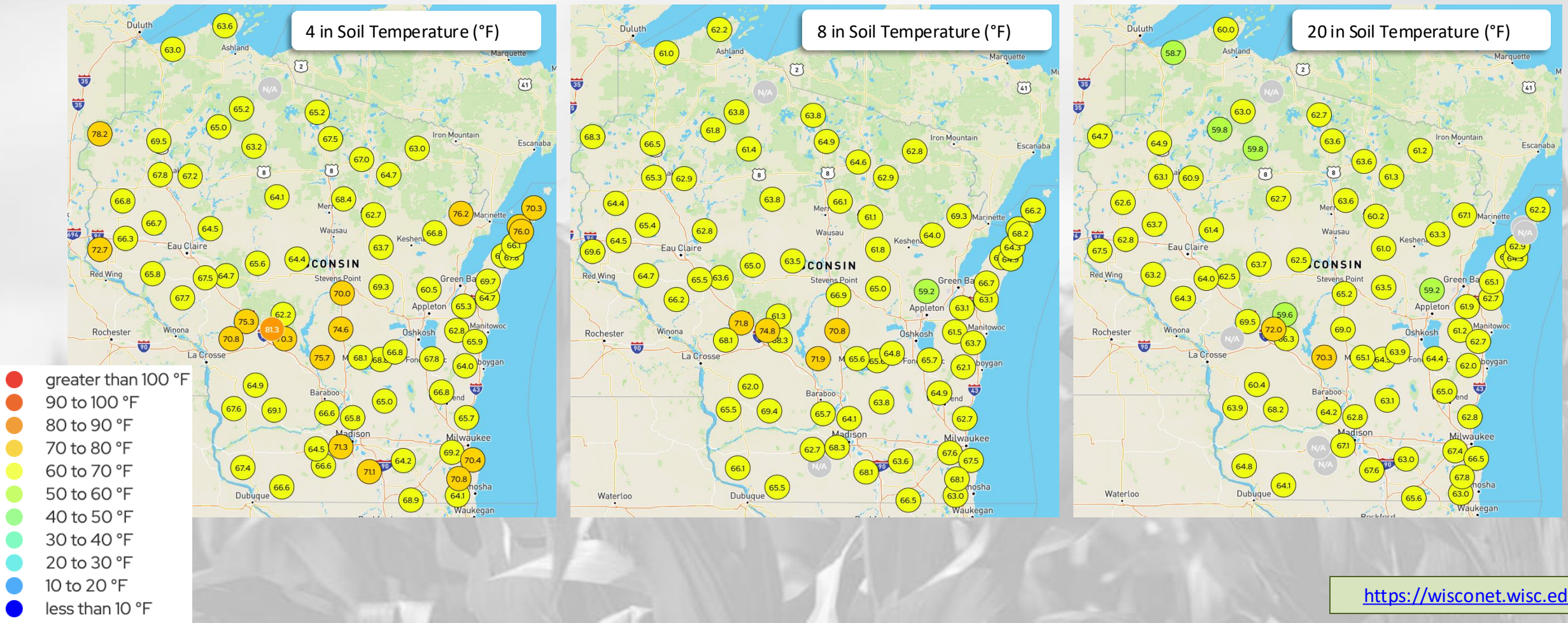
Adequate Soil Moisture



- **76%** of agricultural soils in the state reporting adequate topsoil and subsoil moisture.
- **20-22%** of fields in the state are reported as having short to very short topsoil moisture, a **6-7% increase** from last week.

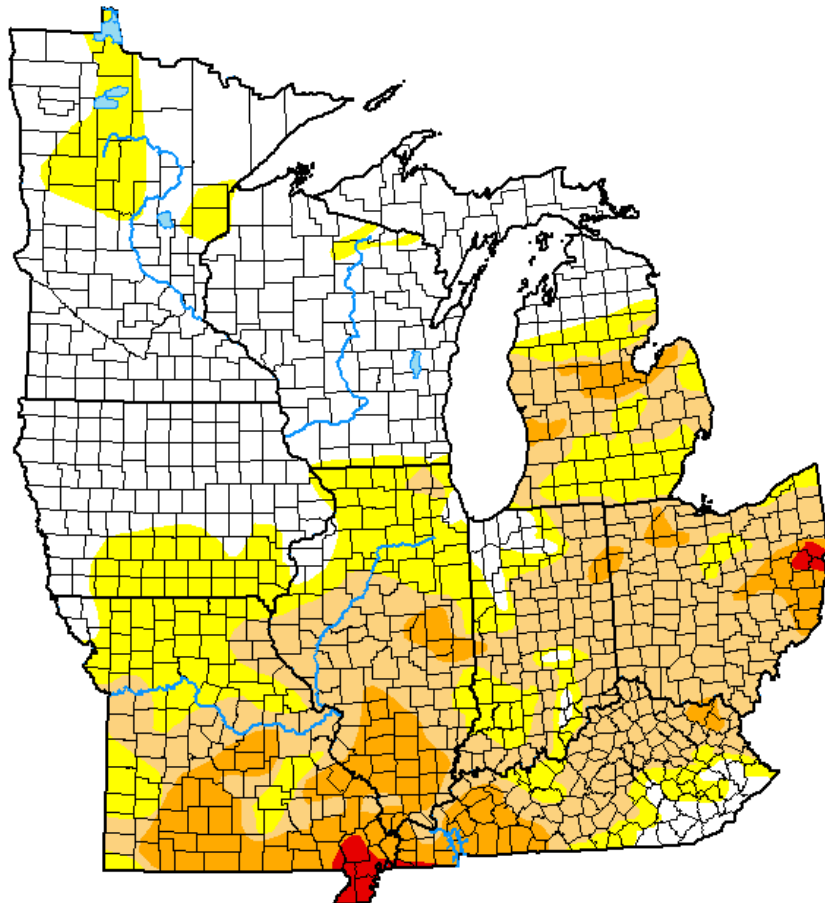
Wisconet Soil Temperature

Maps showing soil temperature conditions on
September 16th @ 1:30 pm.



US Drought Monitor

U.S. Drought Monitor Midwest



September 16, 2025

(Released Thursday, Sep. 18, 2025)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	40.88	59.12	36.93	10.56	0.73	0.00
Last Week 09-09-2025	50.88	49.12	19.63	3.38	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 06-17-2025	67.11	32.89	7.45	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 09-17-2024	22.92	77.08	33.29	9.93	2.56	0.79

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:

Adam Allgood
NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

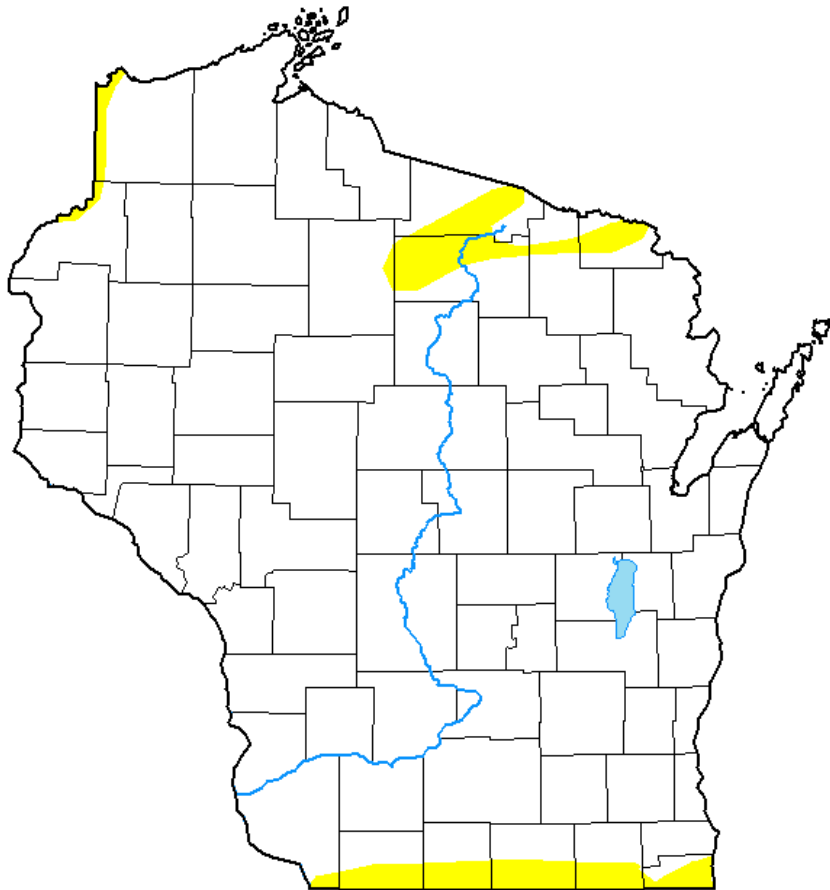
- Midwest: Compared to last week:
 - Substantial increases in D0-D2 coverage.
 - D3 showing up in MO, KY, & OH.
- Midwest: **>17% increase** in D1 coverage south and east of WI, with a **>7% increase** in D2 coverage.
- Wisconsin: The state is still **drought-free**, but D0 is now indicated along the WI-IL border.
- **63.1%** of the Midwest is drought free (~36.9% in D1-D3).

Note: D0 is not considered drought.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

US Drought Monitor

U.S. Drought Monitor Wisconsin



September 16, 2025

(Released Thursday, Sep. 18, 2025)

Valid 8 a.m. EDT

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)

	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	95.00	5.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Last Week 09-09-2025	96.30	3.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3 Months Ago 06-17-2025	74.12	25.88	4.70	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 09-17-2024	47.63	52.37	16.23	0.00	0.00	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>

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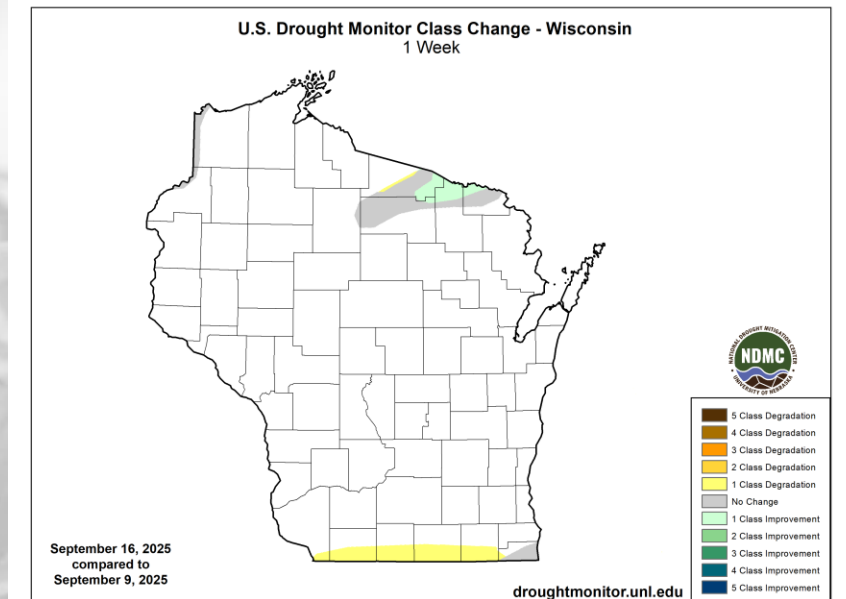
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

<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.

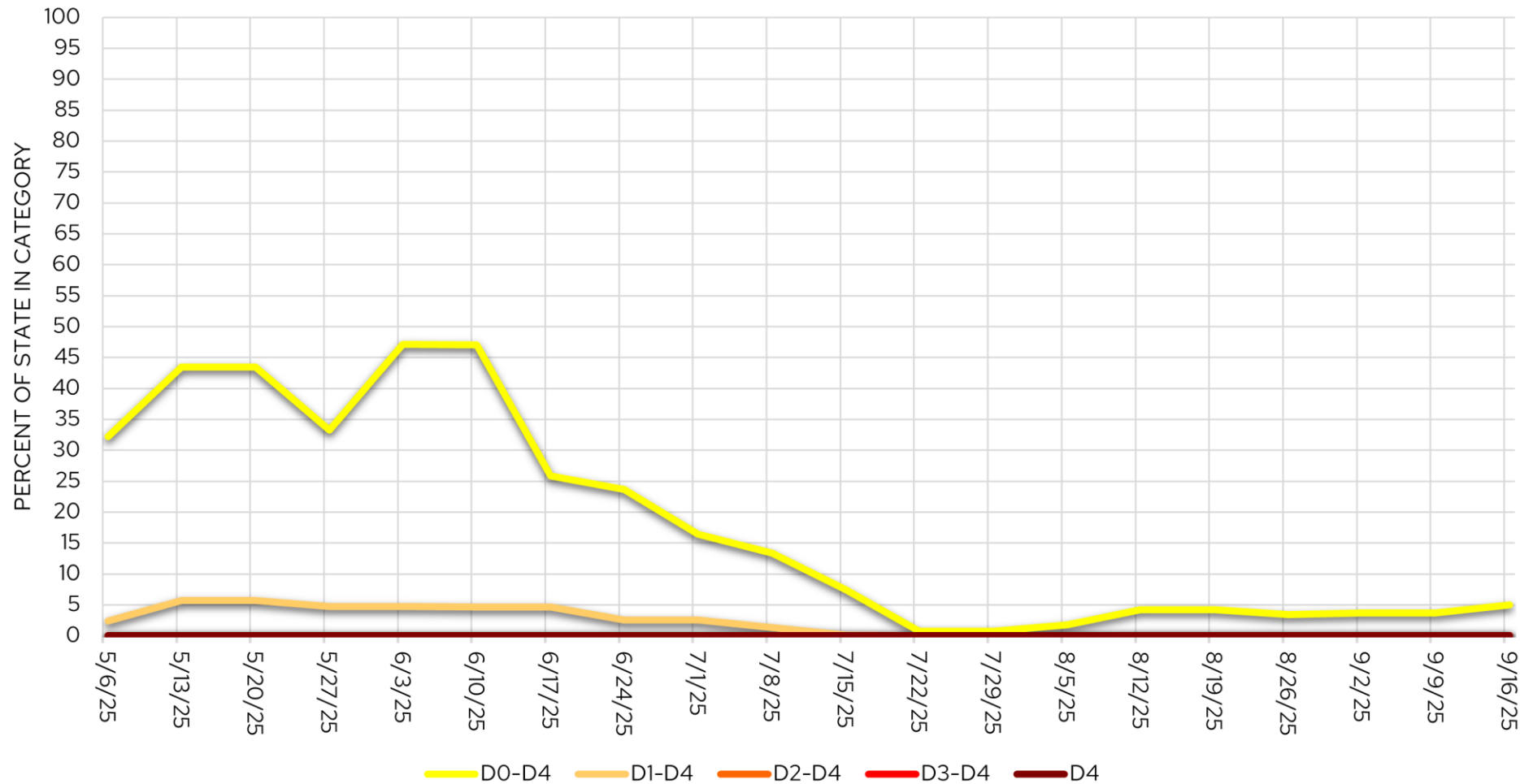


September 16, 2025
compared to
September 9, 2025

droughtmonitor.unl.edu

USDM Time Series

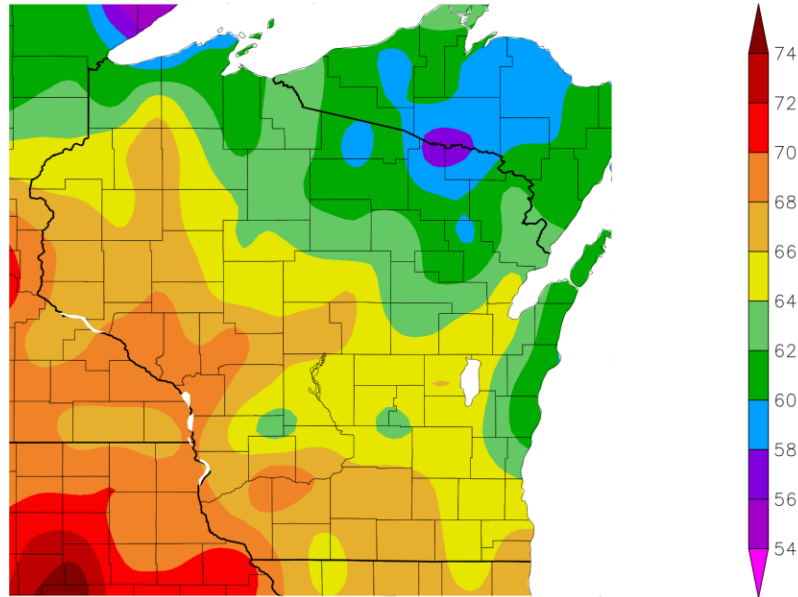
Wisconsin Drought Time Series (USDM)



Minor increase in D0 coverage (along IL border) since last week.

7 Day Temperatures

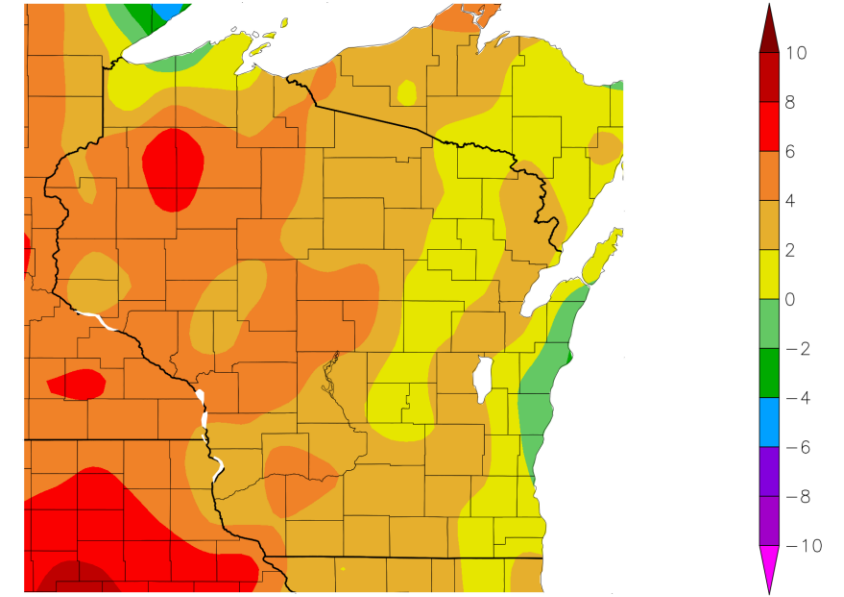
Temperature (F)
9/9/2025 – 9/15/2025



Generated 9/16/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
9/9/2025 – 9/15/2025



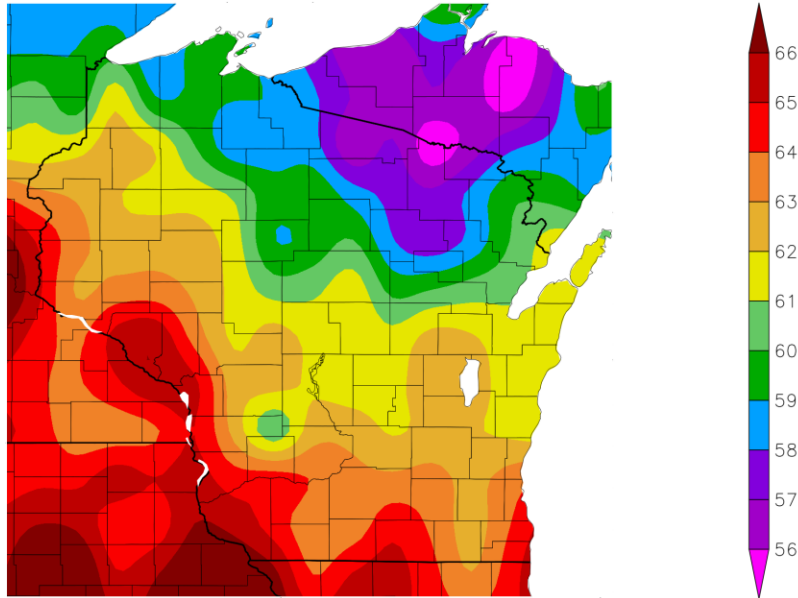
Generated 9/16/2025 using provisional data.

ACIS Web Services

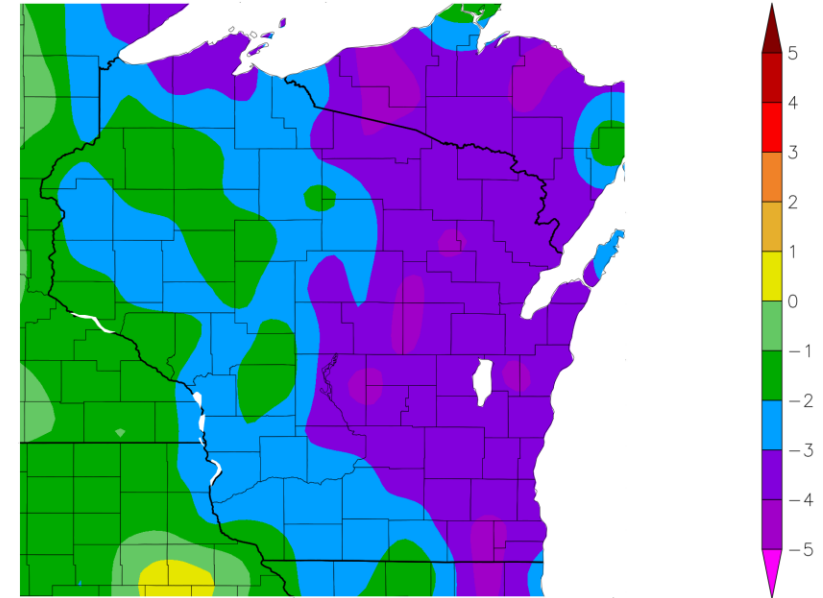
- Average temp. range of **66-70°F** in the south and west; to **58-62°F** in north-central WI.
- **Above average** temperatures for most of WI by **2-6°F**.
- **Near normal** closer to Lake Michigan.

30 Day Temperatures

Temperature (F)
8/17/2025 – 9/15/2025



Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
8/17/2025 – 9/15/2025

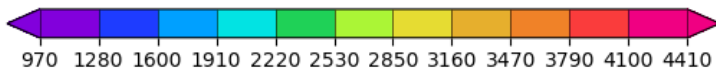
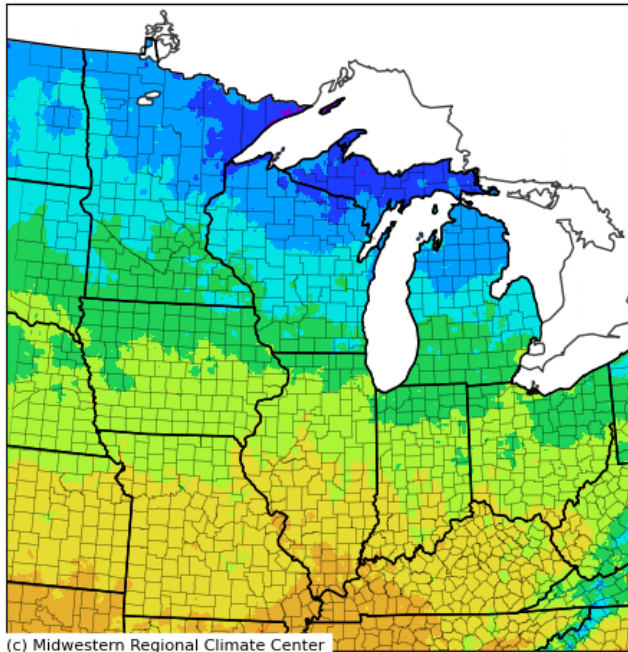


- Average temps. ranged from **63-66°F** in the south and west; to **56-59°F** for the far north.
- **3-5°F below normal** on the eastern half of the state.
- **1-3°F below normal** on the western half of WI.

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

Accumulated Total MGDD (50°F/86°F)

May 01, 2025 to September 14, 2025

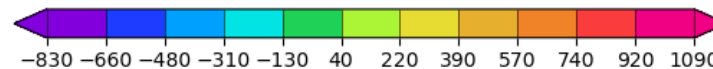
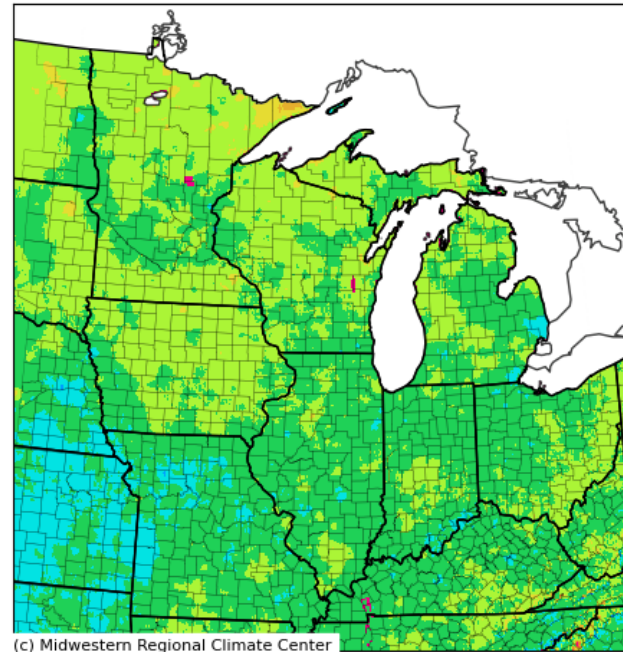


Source: PRISM Weather Data

Generated on: Mon Sep 15, 2025 20:12:44 EDT

Accumulated Total MGDD (50°F/86°F): Departure from 1991-2020 Normal

May 01, 2025 to September 15, 2025



Source: PRISM Weather Data

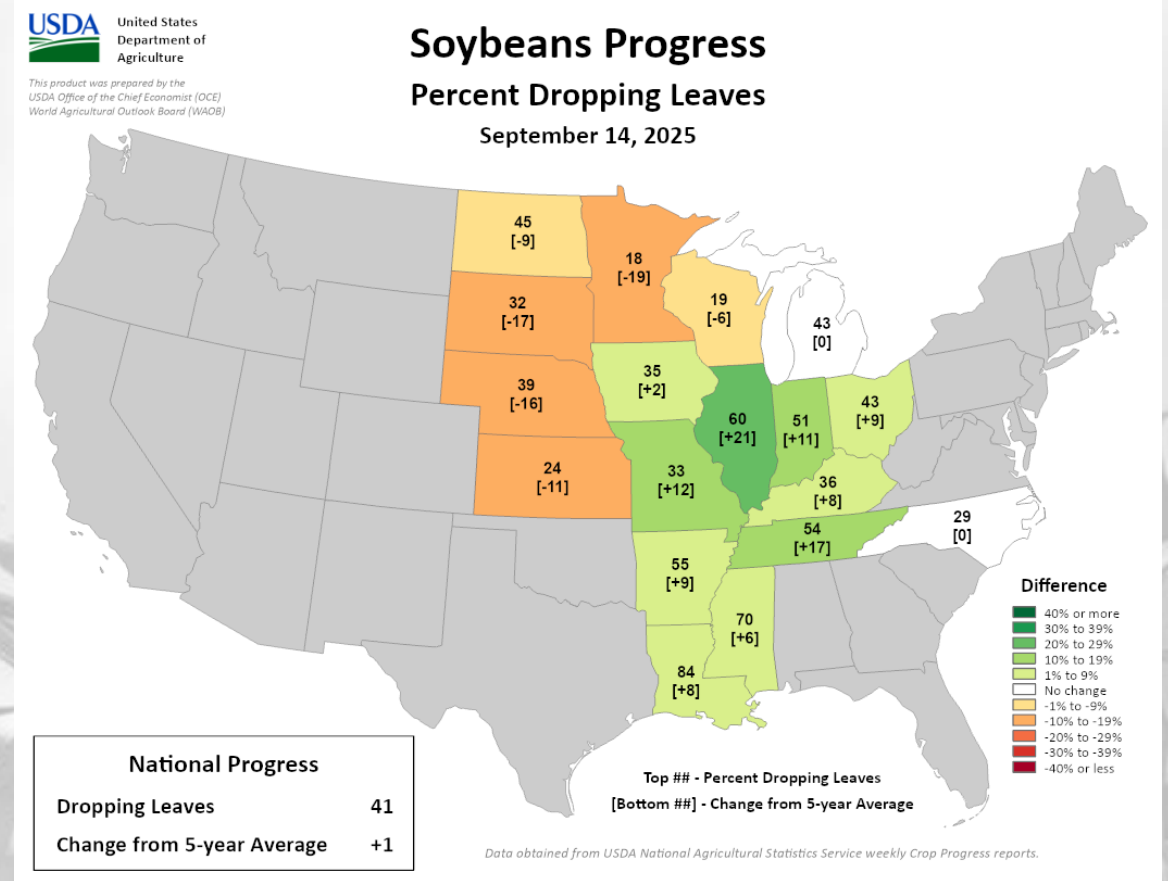
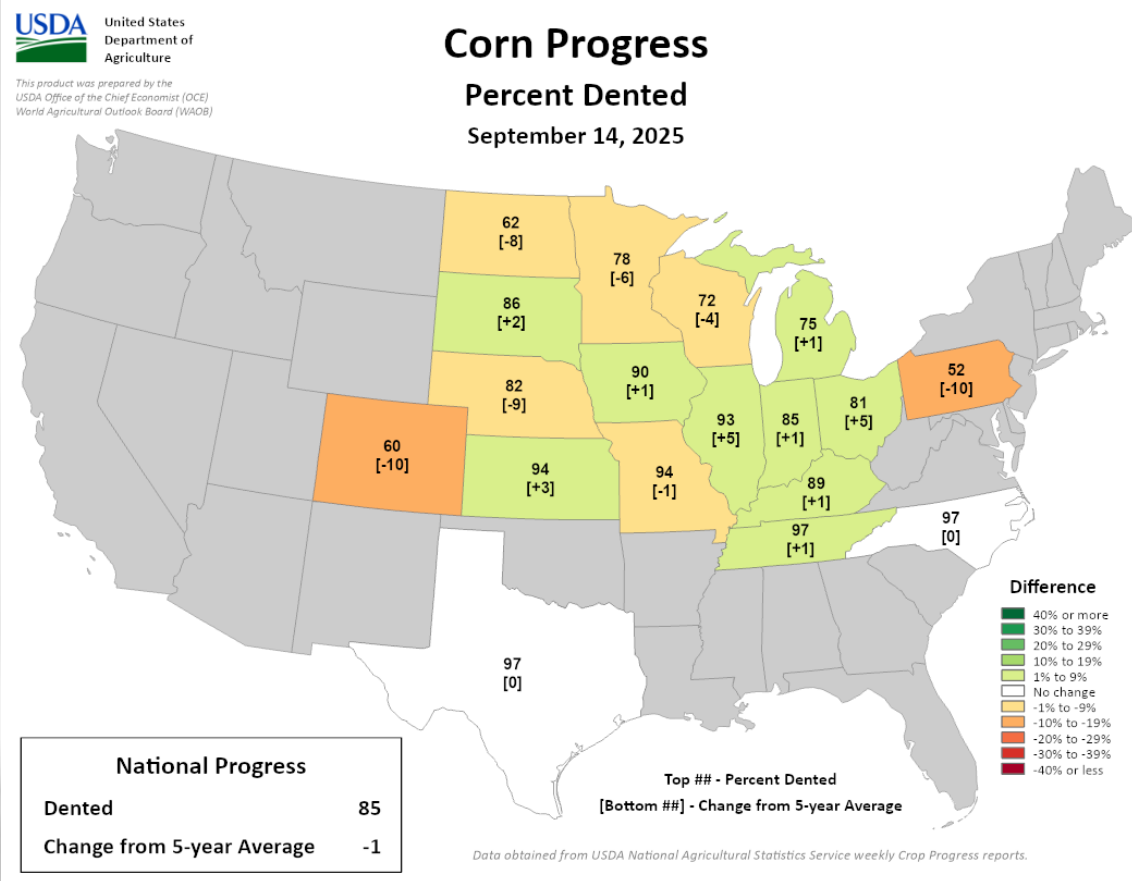
Generated on: Tue Sep 16, 2025 10:50:31 EDT

- Range from **2300-2500 GDD** in the SW to **1600-1900 GDD** in the N.
- GDD accumulation is running **50-200 GDD ahead of schedule** across most of WI.

To calculate GDD for your corn variety and planting date, use this [tool](#).

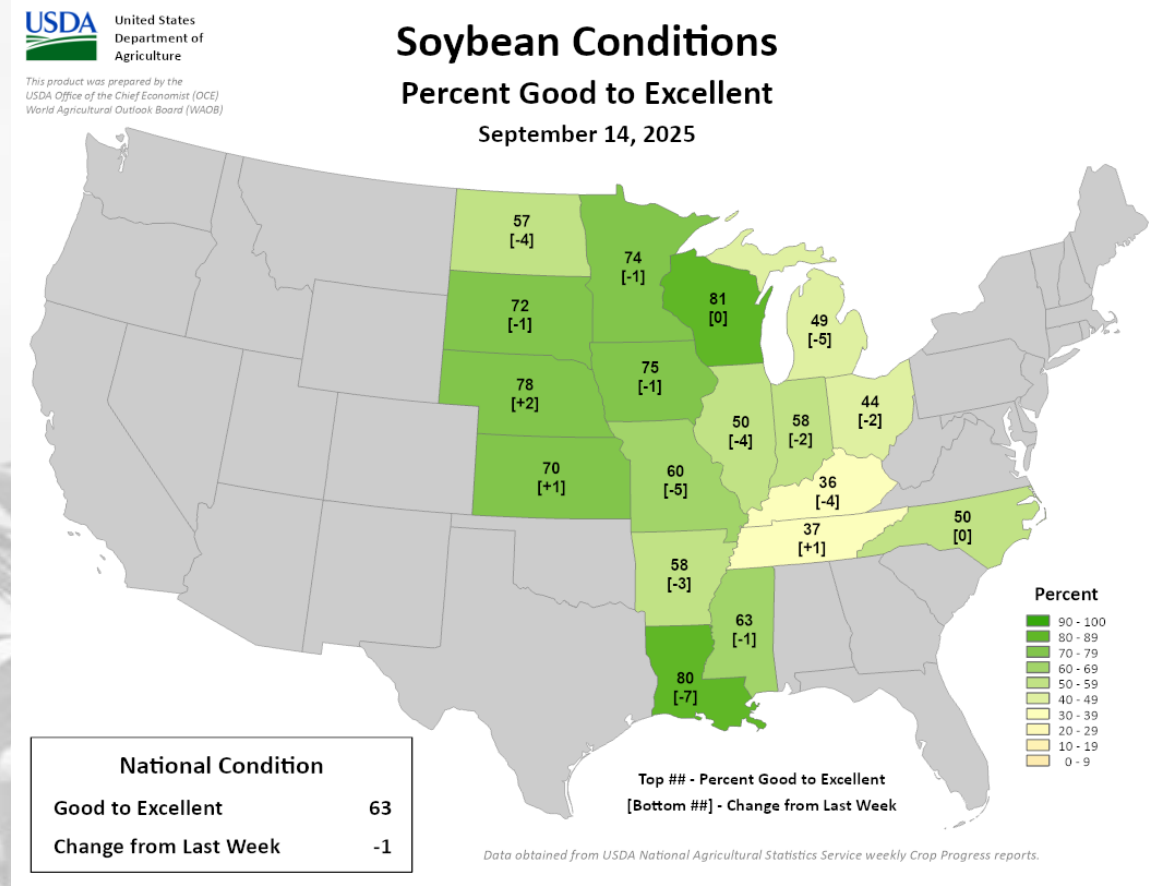
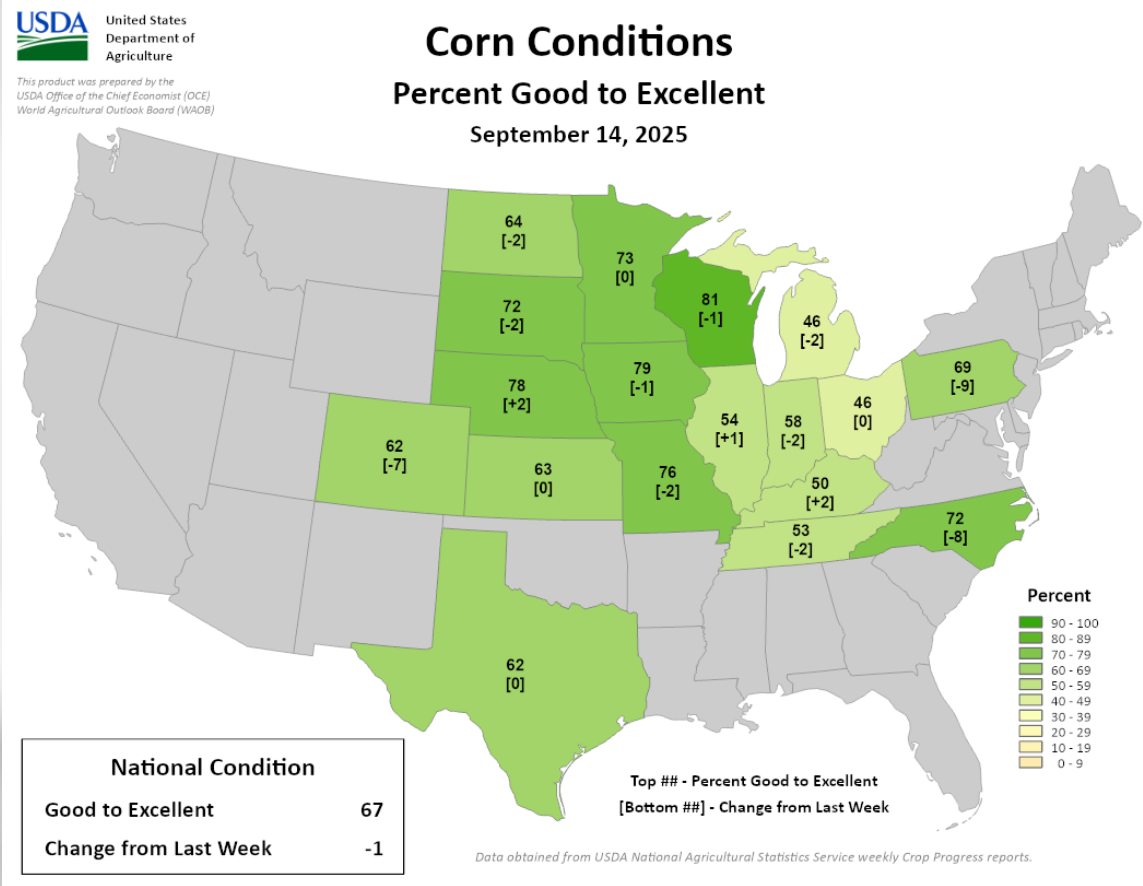
To see specific degree models for pests in your location, use the [Vegetable Disease & Insect Forecasting Network](#).

Corn & Soybean Progress



- Corn denting is **72% complete** in WI fields which is behind the normal pace for mid-September.
 - **17%** of the corn crop in WI is mature.
- Soybean leaf dropping is **19% complete** in WI fields which is behind the normal pace for mid-September.

Corn & Soybean Condition



Crop Progress Report

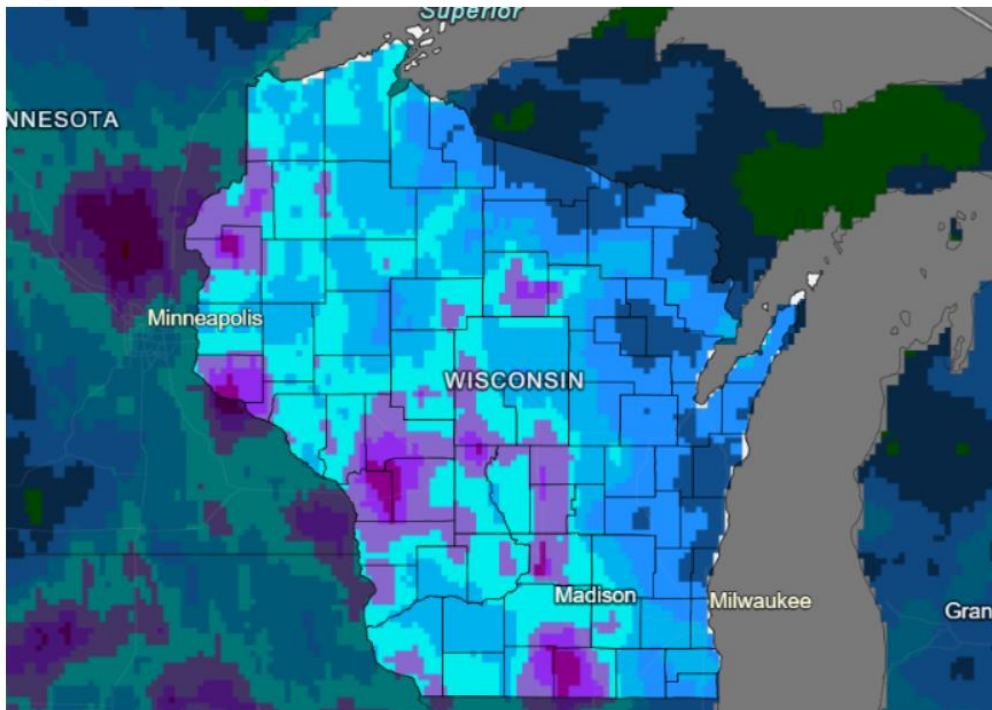
Crop progress report for Wisconsin for the week ending on Sep 14th

- Corn denting is **72%** complete (2 days behind the 5-year average). **17%** of the corn is mature.
 - Condition was rated **81%** good to excellent.
- Soybean coloring is running at **58%** complete (3 days behind the 5-year average). **19%** of soybeans are dropping leaves.
 - Condition was rated **81%** good to excellent.
- Winter wheat seeding for next year is **16%** complete, with emergence at **4%**.
- The fourth cutting of alfalfa hay was **77%** complete (4 days ahead of the 5-year average).
- Pasture and range conditions are rated **68%** good to excellent (**down 2%** from last week).
- Potato harvest is at **55%** complete.

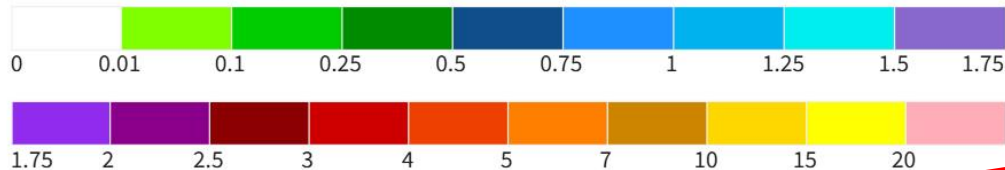
Full report: https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Wisconsin/Publications/Crop_Progress_&_Condition/2025/WI-Crop-Progress-09-15-25.pdf

7 Day Precip Forecast

7-Day Quantitative Precipitation Forecast for September 18–25, 2025



Predicted Inches of Precipitation



Source(s): National Weather Service Weather Prediction Center
Last Updated: 09/18/25

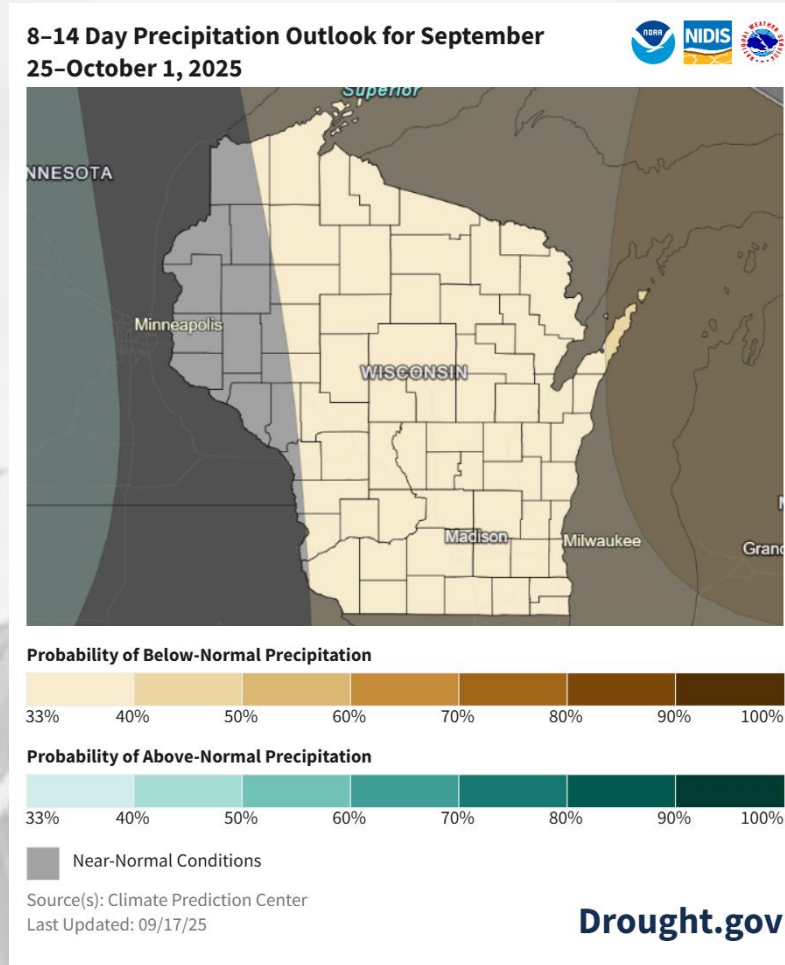
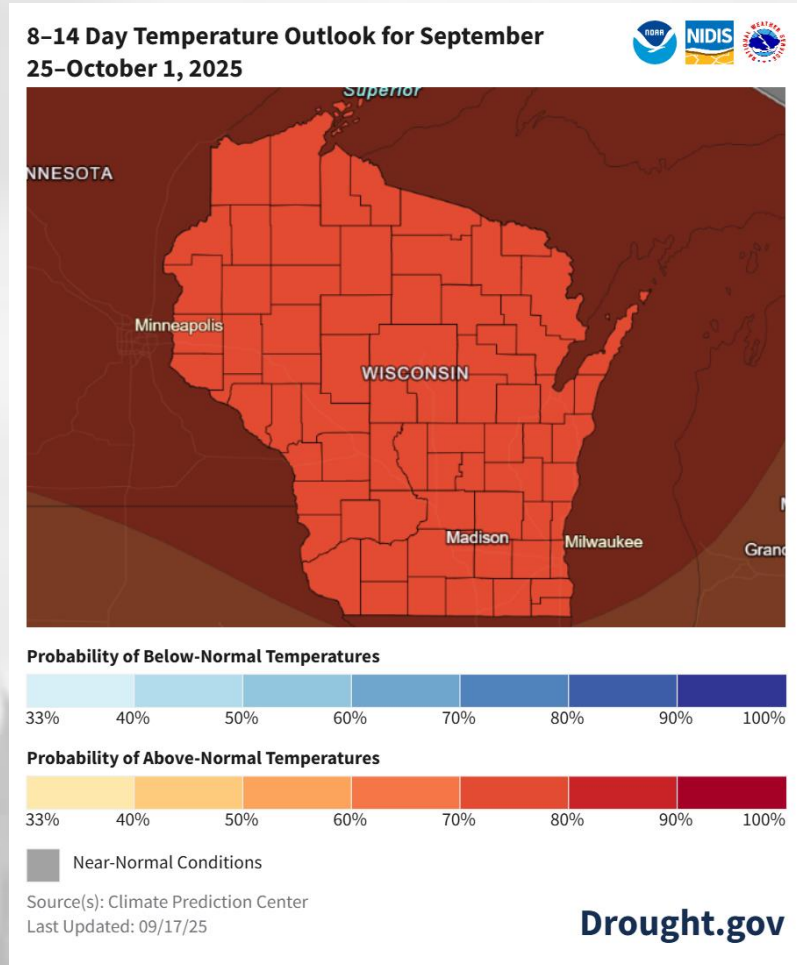
Drought.gov

- **When?** → multiple rain chances through next week Tuesday (9/23), turning quieter by mid-week.
- **Where?** → statewide chances, with a higher likelihood in the western half of WI.
- Check your local forecast for details on totals and timing.
- Average precip (1991-2020) for this week: **0.8-0.9"**

Forecast for 9/18/25 thru 9/25/25
(Begins at 7am CDT)

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

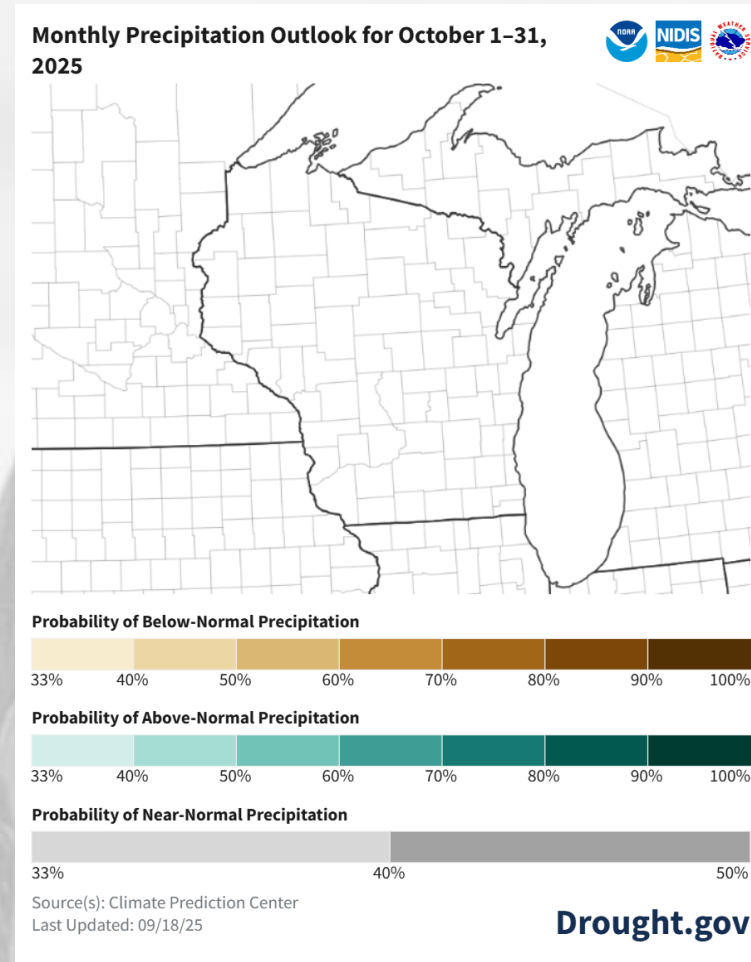
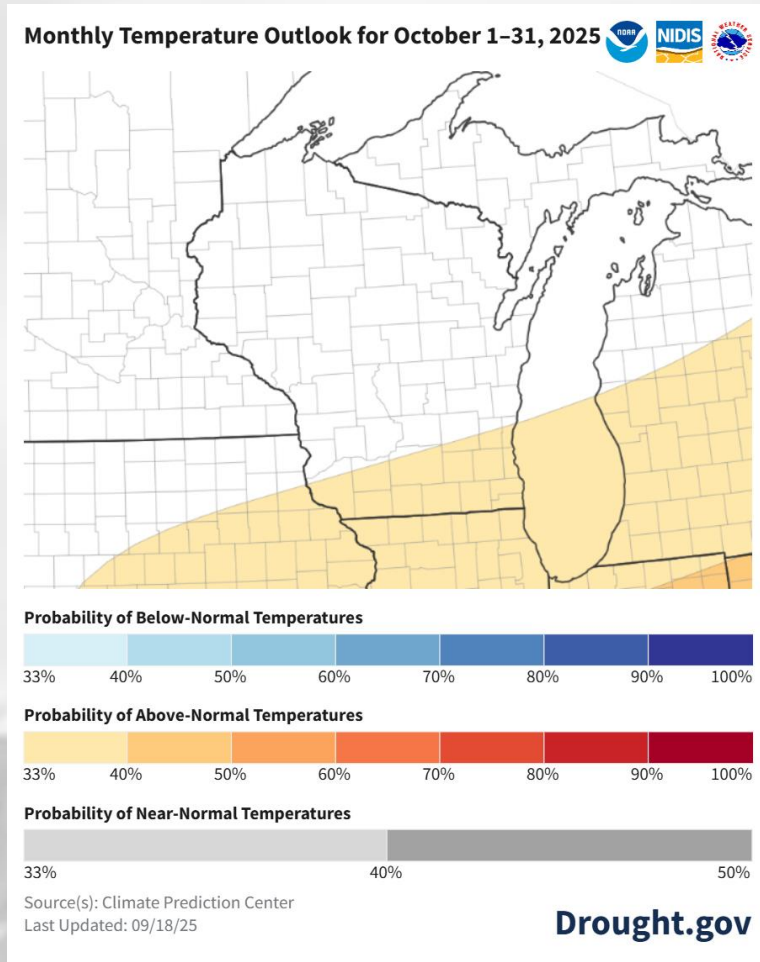
8-14 Day Temp & Precip Outlook



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

Late September: Temperatures likely (**70-80% chance**) to be above normal statewide. Slight lean towards below normal precip statewide except for the NW (near normal).

30 Day Temp & Precip Outlook

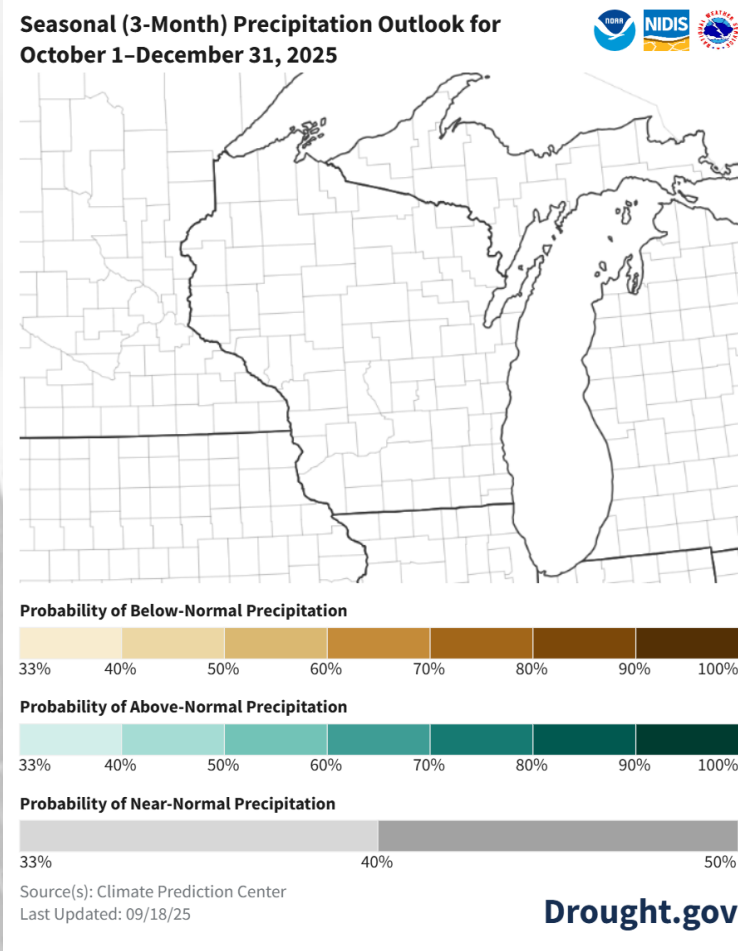
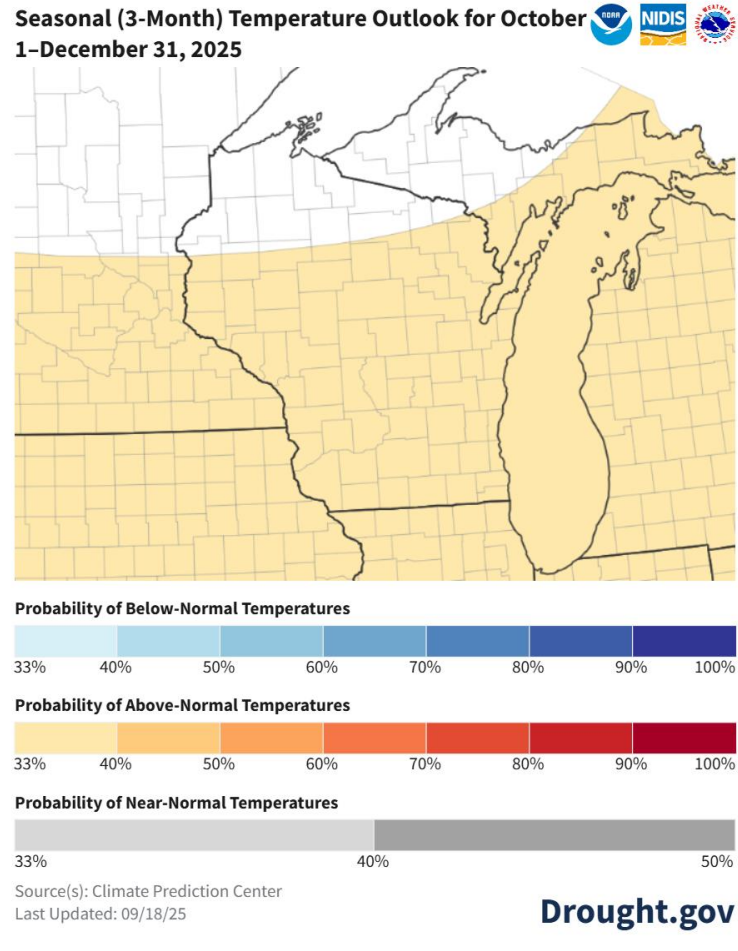


<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>
<https://www.drought.gov/states/wisc>
[onsin](#)

Month of October: Equal chances for precipitation statewide. Slight lean towards above normal temps in southern WI (uncertainty elsewhere).

- Statewide normals (1991-2020) for October are **46.8°F** and **3.01"**.

90 Day Temp & Precip Outlook



<http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/>
<https://www.drought.gov/states/wisc>
[onsin](#)

Fall to Early Winter 2025: Equal chances for precipitation statewide. Slight lean towards above normal temps for most of WI (uncertainty in the far N).

- Statewide normals (1991-2020) for Oct-Dec are **33.9°F** and **6.52"**.

Take-Home Points

Current Conditions

- **Summertime warmth** returned to WI last week, with daily highs topping **80°F** and weekly averages several degrees above normal. This is following what had been a very **fall-like beginning to September**.
- Precip totals were light for most last week, with **totals of less than 0.5" common**. However, some localized areas in the north, northwest, and south-central regions received **over 2"**. The last 30 days have been **drier than normal** for most.

Impact

- Most Wisconet research farm stations saw a **decline in soil moisture** in the top 4" last week following a relatively dry week, with the latest [NASS](#) report indicating **increases** in the percentage of topsoil that is dry to very dry.
- Despite the dryness in recent weeks, WI is still drought free. However, **D0 has been added along the WI-IL border**.
- Corn and soybean progress are running **2-3 days behind normal pace**, but reports indicate that **81%** of corn and soybean fields are rated good to excellent ([NASS](#)). Corn is reported to be hitting maturity in **17%** of WI fields.

Outlook

- The next 7 days are looking **more active for precip statewide**, with multiple rain chances through early next week.
- Climate probabilities for late September indicate an increased likelihood (**70-80% chance**) for **warmer-than-normal conditions**.
- The outlooks for the month of October (*updated 9/18*) **do not show any strong indications** of above or below normal conditions.

Agronomic Considerations

Field Work and Conditions

- With a warmup this week, frost chances are negligible .
- Recent cooler weather may be impacting corn grain and silage maturity.

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

- Check moth trap catches in your region with the DATCP Pest Survey. Sign up for insect pest alerts specific to your region.
- Scout for evidence of soybean gall midge (SGM not presently in Wisconsin; however, the pest has been located in nearby states) which can indicated with dead/wilted plants along field edges. This can indicate maggot infestation. Active feeding is over; however damage can be apparent in the fall.
- Monitor for corn earworm through mid-September.
- Southern Rust has been reported across the state. Heavy disease pressure can cause premature dry down, reduced kernel weight, and lower yield potential.
- Fall armyworm egg-laying may be occurring in late-planted corn fields. Also be vigilant of activity in alfalfa fields. Pay attention to trap catches through mid-Sept.

Forage Management

- Silo gas has been present around a variety of silage storage structures this year. Be aware of the dangers of silo gas and stay away from recently filled structures, particularly when the weather is calm with no wind.
- Use the alfalfa cutting tool to plan remaining alfalfa harvests for stand persistence.
- Consider in-field management strategies to reduce mycotoxins in silage. Begin sampling and estimating moisture as silage matures. Read corn silage harvest management considerations.
- Silage chopping has begun in the southern region of the state. Foliar disease presence can make silage harvest timing critical. Read these considerations for managing disease at chopping.
- Explore the new Corn Silage Dry Down Monitoring Tool to see what samples are measuring at in your region as well as read regional reports.
- Consider planting a cover crop after silage. This will aid in reducing soil erosion going into winter.

Small Grains

- The window to plant winter wheat is approaching (September 20-October 10). Review planting and management guidelines as well as Top 9 suggestions for 2025 establishment.

Fruit Considerations

General

- **Reminder:** Always read and follow directions on the label and keep in mind pre-harvest intervals (PHI) as we move through harvest!
- [Sun scald and southwest injury](#) to trunks and branches has been observed across many orchards and vineyards this summer, likely due to wide variations in winter temperatures that can cause trunk and branch damage.
- [Fruit sunburn](#) has been observed across many fruit crops in southern WI. Consider removing this fruit to prevent other pests attracted to the volatiles (scent).
- **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.
- Wisconsin fruit growers can reference the Midwest Fruit Pest Management Guide (MFPMG) for a list of registered products and recommended best practices. View the [MFPMG Online](#) or order a hard copy here: [MFPMG Hard Copy](#).
- [Brown marmorated stink bug](#) has been observed at West Madison. Keep an eye out for large populations. Hosts include apple, cherry, peach, pear, raspberry, and cranberry.

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 \(Cornell\)](#).
- [Sooty blotch and flyspeck](#) continues to be observed in Southern WI, pushed along by warm, humid conditions. Continue monitoring NEWA models.
- Apple growers should continue monitoring pheromone traps and degree-day (base 50°F) accumulation for [Codling moth](#).
- [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

- Table and wine grape harvest is just about wrapped up at West Madison Ag. Research Station. Check out last week's [WI Fruit Crop Scouting Report](#) for updates on grape maturity testing.
- Black rot and fruit rot 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.
- 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 through harvest.

Vegetable Considerations

Pests

- Be on the lookout for [cabbage aphids](#) which are white to grey in color. The aphids can be difficult to see so look for yellowing and wilting leaves, deformed heads, and drops of honeydew aka aphid poop which is a thick, sticky liquid. Their populations can explode quickly in the fall as reproduction rates actually increase in cool temps (50-68°F).
- The recent dry weather means that the risk of damage from [western flower thrips](#) is high. Thrips can be difficult to control as of result of their small size and their tendency to hide. However, there are many tactics that can be combined for better management. Options include promoting more beneficial insects such as minute pirate bugs, using reflective mulch, and chemical control. More details on control options can be found [here](#).
- The second generation of adult [crucifer flea beetles](#) are active in northern WI. Yellow sticky cards can be used to help determine their population. Treatment is recommended when 10-20% of a stand shows damage. Populations can be spotty across a field so spot treatment can be very effective.

Diseases

- This year's moisture stress combined with high temperatures can increase the risk of potato tuber diseases this time of year. Test dig potatoes to look for pink eye, enlarged lenticels, and other physiological conditions. If you notice any of these abnormalities, make sure you are carefully monitoring for disease in storage. Diseases to be monitoring for include [pink rot](#), [late blight](#), [pythium leak](#), and [bacterial soft rot](#). More information on symptoms and management options can be found [here](#).
- Potato yield and tuber size can be negatively affected by [silver scurf](#) and [black dot](#). These diseases can both occur on the same plant and are difficult to distinguish. An important management strategy for both diseases include limiting the amount of time between vine kill and harvesting as tubers are at greater risk the longer they remain in warm, moist soil. Read [Dr. Amanda Gevens' newsletter](#) for more information on the life cycle and management of both diseases.
- When possible, [harvest mature winter squash](#) rather than let it sit in the field. As vines die back, squash bugs will be more attracted to the fruit. The damage caused by their feeding can provide entry points for diseases. Additionally, during rain events, fruits can become infected by the soil dwelling pathogens [fusarium](#) and [phytophthora](#).
- Scout for symptoms of [alternaria and cercospora](#) on carrot leaves. These diseases can be difficult to tell apart as both cause brown lesions often surrounded by a yellow halo. One distinguishing factor can be the timing of infection. Cercospora often occurs on young, rapidly growing plants while alternaria often occurs on older plants although can occur on young plants as well. Both can cause yield loss due to petioles breaking off during mechanical harvest is disease pressure is high.
- Despite the relatively dry weather, recent conditions with warm days, cool nights, and heavy dew in the morning are right for the formation of [alternaria](#) in brassicas. Leaf spots are grey or black in color and have concentric rings as they enlarge. It can be spread by rain, wind, and insects like flea beetles. Although due to their larger size, spores cannot travel as far on the wind as downy or powdery mildew spores. Management options include [planting resistant varieties](#), removing alternative hosts such as shepherd's purse and field mustard, and [fungicides](#).
- [Powdery mildew](#) is common after this year's wet and humid conditions. Remember that fungicides are preventative in nature and while they can help slow the disease when first detected, they will not provide any benefit once the disease has progressed. Powdery mildew is an obligate parasite meaning that it needs a living host to survive. Once there is a killing frost in your area, the pathogen will die along with the plant tissue. Keep in mind that winter squash from infected plants will likely have a reduced storage life.

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

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