

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

Date: May 06,2020

Report Number: GM2020-0028

Report Name: Light Rains In Germany Ease Fear of Drought For Now

Country: Germany

Post: Berlin

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the News, Climate Change/Global Warming/Food Security, Grain and Feed, Oilseeds and Products, Dairy and Products

Prepared By: Sabine Lieberz

Approved By: Kimberly Sawatzki

Report Highlights:

The light rains in the week of April 27 brought some relief to the thirsty German soils and came just in time for the germination of the recently planted corn and sugar beets. However, more rain is needed to ensure continued plant development and adequate yields.

Most of Germany did not see any rains for over six weeks from mid-March until late April and many farmers fear this could be the third straight year of drought. According to the German meteorological service Deutscher Wetterdienst (DWD), April 2020 was the third driest April since the onset of precipitation recordings in 1881. Precipitation amounted to 17 liters per square meter (l/m) compared to the 58 l/m average of the international reference period (1961-1990). The lack of precipitation was of more concern in the Eastern part of the country where winter rains were not sufficient to restore moisture levels in the subsoil. In addition, warm easterly winds increased plant transpiration and added to the water deficiency.

With an average temperature of 10.5 degrees Celsius/50.9 degrees Fahrenheit DWD lists April 2020 seventh warmest April since 1881. However, temperatures were distributed unevenly throughout the country with much higher temperatures in the South, yet still night frosts in the East. At the same time, there was an unusually large temperature spread between day and night temperatures that reached up to 25 degrees Celsius/77 degrees Fahrenheit.

All of the above negatively affected plant development for rapeseed, winter and spring grains, grassland for fodder production and pastures. The latter two may indirectly lead to a lower milk production. It could also prompt farmers to cut grains, for example triticale and rye, while still green and put into silage to make up for the reduced grass production.

The light rains in the week of April 27 brought some relief to the thirsty soils and plants and came just in time for germination of the recently planted corn and sugar beets. However, to ensure continued plant development and yields more rain is needed. If the rain fails to come, severe production losses could result. The extent of the drought damage that already occurred will only become clear in the next couple weeks. According to the German Farmers Union's preliminary assessment rapeseed was more affected than the grains.

Attachments:

No Attachments.