

Moisture Situation Update – September 3, 2013

Synopsis:

Generally speaking, province wide, this growing season has been favorable, with ample moisture, and moderate temperatures bringing good growing conditions to most areas. Early frosts have been largely avoided to date, allowing some late seeded crops to continue to mature. Warm relatively dry weather has dominated over the province over the last few weeks allowing harvesting to occur largely uninterrupted. Over the next few days, rains are expected to fall over the southern half of the province, with frost remaining absent from the current 7-day forecast.

Forecast from ESRD's Fire Weather Section (special thanks to Nick Nimchuck)

Beginning on Thursday (September 5th), an upper low will bring precipitation to most parts of Alberta, south of Edmonton. Areas in and around Rocky Mountain House are expected to receive the greatest accumulations with upwards of 60 mm expected to fall, by Friday (September 6th). Areas along the foothills, south of Edson extending all the way to the US boarder are likely to see appreciable accumulations. Many of the agricultural areas between Edmonton and the southern parts of Alberta likely to see less, but still upwards of 20 mm of precipitation is expected to fall in some locations. Looking out as far as 7-days it appears that frost is not likely in this time frame.

Frost areas August 20 to Sept 3, 2013 – see map

- Cool air brought early morning frosts on or about August 21st to most areas along the foothills, between Grande Cache, down as far south as the M.D. of Ranchland; however, since that time, frosts have generally been absent across the agricultural areas of the province.

7-day precipitation accumulations relative to long term normal as of September 3, 2013 -see map

- Over the past 7-days, many parts of north-central Alberta have seen upwards of 50 mm of precipitation, with most of this falling during heavy thunderstorm activity which occurred in the late evening on August 29th. During this time, the Tomahawk AEDM station recorded more than 42 mm in a single hour, followed by the Vilna AGCM station which recorded 35 mm in a single hour.

21-day highest daily maximum temperatures as of September 3, 2013 -see map

- Since about August 14th, southern Alberta has been experiencing a heat wave, with daytime highs over the last three weeks topping 30°C most days.
- The warmest temperatures were recorded at Medicine Hat RCS on September 2nd (36.7°C) with 18 of the last 21 days seeing temperatures at or above 30°C

Perspective:

- Most areas have avoided early frosts to date, with the 7-day forecast suggesting that there is no serious widespread frost expected in this time frame
- Overall conditions have been favorable, but wide spread rains are on the way. At this time a year, rain can be a “mixed blessing”, slowing harvesting operations but at the same time bringing some relief to dry pastures and also recharging soil moisture reserves ahead of the next growing season.

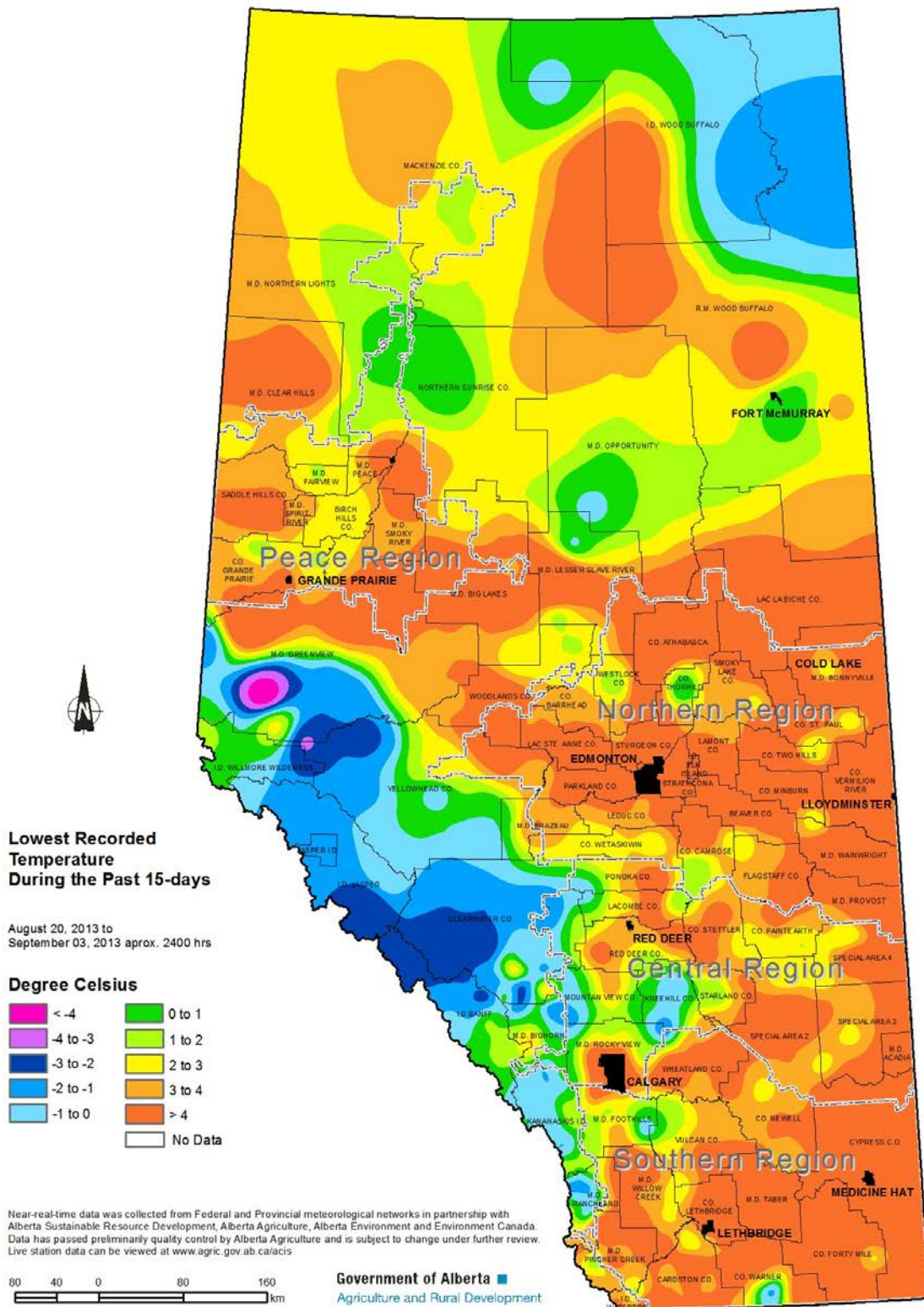
Additional Maps can be found at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/maps

Near-real-time hourly station data can be viewed/downloaded at www.agriculture.alberta.ca/stations

Note: Data has about a two hour lag and is displayed in MST (add one hour for daylight savings time)

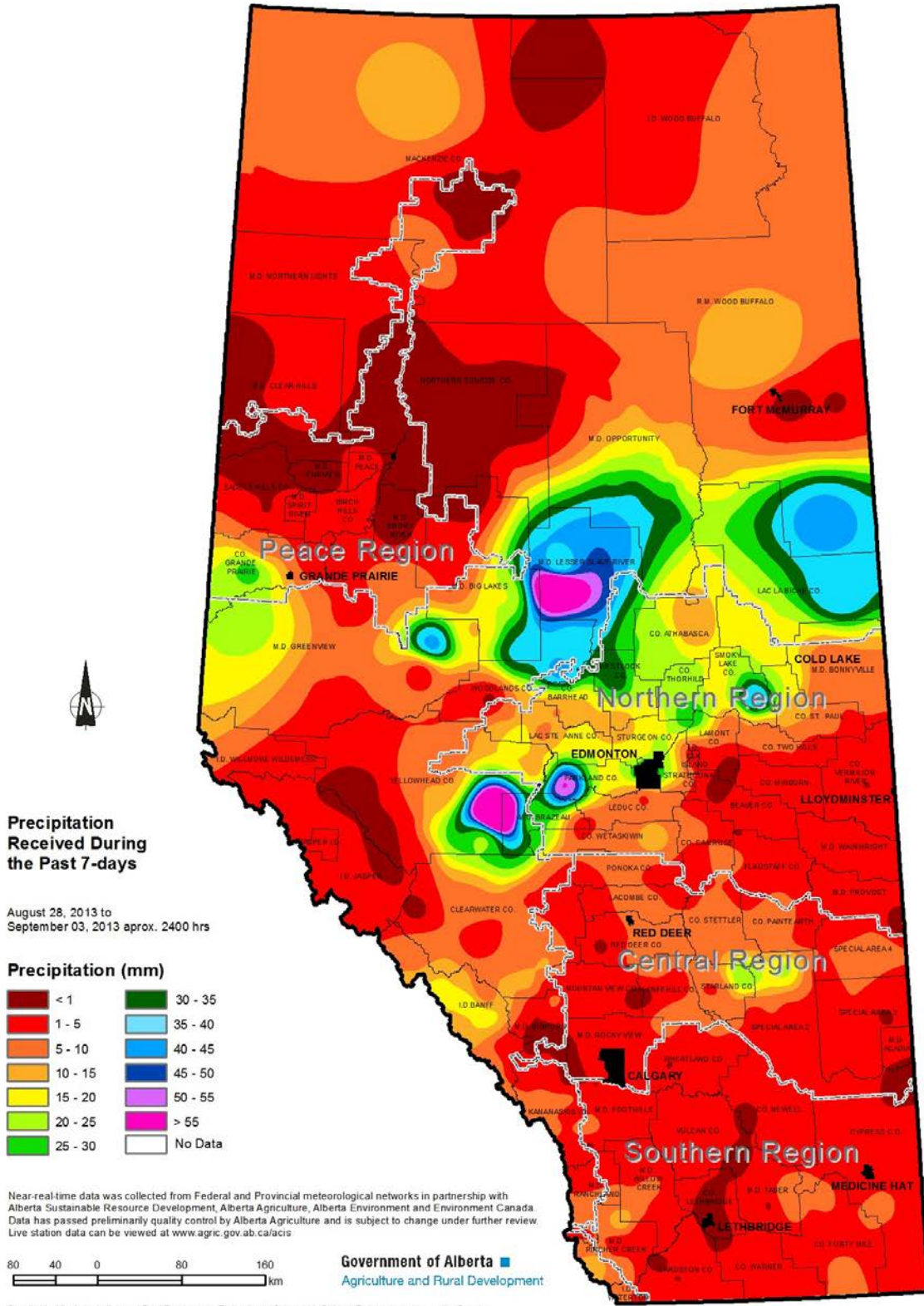
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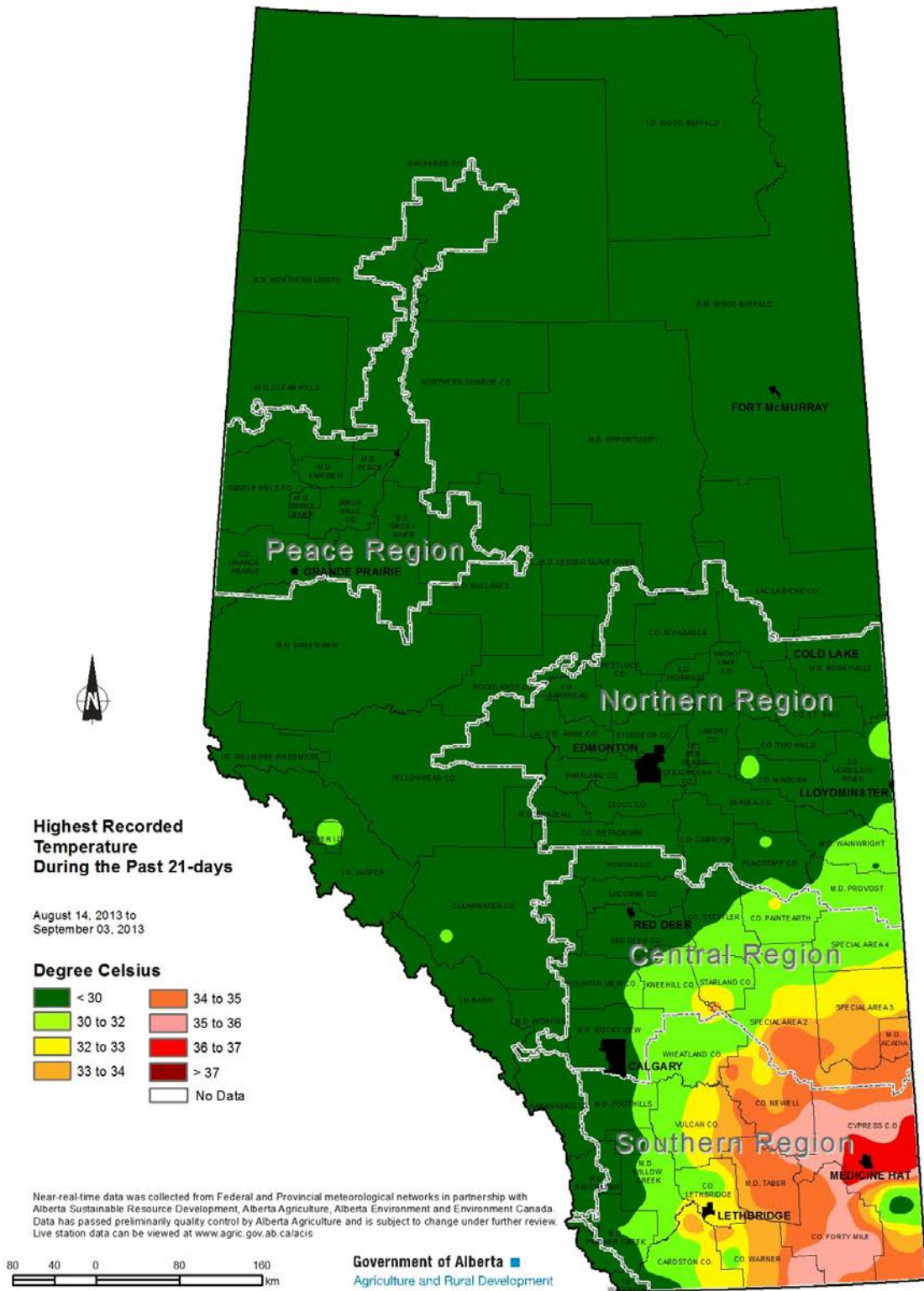


Compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Environmental Stewardship Division, Technology and Innovation Branch
Created on September 04, 2013

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