

Rain improves U.S. crop outlook

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Showers and cooler temperatures have eased crop moisture stress and the extreme heat over most of the eastern two-thirds of the nation during the past week, according to a report issued Tuesday by the joint Agricultural Weather Facility of the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Agriculture.

Unseasonable warmth and sunshine benefited crops in the Pacific Northwest. Temperatures averaged

two to five degrees below the seasonal normal over the northern Great Plains and Ohio River Valley last week while temperatures ranged from four to seven, and six to 10 degrees above normal over eastern New England and the Pacific coastal areas, respectively. Texas cooled slightly, but temperatures still were two to five degrees above seasonal averages.

Beneficial rains totaling two to four inches fell over the lower Mississippi Delta,

the Ohio River Valley, most of the central and southeast coastal regions, and portions of the northern Great Plains. Crops in most areas east of the Great Plains were helped somewhat by rainfalls ranging up to 1.5 inches.

Except for showers over the mountains, the western United States remained dry and warm as last month's heat wave abated in the central United States and moved to the west coast where fair weather will accelerate crop develop-

ment and the wheat harvest now beginning in the Pacific Northwest.

CANADA. Light rain over the grain belt continued crop improvement, especially in the later planted fields. Substantial yield reductions still are anticipated in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Normal yields or greater still are expected in Alberta.

MEXICO. Rains maintained adequate soil moisture for maize now flowering in southern crop areas to the west of Mexico City. Dryness still plagues crops in the northeast, despite some showers.

EUROPE. Two to three times the normal rainfall has kept conditions too wet for most crop development in a band extending from Belgium and Holland east to the Soviet Union. Reports of crop conditions in Western Europe remained cautiously optimistic as weather cleared during last week. Weather in central and southern France was favorable for the beginning winter grain harvest.

USSR. Heavy rains, totaling 4 to 5 times the normal seasonal amount, created very unfavorable conditions for coarse grains in western Belorussia, the western Ukraine and northern Moldavia. Ripening winter grains in the southern areas were especially hurt by the wet weather. Eastern winter grain areas enjoyed good harvest weather, but the hot and dry conditions were poor for spring planted row crops in these areas.

SOUTHEAST ASIA. Rainfall increased over Thailand, with most areas benefiting from above-normal amounts. The dry season rice crop in the Central Plain north of Bangkok should be nearly mature at this time.

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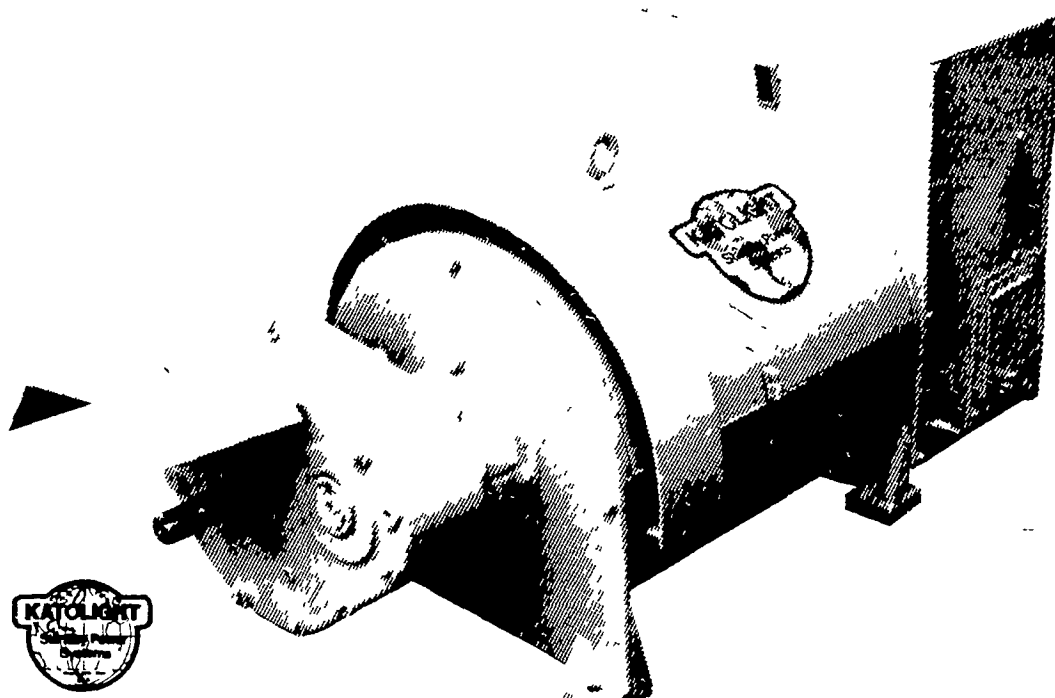
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