

Beneficial rain falls on many global crop areas

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Needed rain fell on many of the world's crop areas last week while freezing temperatures and snow brought a halt to the harvest in parts of the United States, according to a weekly report issued today by the Joint Agricultural Weather Facility of the U.S. Department of Commerce and Agriculture.

Highlights of the report follow: —United States. Cold air spilled southward across the Great Plains at mid-week, following the season's first major snowstorm. At week's end, snow on the ground halted harvest efforts from Nebraska north to Montana, and east into New England.

Subfreezing temperatures extended to sections of all Gulf Coast states by the weekend. Mostly fair weather aided the harvest in the Southern states.

—USSR. Widespread precipitation improved subsoil moisture conditions in the western Ukraine. Modest precipitation fell on northern and central winter wheat areas where cold temperatures have induced dormancy.

Generally dry weather prevailed over the Volga Valley and southeastern areas where winter wheat also has entered dormancy. In western areas near the Caspian Sea, widespread rains have maintained favorable conditions for early wheat growth.

—Europe. Dry weather persisted over the southwestern part of the region. Limited topsoil moisture further delayed winter grain sowing in the Iberian Peninsula.

Rainfall in northwestern Europe maintained favorable conditions for the early growth of winter grains. In the northeast, favorable precipitation maintained adequate soil moisture supplies for winter wheat, most of which is now dormant. Below-normal temperatures allowed only limited wheat growth in the southeast.

—Mexico. Sunny, mild weather aided the corn, citrus and sugarcane harvest in the east and development of winter vegetables and wheat along the West Coast.

—South American. Argentina's crop areas received mostly light rain, except in Santa Fe, Cordoba and extreme eastern Buenos Aires where heavier rainfall slowed fieldwork early in the week.

Planting of coarse grains, sunflowers and first-crop soybeans was underway in all areas. The first crop comprises about 65 percent of the total soybean crop. Sunflower planting is complete in northern crop areas.

Widespread showers in Brazil provided ample moisture for corn and soybean growth, but interfered with the wheat harvest in Rio Grande do Sul where 95 percent of

the harvest usually is completed by the end of November. Corn should be in the tasseling/silking period while soybeans are now in early vegetative growth.

—Australia. Locally heavy showers fell over the Northern Territory, Queensland and eastern New South Wales, but mostly dry weather prevailed in southern and western wheat areas.

The rainfall benefited sugar cane along Queensland's east coast and pastures further inland; but the last wheat harvest may have been disrupted. Dry weather in other major wheat-producing states aided early harvest operations as the crop reached maturity in some areas.

—India. Mostly dry weather allowed the harvest of groundnuts, autumn rice and winter rice to progress with little delay. The dry weather, however, was unfavorable for emergency and early growth of winter wheat and for cotton which still is in the boll-formation stage.

—China. Generally dry weather over winter grain areas north of Yellow River Valley continued to delay winter grains planting. Cold weather is limiting wheat growth and, as the winter pattern continues to set in, the possibility of additional planting is further diminished.

Rain and warmer temperatures permitted normal wheat growth in central winter wheat areas. Drier weather in southern coastal areas benefited the late rice harvest and improved winter grain planting conditions.

—Southeast Asia. Post-monsoon showers continued to provide beneficial moisture for crops and reservoirs in Thailand. Irrigation supplies are improved for the second rice crop, although northeastern Thailand was mostly dry. Further south, heavy rain fell along peninsular Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and southern Philippines.


—Northwestern Africa. Little

precipitation fell on northern coastal areas of Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. Winter grains planting is underway in Tunisia and eastern Algeria. Persistent dry weather has further delayed planting in Morocco and western Algeria.

—South Africa. Beneficial showers in much of the corn-growing region provided need moisture for planting. The rain was extremely helpful in southern and western portions of the corn triangle where very little planting had occurred prior to last week because of dry soil conditions. Additional rain is needed for crop emergence and early growth.

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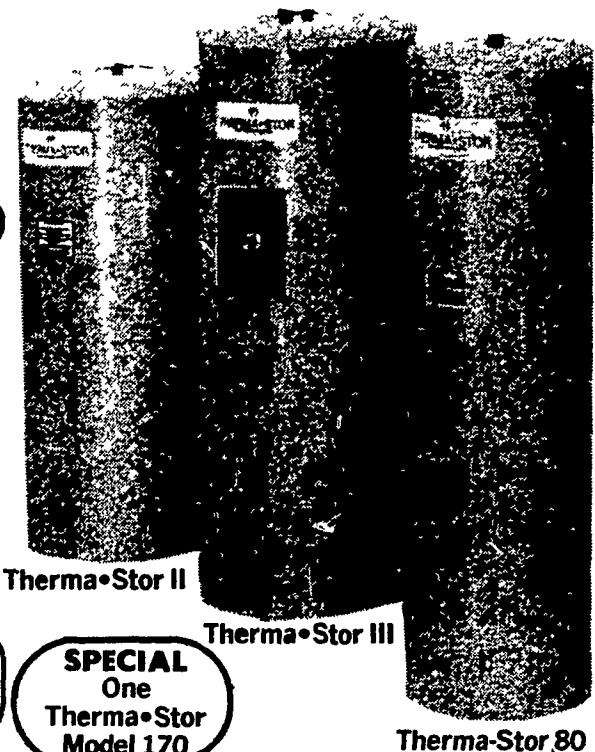
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