

# World weather runs wet and dry

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Many of the world's winter grain areas were wet during the first week in March as significant precipitation was recorded in both hemispheres, according to a report issued last week by the Joint Agricultural Weather Facility of the U.S. Departments of Commerce and Agriculture.

In South Africa, however, corn crop prospects are well below normal due to lack of rain, and subsoil moisture is deficient in some northern parts of China's winter grain areas.

Highlights of the report follow. —United States. Above-normal temperatures were common in the West and Southwest while unseasonable cold covered the North

from Montana to New England. Snow cover increased over the Plains, particularly from Nebraska north and eastward, protecting winter grains from cold Arctic air. In the Southeast, fieldwork was underway until showers began after mid-week. Significant rainfall was recorded from East Texas and the Central Plains to the East Coast, and along the Pacific Coast and over the Northern Rockies.

—USSR. Generally dry weather returned to the major winter grain areas of the Ukraine and North Caucasus. Above-normal temperatures prevailed with daytime highs above freezing in many locations. Most of the Ukraine is vulnerable to potential winterkill

due to lack of significant snowcover.

—Europe. Generally dry weather continued across the Iberian Peninsula where Spanish winter grains are in the vegetative stage and would benefit from more moisture. In contrast, winter grain areas from northwest Europe south into France and Italy received generous rainfall. Soil moisture conditions in northern Italy were considerably improved.

—Mexico. Rain over Southern Plateau corn and bean areas improved soil moisture, but several other districts were dry. Warm weather permitted corn planting in some of the low elevations of the south and upper northeast. Crops along the coastal plains of the Bay of Campeche received adequate moisture. Sunny, warm weather prevailed over most other principal agricultural areas.

—South America. Only scattered showers fell on Brazil's corn and soybeans in Sao Paulo and Parana. In contrast, crop areas of Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul received adequate rainfall. Early harvest activity had only minor delays in Brazil. Argentine corn, sorghum, first-crop soybeans and cotton benefited from dry weather as most crops neared maturity.

—Eastern Asia. Above-normal precipitation continued over some northern parts of China's winter grain areas. Subsoil moisture is still deficient, however. Very light rain in southern winter grain areas was adequate for the crop's minimal water needs. Conditions to the south should be favorable as rice planting begins. In South Korea, above-normal precipitation benefited winter grains as above-

normal temperatures allowed continued growth in the south.

—South Asia. Wet weather continued in winter grain areas of northern India and Pakistan and temperatures fell to much below normal ranges. Rain and strong winds reportedly flattened winter grains, now nearing maturity, but no local damage estimates are available. Rainfall in Bangladesh and Eastern India improved prospects for spring-harvested crops.

—Northwestern Africa. Above-

normal rainfall maintained favorable growing conditions for winter grains in Tunisia and Eastern Algeria. Soil moisture was adequate for crop needs in central Algeria and areas to the west.

—South Africa. Shower activity failed to improve the crop outlook in the Maize Triangle, although the rain may have helped the late filling of kernels. Early-planted fields had matured, however, and many areas were too dry to benefit from the moisture. Overall crop prospects continue well below normal.

## Wheat and feed grain sign up

CHAMBERSBURG — D. Merle Baughman, county executive director of Franklin County ASCS office, has announced the enrolment period for the 1982 Wheat & Feed Grain Programs is now open and will continue through April 16.

Feed grain supplies are about 13% above last year and wheat supplies are up 14% over last year. U. S. Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block is urging Wheat and Feed Grain producers to enroll in the 1982 Wheat and Feed Grain Programs.

According to Block, this action will strengthen wheat and feed grain prices by reducing supplies for the 1982-1983 marketing year. Based on the best estimates, it is expected the next marketing year, which begins October 1, 1982, carry-over on feed grains could be around 2 billion bushels, the largest since 1960.

To qualify for program benefits, which includes Target Price Protection, Price Support Loans

and Grain Reserve Loans, a farmer must devote to conserving use 10% of the established feed grain bases and 15% of the established wheat base.

Something new for 1982 is that two bases have been established for feed grains, one for corn/sorghum and one for barley/oats. Also, a wheat base has been established. Producers will be notified in the near future of these bases and yields. A farmer may participate on either one or all bases.

Participating producers will receive the following target price (per bushel) protection: wheat, \$4.05; corn, \$2.70; sorghum, \$2.60; barley, \$2.60; oats, \$1.50.

Participants will be eligible for the following Commodity Credit Corporation loan rates: wheat, \$3.52; corn, \$2.55; sorghum, \$2.42; barley, \$2.08; oats, \$1.31. Price support loan rates for Pennsylvania are slightly higher.

## ABC meeting

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and employer is agriculture. However, Smith said, most people and legislators still think of Pennsylvania as a coal, steel, and trucking state.

Smith reported that during 1980-81, Penn State Extension poured \$4 million into central Pennsylvania. Part of the total, he noted, was a generous contribution by county commissioners of \$750,000.

"The old days of get bigger and get richer are no longer true," Smith observed. "At Penn State, we're working economics and efficiency into Extension recommendations."

Smith pointed out that Penn State is currently putting a lot of time into marketing research. "Right now we're seeing excesses in milk which, in 5 to 10 years, will be a thing of the past," he said.

The Penn State dean expressed his concern that legislators don't understand that agricultural research, just like farming, "can't be turned off and on like a faucet." He stressed the need for them to realize that farmers can't go out of business one day and back in the next, and neither can the ag researchers.

Wrapping up the annual meeting was the election of a new slate of officers. Crawford County dairyman David Slusser, Centerville, will be picking up the president's gavel. Assisting him as vice president will be William P. Moore, Chatham, Chester County, with Norman Sollenberger, Franklin County staying on as secretary and John Paxton, Grove City, Mercer County continuing to serve as treasurer.

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