

CHATS WITH THE WEATHER MAN

Friday, August 19, 1932

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Speaking Time 10 Minutes.

ANNOUNCEMENT: And now for another chat with one of the weather men of the United States Weather Bureau. As you know, Station \_\_\_\_\_ presents these weather chats prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture once every two weeks. The chat today is about the effect of weather on the crops and how we find out about it.

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Yes, sir, today we are going to talk about last week's weather.

Many of us think of the weather that is past as about as useless as last year's bird's nest. We are ready enough to talk about the weather we are getting right now. And we keep a sharp ear open for the forecast of the weather that will be soon. -- That coming weather may upset some of our plans. -- But many of us never give a second thought to the weather that is gone.

Yet when you stop to think of it, the weather last week had its effects on the crops here, there, and everywhere. This crop may have been helped by rain. That crop may have been damaged by drought. Just what did the weather last week do to the crops?

Of course, any wide awake farmer knows what effect the weather has had on his crops, and on other crops in his neighborhood. But how about other places where these same crops are raised? In these complicated days of distant markets and commercialized farming, a farmer may find the market price he gets for his stuff boosted up or pushed down by what happens to other farmers crops a thousand miles or more away.

If we had no way of getting a complete picture of what the weather does to crops in all parts of the country, unscrupulous speculators might be able to start rumors to force down market prices without cause. I say, if we had no accurate, reliable picture of what the weather did to crops all over the country, such rumors might easily be circulated, and all our markets might at times fall victims to such false reports. Fortunately, the weekly weather and crop bulletins issued by the United States Weather Bureau forestall any such rumors that may get abroad. Those bulletins give us the crop weather picture.

Mr. J. B. Kincer, who has charge of that work, tells how we get those bulletins about the weather and what it has done to crops in all parts of the country.

Besides the regular Weather Bureau observers, the Bureau has thousands of crop correspondents who report the weather and its effect in their localities. Take the weather this week, for example. You can look around and see what effect it is having on pastures, and crops of one kind or another. Certain farmers in nearly every locality will do just that this week, as they do every week. They will note conditions to-day, and tomorrow, up to Monday afternoon. Each of those weather and crop correspondents, by Monday night, will drop a post-card in the box telling about the weather effect on crops in his community, during the week ending that afternoon. Farmers from Maine to California will do the same thing. Meteorologists will summarize those thousands of comments into a weekly crops and weather report for each state which will be wired out from the Weather Bureau headquarters at Washington at 10 o'clock sharp next Wednesday morning; just as was a similar weekly summary last Wednesday and every Wednesday.

Yes, that's right. The weather and crop correspondent mails his post card Monday afternoon, and about 24 hours later the complete summary covering all the country is in print and ready for the wires giving the full and accurate word picture of crops and weather for the week ending Monday afternoon. And shortly after that, you probably hear it over the radio.

Of course, I should have said that all those post cards are not mailed direct to Washington. Our mails are pretty fast, but not that fast. The crop correspondents send their reports by mail to their State or section centers. Meteorologists at the section centers summarize those reports and forward the summary for that section to Washington by telegraph.

Mr. Kincer says that some section centers have as high as 1500 weather and crop correspondents in the State to supply the reports on the effects of the weather in that one part of country.

In case the farmer cooperating in this work lives too far from the State center for his card mailed Monday afternoon to reach the State center over night, he mails his card to the nearest weather bureau station. That weather station speeds the information forward by wire. All reports showing conditions up to Monday afternoon must be in the State center early Tuesday morning. The complete report giving the weather for the past week and its effect on the crops as observed by practical farmers and other experts will be issued promptly at 10 o'clock Wednesday. And, by the way, these thousands of correspondents furnish reports week after week and year after year as a public service, without expense to "Uncle Sam".

I said that bulletin gives a complete picture of weather and its effect on crops in this country. But Mr. Kincer tells me it does more than that. The weekly crop and weather bulletin also tells what the weather has done to crops in some other countries.

However, this weekly crop and weather report is not the only service designed to keep down wild weather talk which might up-set markets and hurt prices.

At New Orleans there is also published a weekly cotton region bulletin, and at Chicago a corn and wheat region bulletin. Each State center publishes a local weather and crop summary giving information in more detail as to conditions in that particular State or section.

Then there is a weekly cattle-region bulletin published at several central points in the western grazing country. As Mr. Kincer explains, our range lands cover a lot of country. One section may get a severe drought. Another section may get enough rain to supply more than enough food for livestock in that section. Under such circumstances, Mr. Kincer points out, livestock men may ship their stock from unfavorable to more favorable regions. So you see livestock men often need to know the weather and range conditions in all parts of a wide area. Then, too, bankers who lend money to livestock raisers may need information on weather and range conditions in deciding on loans.

With highly speculative crops like cotton and grain it is important to keep even closer check than can be had from reports by the regular Weather Bureau stations and observers. For that reason, all during the growing season in the grain and cotton regions a daily wire service is maintained. Each morning in addition to the regular Weather Bureau reports, each of the district centers in the Cotton Belt and in the Corn and Wheat regions gets special telegrams giving the details as to rainfall, temperature, and the like from a special corps of observers scattered through each district.

Mr. Kincer explains that those extra observers are local men who have been equipped with standard weather instruments. They report to their district center. There are thirteen of those district centers in the Cotton Belt and thirteen others in the Corn and Wheat regions.

The observations made by these men supply the detailed figures as to actual weather conditions. The effect of the weather on the chief crops in all parts of the country is noted in the summaries given in the weekly weather and crop service about which we have already spoken.

And so it is quite a big job to keep track of the weather that has been and the effect it has had.

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ANNOUNCEMENT: Two weeks from now Station \_\_\_\_\_ will have another of these chats with some of the other weather men of the United States Weather Bureau.

# National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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