

PROGRAM.....

Chats by the Weather Man

RELEASE.....

Wed. Nov. 24.

1926

ANNOUNCEMENT: The Weatherman is with us again this Wednesday. His story, one of interest to all of us, follows.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was "quitting time" one cold evening out in Sioux City, Iowa, -- back in the old days when "jitney" busses were in operation on the streets of that city.

The weather man was riding home from work after a strenuous day at the office. A cold wave was in prospect, and the weather office had issued warnings that same morning. The city was preparing to "hole in". Shippers were advised to protect their perishable merchandise against temperatures of 10 degrees below zero which were predicted for the next day. Weather office had flashed the warning by radio, telegraph, telephone, printed bulletins and in the papers. The white and black cold wave flag flew from a staff in Sioux City.

The driver of the "jitney" didn't know he was taking the weather man home.

"Well, I reckon we're in for a cold spell", he remarked to his passenger.

"That so"? asked the weather man. "How do you know"?

"Weather man's got the cold wave flag out", stated the driver of the buss. Then the Sioux City weather man thought he'd get some inside information on weather men's ways. So he asked, "Wonder how those weather chaps go about to find out when to fly the cold wave flag?"

The driver was surprised. "Why haven't you heard"? he inquired. "You know that old man with the long whiskers that sells gas up on 28th Street? Well, that old fellow is a real weather prophet. He goes by the moon. The weather man goes up there about twice a week and talks to him about the weather. The old fellow keeps him posted!"

Many folks can't seem to understand that the Weather Bureau operates on scientific principles. They seem to think that we weather men watch the moon and the goosebones for signs --then make our predictions.

(Weather man)

-2-

I don't have to consult the old fellow with the long whiskers to tell you folks that winter's just around the corner for most of us. So, haul in the wood and batten the doors. Soon we'll hear the song of the rolling wagon wheels as they creak over the frozen snow on zero mornings. Soon the telegraph wires will hum in the frost. The lone pine tree will chant its dirges to the wind, and the lakes will boom far off. All through the long nights, the wind will whistle and howl about the chimney pots, -- and trees will burst with crackling shots, deep in the woods. You'll hear the sleet tick -- tick on the window pane and be glad you're safe and warm inside, sitting by the fireplace. Listen to the soft PTH, PTH of the burning woods! The old folks say it's a sign of snow. "The fire is treading snow", they whisper softly.

I hope this chat will find you sitting around the fireplace tonight, because I have a cold subject to talk about.

Yet, -- do you know -- while the cold wave flags may be snapping in the wind in many American communities tonight, there are places in this wide land where winter is almost unknown. Frost follows a queer and winding path. Although there is no spot on the mainland of the U. S. that has never felt the bite of frost, there are many places where zero weather is unknown. I want to tell you something about Jack Frost tonight, -- that queer, frozen-nosed chap who catches us unawares--and sometimes ruins our crops.

Frost doesn't have to catch you unawares, -- if you'll take advantage of the Weather Bureau's reports. At present, the Bureau is making a special study of frost and how frost damage to crops and products may be minimized, -- or entirely avoided.

We weather men classify frosts into three groups: light, heavy, and killing. Light frosts do little or no damage, and heavy frosts damage only more tender vegetation. Killing frosts kill the staple products of a community and cause quite general destruction of crops. Even where there isn't enough moisture to produce the familiar white frost crystals, it may still be cold enough to kill crops or ruin products in store houses and on freight cars. This is known as a black frost.

When nights grow long and our days get short, -- when the sun is low in the southern sky, -- then we lose more heat by radiation during the long, cool nights than the sun gives us during the short days. As a result, the air temperature, -- especially near the ground, -- is low. If the nights are calm, it gets still colder because there's no wind to stir the air up. Knowing this, some orchardists have tried great power-driven fans to stir up the air over their orchards. These fans are called "wind jammers". But they have not proven successful.

When the temperature falls to freezing, we have frost. Then the fruit grower will have to take the chance of a frozen crop, -- or get out his orchard heaters. Truck gardeners will have nightmares of the demon, Frost, riding down on frozen white wings to freeze the crops that bring his bread. Then, housewives rush out to cover the flowers with paper, or cloth-- anything to prevent freezing. Coverings of metal materials should not be used for this purpose. As metal radiates heat too rapidly and may be worse than no covering at all.

Farmers are interested in the average growing season for their particular territory. The average growing season is represented by the number of days between the average date of the last killing frost in the spring, and the average date of the first killing frost in the fall. This growing season increases from about 100 days in places along the northern borders of the country, to about 240 days or more in the extreme south, and along much of the California and south Atlantic coasts.

Knowing this, a farmer will choose those crops that will grow and mature and produce a crop in his territory during the frostless period. For example, if he has an average growing season of 120 days, he will select crops that will grow and mature in something less than 120 days time. The farmers must always allow for the chance of a killing frost coming later than the average in the spring, and earlier than the average in the autumn, but from Weather Bureau records he can tell just what the chances are that frost will cease by a certain date in spring or occur again in the fall. That is one reason why farming requires a high degree of good judgment and sound common sense, and why the farmer or the gardener should know the climate of his locality.

From a study of the growing seasons, we find that fewer than 90 days are available for profitable farming in some of the extreme northern borders of the east and central regions. This figure increases to 210 days in some of the extreme southern sections of the country.

Now, here's the nub of it all: -- Find out from your Weather Bureau what the profitable growing season for your own territory is. Your weather man will know or he will find out for you. Then determine what crops are best fitted to your section. Find out what crops are most profitable in your territory. Make use of the weather reports -- especially the storm and frost warnings. There are many stories I could tell you of savings made by farmers who were wise enough to listen to weather warnings. Here's one to say good night with:

The weather man out in Lander, Wyoming, tells of a stockman who called him up on the 'phone one day. It was late in the fall. Just about the time when the cattle are brought in off the summer ranges. The stockman asked if it would be advisable to move his stock in to the home ranch at once. The cold wave flag was being displayed at the time. The weather man urged the rancher to bring his cows in immediately, by all means, as a heavy snow fall was predicted with a .

(Weather man)

-4-

cold wave to follow in from 24 to 36 hours. So the stockman 'phoned post haste to his foreman, telling him to bring the stock in and to make speed doing it. He also asked the foreman to 'phone a neighbor and tell him what the weather man had advised. The forman complied. He got the cattle in safely, a few hours in advance of a heavy snowfall. The neighbor stockman paid no attention to the warning. He suffered a heavy loss and was delayed 3 weeks in moving his stock. He was compelled to feed throughout that period, involving an expense he easily could have saved, -- had he listened to advice.

All of which is another way of saying: to be forwarned is to be forearmed.

\* \* \* \* \*

ANNOUNCEMENT: You may hear the Weatherman's chat regularly at this period on Wednesdays. If you enjoy this feature tell us so in a letter and we will pass the word along to the U. S. Department of Agriculture which prepares it for you. Your personal experiences in using the weather forecasts will be especially welcome. Perhaps it may be used on these programs.

# **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

## **ERRATA NOTICE**

One or more conditions of the original document may affect the quality of the image, such as:

Discolored pages

Faded or light ink

Binding intrudes into the text

This has been a co-operative project between the NOAA Central Library and the Climate Database Modernization Program, National Climate Data Center (NCDC). To view the original document, please contact the NOAA Central Library in Silver Spring, MD at (301) 713-2607 x124 or [Library.Reference@noaa.gov](mailto:Library.Reference@noaa.gov)

HOV Services  
Imaging Contractor  
12200 Kiln Court  
Beltsville, MD 20704-1387  
July 23, 2010