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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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AVERAGE OCTOBER WEATHER

October, with most of us, is pleasantly associated with clear cool weather, frost, sunny harvest days, and bright, fall colors. For two of our staple crops, October is a critical time. Corn is subject to considerable injury by too early frosts, and the picking of a good crop of cotton may be hindered by too frequent rain. Concerning average October weather, a Government bulletin says: "The normal October temperature is 10° to 15° lower than that for September in most sections of the country, the most pronounced reductions being in the northern Great Plains States and the more elevated western districts. East of the Rocky Mountains, the October normals range as a rule from slightly less than 45 degrees along the northern border of the country to about 70 degrees near the Gulf coast. On the average, killing frosts occur by the last of October as far south as the northern portions of North Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi, and the central portions of Arkansas and Oklahoma.

"East of the Rocky Mountains October rainfall as a rule is considerably less than for the months immediately preceding. From the Rocky Mountains westward, rainfall during October does not as a rule differ materially from that of September, except that rains usually become more frequent and extensive in the Pacific Coast States. The average for the month is as much as 10 inches at points along the coast of Washington. East of the Rocky Mountains little snow usually occurs during this month, but in the higher elevations of the Western States, the amounts are sometimes heavy, more than seven feet having been known to fall at Summit, California, in October."

(Tomorrow: Heavy Dews of Autumn)
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