

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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LATE FROSTS ON OCEAN AND LAKE SHORES

Frost comes late along the shores of oceans and large lakes, for water bodies always exert a moderating influence on shore climates, as water does not change temperature so readily as land. In fall, when the land is cooling rapidly, deep lakes and oceans are still relatively warm. A map of the average dates of first killing frost in fall shows well how these warm water bodies protect their immediate shores.

Along the southern margin of Lake Superior the average frost date is October 11, while only 20 or 30 miles inland killing frost comes on the average 20 days earlier. In lower Michigan the contrast is similar, the frost dates varying generally from October 11 along the shores of Lake Michigan and Lake Huron to September 21 and earlier in the interior of the peninsula.

On the North Atlantic seaboard, killing frost is commonly ten days later along the immediate shore than a short distance inland. Very striking illustrations of the difference between ocean shore and high interior are found along the Pacific coast. On the shores of Puget Sound the first killing frost occurs on the average after November 1, while in the Olympic Mountains, 20 or 30 miles inland it is due before the first of September.

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