

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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BEAN GROWING CLIMATES

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Crops differ widely in their climatic requirements, and this is true even of closely related varieties and species. Thus while some kinds of bean flourish in a hot dry climate, most field and garden beans are best adapted to moist and moderately cool climates. In California lima beans grow to perfection only in the warm humid climate of the southern coast region, where the rainfall is light but ocean fogs supply abundant moisture. Much farther north on the same coast there is an area where the white or navy bean flourishes. The late Prof. J. Warren Smith wrote of this region:

"On the California coast near Carmel, there is a region exceptionally well fitted for growth of beans. On days having a temperature not higher than 70 degrees there is usually no sunshine. Ocean fog-banks extend only a short distance inland. These days constitute about 70 per cent of the whole time from July 3 to September 10. In this period in 1916, the sunshine was only 9 per cent of the possible. Humidity is rather high; at night the temperature is rather low. This climate is ideal for many plants, as the luxuriant growth of geraniums, fuchsias and foxgloves shows. It is such cool and humid conditions that make possible along the California coastal belt the growing of beans and many other vegetables to remarkable perfection."

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