

Good Weather to Some Bad to Others

IT'S GOING to rain or snow one of these days. Many people will think that is "rotten weather" but others will consider it a beautiful day.

Oklahoma needs moisture for the winter wheat crop, as well as to get land into condition for spring planting. The livelihood of thousands depends directly upon rainfall and most segments of the state's economy benefit directly when rain produces good harvests.

For generations we have been conditioned to regard rain and snow as "bad weather," overlooking positive values. Newspaper writers and TV weathermen perpetuate the attitude through their comments.

An Oklahoma City home builder once told me he wouldn't care if it never rained. "Rain just runs up my construction costs by delays during the week and interferes with my golf on weekends," he said.

Rain affects most outdoor activities but over all it does more good than harm. Hunters know that dry weather is a handicap to dogs trailing game. Without rainfall anglers

would find dying fish in stagnant pools. "Rained out" is a sad note to summer baseball fans but football boosters will endure harsh wintry weather hoping for touchdowns.

On a couple of occasions last fall writers referred to the weather at Norman as "miserable" but the stands were filled anyway. Professional football fans have been observed on TV recently watching games played in snow and cold that might have kept some home from work.

Certainly, we sympathize with those whose duties keep them outdoors whatever the weather. Policemen, guards, postmen, paper boys, plumbers, utilities workers, construction employees and others may be busier or find their services more urgently needed when it rains or snows.

Probably no occupation is more susceptible to vagaries of the weather than farming. Without adequate, timely rainfall they can't plant or harvest. They need rainfall to grow pastures and hay for livestock and to put water into ponds and the ground for future use.

Oklahoma wheat farmers usually welcome winter moisture whether it comes as rain or snow. But those who have livestock deplore snowstorms that make increased feeding of animals necessary and extremely difficult to do.

After crops or livestock have been produced, a caprice of weather may wipe out the profit. A 20-minute hailstorm can ruin a year's wheat crop. Lightning may kill cattle. Floods wash out cotton crops and drouth shrivels peanut vines. A tornado tears down barns and damages equipment. Weather doesn't eliminate a farmer's expenses; it just wipes out or reduces their incomes.

Man has always tried to influence weather for his benefit but so far his efforts have proved to be puny and largely ineffective.

For that reason, we have to depend upon the sunshine and rain that comes to us naturally. When we live in a semi-arid land like Oklahoma, where drouth often prevails, a rainy day can be beautiful! And most of us will even welcome snow, providing it melts right away.