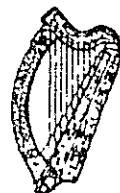


METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE



AGROMETEOROLOGICAL BULLETIN

AUGUST 1983

The Weather of August

The month began with a moderate northwest airflow backing west to southwest on the 3rd; some outbreaks of rain occurred in many areas up to the 5th from weakening rainbelts, which became slow-moving over the country. High pressure then dominated up to the 13th and the period 5th to 14th was very warm, sunny and dry, with light variable winds; occasional weak troughs affected northern areas, interrupting the sunny spell.

A southwesterly airflow set in on the 14th and later backed to southeast and east as a North Atlantic depression moved to a quasi-stationary position south of Ireland; its associated troughs moved northwards over Ireland during the following week releasing very welcome and widespread heavy and thundery rain on the perched ground. As the depression drifted eastwards to Britain further troughs followed from the North Atlantic on 22nd/23rd. Rainfall amounts in the southern half of the country were particularly large in the period up to the 23rd. The spell was also dull and humid.

High pressure again dominated from 24th to 29th; temperatures were above average but there were variable sunshine amounts and a weak trough affected the country on the 27th. A southwesterly airflow slowly set in in western areas on the 30th and a rainbelt off the west coast moved inland late on the 31st giving rain to western areas.

Monthly Amounts of Precipitation were well below normal everywhere except in the southeast and south midlands. Values varied from 32% of normal at Glenties to 85% at Fermoy (Moore Park) in relation to most of the country; in the southeast and south midlands values varied from 108% at Rosslare to 158% at J.F.K. Park. The main wet spells occurred between the 15th and 23rd. Maximum accumulated soil moisture deficits had reached about 100mm at most stations by the middle of the month, causing drought and severely restricting growth. These were reduced rapidly during the wet spell. Johnstown Castle had a remarkably low deficit of 21mm by the end of the month but the deficit at Kinsealy was still up to 70mm. The only major spells of weather favouring potato blight during the main crop season occurred from the 16th to 18th and 20th to 27th.

Mean Monthly Air Temperature was well above normal everywhere, record values occurring at some widely spaced stations. Values varied from 2.5°C above at Shannon Airport to 1.1°C above at Rosslare. Degree days with threshold 4.4°C were some 15% to 25% above average and, with threshold 10°C were some 25% to 55% above average.

Mean Duration of Bright Sunshine varied from 77% of normal at Birr to 113% at Valentia. Solar radiation varied from 85% of average at Birr to 111% at Valentia.

Strong Winds did not occur except in the northwest on the 1st/2nd.

Summary Very warm and very dry apart from a confined wet spell 15th to 23rd which greatly helped relieve drought conditions in the soil. Sunshine varied about normal.

TABLE 2 GLOBAL SOLAR RADIATION

STATION	PERIOD	AMOUNT Joule/cm ²
Malin Head Co. Donegal	1-10	17122
	11-20	14129
	21-end	12911
	Month	44162
Dublin Airport Co. Dublin	1-10	17285
	11-20	13048
	21-end	11516
	Month	41849
Cahirciveen (Valentia Obs.) Co. Kerry	1-10	19850
	11-20	13639
	21-end	14763
	Month	48252
Kilkenny Co. Kilkenny	1-10	17291
	11-20	14218
	21-end	11466
	Month	42975
Belmullet Co. Mayo	1-10	16328
	11-20	13453
	21-end	12101
	Month	41882
Clones Co. Monaghan	1-10	15808
	11-20	12564
	21-end	10796
	Month	39168
Birr Co. Offaly	1-10	14701
	11-20	10927
	21-end	10337
	Month	35965

TABLE 3 POTENTIAL EVAPOTRANSPIRATION (P.E.) AND SOIL MOISTURE AUGUST 1983

STATION	PERIOD	P.E.(mm)		SOIL MOISTURE (mm)	
		Amount	Deficit	Accumulated Deficit	Surplus
Carlow (Oak Park) Co. Carlow	1-10	38.5	9	-104	-
	11-20	30.7	-	97	7
	21-end	28.0	-	49	48
	Month	97.2	-	-	-
Kinsealy Co. Dublin	1-10	39.4	8	97	-
	11-20	18.5	-	75	22
	21-end	16.0	-	70	5
	Month	73.9	-	-	-
Cahirciveen (Valentia Obs.) Co. Kerry	1-10	19.9	10	78	-
	11-20	22.8	-	45	33
	21-end	12.2	-	40	5
	Month	54.9	-	-	-
Ballinamore Co. Leitrim	1-10	30.4	8	93	-
	11-20	24.7	-	78	15
	21-end	34.2	-	60	18
	Month	89.3	-	-	-
Glenamoy Co. Mayo	1-10	26.5	8	66	-
	11-20	20.9	-	61	5
	21-end	17.3	-	51	10
	Month	64.7	-	-	-
Johnstown Castle Co. Wexford	1-10	44.4	7	105	-
	11-20	44.7	-	45	60
	21-end	11.6	-	21	24
	Month	100.7	-	-	-

Notes on the tables in January issue

special topic

USE OF METEOROLOGICAL DATA IN LIVER

FLUKE CONTROL IN IRELAND

(continued from July)

The degree to which weather is favourable to liver fluke in Ireland has been measured since 1966 in terms of the Ollerenshaw Index and by Ross's Stormont 'Wet Day' Index, and the systems have proved to be generally satisfactory in predicting the levels of disease. The Ollerenshaw Index (see WMO Tech. Note 159, 1978, pp 2-5), which is essentially a measure of the excess of rainfall over evapotranspiration (values of which are derived at the main weather stations), weighted by the number of rain days, has proved to be a useful indicator of habitat wetness. Ross's index (*ibid*, pp 14-19), which is simpler, since it uses the accumulation of wet-days as the value of the Index, has the advantage that it can include any number of rainfall stations thought necessary to give greater areal resolution.

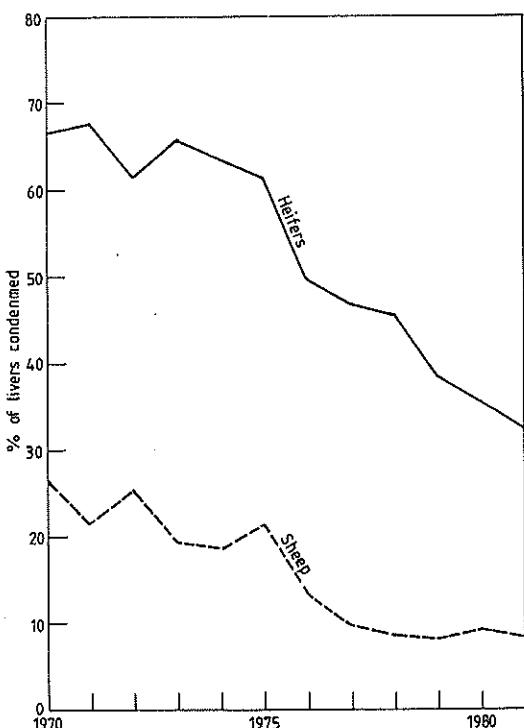
SOME MODIFYING INFLUENCES In wetter areas of the west, the Ollerenshaw index may not accurately estimate the subsequent level of disease likely to be found because:-

- for many hilly areas the main network of weather stations does not adequately reflect the temperature season
- there may well be a tendency towards an annual fluke cycle rather than a seasonal one in western areas
- while the level of disease found in animals is a function of the level of infection on the herbage, because of good husbandry there has been a marked decline over the years in the overall level of infection found
- in wet summers hill areas are permanently wet and disease levels are not as great as one might expect because waterlogged peat habitats are too acidic to support the snail.

NATIONAL ADVISORY GROUP ON FASCIOLIASIS

The National Advisory Group on Fascioliasis convenes a meeting of experts from the Veterinary Advisory Services and Research Laboratories, the Veterinary College and Agricultural Institute, and the agricultural meteorologist of the Meteorological Meteorological Service early in September each year. On the basis of (1) the meteorological data presented, (2) the counts of snails infected at experimental sites, (3) the results of faecal samples returned by various farmers to the Research Laboratory for examination, (4) the numbers of infected livers at Abattoirs and (5) the results of recent research, the group estimates the likely level of infection. The recommendations of the group are communicated widely and given general media coverage.

The Figure across shows how there has been a fall over recent years in the percent of livers condemned at abattoirs for liver fluke infection in heifers and sheep. The disease levels in other animals show similar trends.



Percent of livers condemned at abattoirs for liver fluke infection for the specified animals, 1970 - 1981.

(Courtesy Dept. of Agriculture)

T. Keane
Agricultural Meteorology