



By Carolyn Lee

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At least people had time to move potted plants inside, pick those last tomatoes and prepare for snow last weekend. The forecast several days before had called for snow, which in Imperial's case, was five to six inches on Saturday.

A trace of snow was also recorded Friday, but quickly melted. The temperature plunged to an official 18 degrees Saturday night, with an unofficial 14 degrees recorded in the Champion area. The record low for Oct. 6 in Imperial was 16 degrees in 1952.

The snowfall was most beneficial for evergreen trees for this year's growth, according to Doug Anderson, Extension Agent for Keith/Arthur/Perkins Counties. It was not beneficial for most other plants as far as this year's growth, because they were already dormant, he said.

The evergreens will continue to absorb moisture and continue to grow this fall.

However, Anderson said that as long as the ground isn't frozen, any moisture received will help fill up the soil profile this fall, benefiting plants next spring.

As far as pastures are concerned, Anderson said, "We didn't have anything green and growing since July 1. It went dormant so fast, but the cows got some nutritional value on the dry stuff and didn't do much damage" to the pastures.

The pastures will be slow to rebound next spring, he added.



"If we get some moisture this fall to replenish the root zone, the pastures will continue to grow next spring."

However, Anderson said he hopes the spring will be mild and not like last spring's 90 degree temperatures in May. If the spring is mild, "We'll have a chance to rebuild pastures and lawns."

Anderson said the cold temperatures accompanying the snow probably helped corn dry out faster. "With our dry conditions, the corn, surprisingly, is still at about 18 percent moisture," he noted.

The snow didn't affect sunflowers still in the field. It might have hit soybeans hardest, as they have "the most tender reaction to snow and wind. They get knocked down and it's hard to pick them up."

As far as the winter wheat, he added, "If we get some 60-70 degree days the wheat will appreciate the snow."

Anderson said there's moisture about 12 inches down in the soil, so some good rains or snow before the ground freezes will help to fill that 12 inches of dry dirt above the moisture line.

