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Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Burlington VT
800 AM EDT Thu Aug 12 2021

...NWS offices serving Northern New England will conduct an experiment this fall to improve services related to the Frost/Freeze Program...

The National Weather Service's (NWS) Frost/Freeze Program consists of issuing Frost Advisories, Freeze Warnings or Hard Freeze Warnings when cold temperatures potentially threaten tender vegetation and crops during the climatological growing season. The growing season is defined by the period of time between the median date of the last Spring Freeze and the median date of the first Fall Freeze.

Currently, the ending of the issuance of Frost/Freeze headlines for a season are based on the occurrence of a freeze in one weather forecast zone or two weeks after the median first Fall Freeze date. This approach was confusing to many users as meteorological conditions often led to a patchwork approach of ending the growing season across multiple weather forecast zones and NWS offices.

The Northern New England NWS forecast offices (Burlington VT/Gray ME/Caribou ME) and NWS Albany NY will conduct an experimental program service during the fall of 2021. The purpose of this experimental program is to streamline the Frost/Freeze program for simplified customer usability.

The end of the seasonal Frost/Freeze program will be determined by the climatological median first Fall Freeze date. This means that these NWS offices will use a fixed date for climatologically defined areas, both based on 30-Year temperature averages, to end the growing season.

During the defined growing season, the NWS will issue frost/freeze headlines as needed. Once the defined growing season ends, frost/freeze headlines will no longer be issued for that climatological area.

The following are the climatologically defined areas and their respective ending dates of the growing season in Vermont and northern New York.

September 21st: Northeast Vermont and the Adirondacks of NY.

October 1st: St. Lawrence River Valley in NY and the remainder of VT, except the Champlain Valley.

October 11th: Champlain Valley of VT/NY.

Again, our goal is to streamline the frost/freeze process, by using defined closing dates, which should make it easier and aid in planning decisions for our users.

A detailed handout with Median Last Spring and First Fall Freeze climatology can be found at:

https://www.weather.gov/media/btv/BTVFrost_Freeze.pdf

If you have any questions or comments on this experiment, please reach out to Scott Whittier, Warning Coordination Meteorologist at scott.whittier@noaa.gov or call 802-862-8711.

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NWS Burlington