

Even Bankers May Display Mild Cheer Over Feed Prospects

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MERTZON — If the rains continued falling as they have during the past month, by Christmas the Shortgrass Country will have turned into a rain forest. Hillsides are boggy, the grass has turned to a lush green, and hopes are higher than ever before this year.

Life on the rangelands hasn't been better since the last big agricultural boom in 1886.

Rain in any quantity makes a big psychological difference in this country. A dew over 10 percent of the land can raise my people's morale a full 50 points. Foggy mornings can often cure fits of despair that would shatter the stone faces of Mt. Rushmore. And when it rains enough to settle the dust, the entire countryside experiences a spiritual upswing.

The only segment of the community that shows the slightest restraint during wet spells are the bankers. Preoccupied as they are with chattels and demand notes, they remain calm regardless of the humidity in the atmosphere.

Oldtime ranchers, many of whom have spent three-fourths of their lives going to and from banks, say bankers withdraw during wet weather because of the brash approach of younger operators. According to these frosty-snouted old sages, a money lender should always be treated like outlawed horses or mildly disturbed housewives. They say the sensible way to deal with guardians of the purse is to speak in soft tones, avoid sudden movements, and, for the sake of all men's sanity, never go tearing up to a banker's desk as if our wife had just inherited the richest part of a South African diamond field.

The elders offer specific pointers, saying that a young man is foolish to try to put over a dust-marking .20 of an inch as fabulous drouth-breaker; they warn against the temptation of telling a banker that the first spotted shower in six months is the best soaker in ages.

However, it's impossible to confirm the value of the old ranchers' advice.

Bankers, as you may know, aren't prone to go around town blabbing their feelings. The best hand in the C.I.A. would probably have a tough time writing a one-paragraph report on the entire behind-the-scenes history of bankdom

Nevertheless the rains have assured us a good fall season and I can't help believe that as the younger men become accustomed to having some green feed the bankers may also share in the excitement. And whatever the future holds, I know that we have a better chance of making it, now that we have some green pickings, than we did before the rains came.