

# EXTRA!

FROM THE OLD FARMER'S ALMANAC

## COLD COMFORTS

PLUS: • Best Days to Do Things • Gardening by the Moon's Sign  
• Monthly Calendar • Astronomy • Weather



OCTOBER 2024

PHOTO: DABJOLA/GETTY IMAGES

# OCTOBER

*Holidays, Full Moon Names, and More*

## HOLIDAY HAPPENINGS

- Oct. 2:** Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown
- Oct. 7:** Child Health Day
- Oct. 9:** Leif Eriksson Day
- Oct. 11:** Yom Kippur begins at sundown
- Oct. 12:** National Farmer's Day
- Oct. 13:** U.S. Navy Birthday
- Oct. 14:** Columbus Day, observed
- Oct. 14:** Indigenous Peoples' Day
- Oct. 14:** Thanksgiving Day (Canada)
- Oct. 24:** United Nations Day
- Oct. 31:** Halloween

## BIRTH FLOWERS: OCTOBER

### CALENDULA/MARIGOLD AND COSMOS

- Both *Calendula* (pot marigold) and *Tagetes* (which includes French, signet, and African marigolds) are accepted as October's birth flower. The marigold represents joy, remembrance, grief, or chagrin in the language of flowers.
- Cosmos may symbolize joy in life, love, harmony, and peace.



## EYE ON THE SKY

### OCTOBER'S FULL MOON NAMES

Hunter's Moon, Freezing Moon, Falling Leaves Moon

### MOON PHASES

- New Moon:** Oct. 2, 2:49 P.M. EDT
- First Quarter:** Oct. 10, 2:55 P.M. EDT
- Full Moon:** Oct. 17, 7:26 A.M. EDT
- Last Quarter:** Oct. 24, 4:03 A.M. EDT



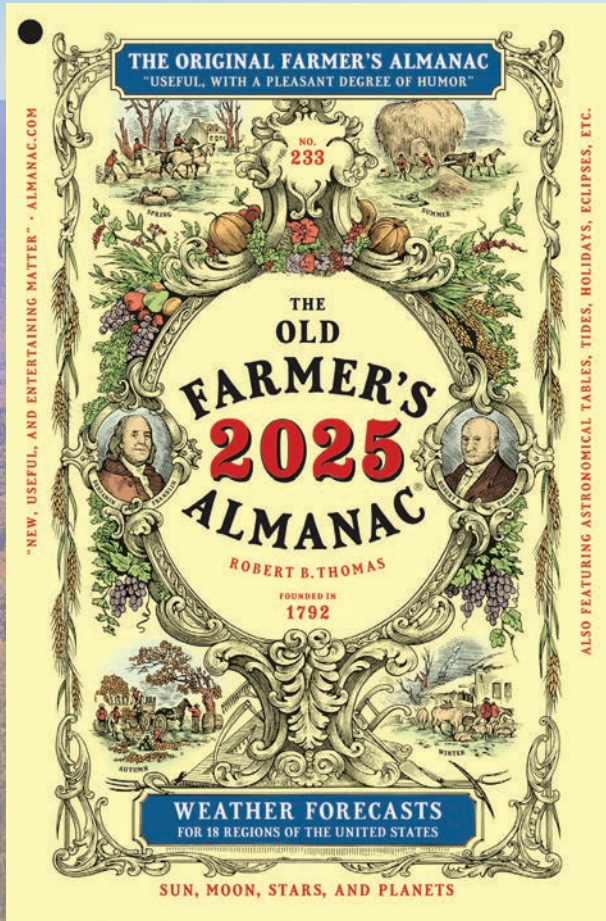
TAP FOR MORE ABOUT MOON PHASES



TAP FOR MORE ABOUT OCTOBER'S FULL MOON

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## BEST DAYS TO DO THINGS

These October dates, deemed to be propitious in astrology, are based on the astrological passage of the Moon. However, consider all indicators before making any major decisions. –*Celeste Longacre*

### PERSONAL

Advertise to sell: 4–6

Ask for a loan: 18, 19, 31

Begin diet to gain weight: 7, 16

Begin diet to lose weight: 19, 29

Buy a home: 4–6

Color hair: 18, 19

Cut hair to discourage growth: 29, 30

Cut hair to encourage growth: 13–15

Entertain: 24, 25

Get married: 2, 3, 29, 30

Have dental care: 1, 26–28



Move (house/household): 20, 21

Perm hair: 11–13

Quit smoking: 19, 29

Straighten hair: 7, 8

Travel for pleasure: 24, 25

Wean children: 19, 29

### **AROUND THE HOUSE**

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Bake: 22, 23

Brew: 4–6, 31

Can, pickle, or make sauerkraut:  
22, 23

Demolish: 4–6, 31

Dry fruit, vegetables, or meat: 24, 25

End projects: 16

Lay shingles: 24, 25

Make jams or jellies: 14, 15

Paint: 2, 3, 29, 30

Start projects: 3

Wash floors: 14, 15

Wash windows: 16, 17

### **OUTDOORS**

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Begin logging: 9, 10

Go camping: 7, 8

Go fishing: 2–17

Set posts or pour concrete: 9, 10

### **IN THE GARDEN**

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Destroy pests and weeds: 16, 17

Graft or pollinate: 22, 23

Harvest aboveground crops: 9, 10

Harvest belowground crops: 26–28

Mow to promote growth: 4–6

Mow to slow growth: 22, 23

Pick fruit: 1, 26–28

Plant aboveground crops: 4–6

Plant belowground crops: 1, 26–28

Prune to discourage growth: 24, 25

Prune to encourage growth: 7, 8

### **ON THE FARM**

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Breed animals: 4–6, 31

Castrate animals: 11–13

Cut hay: 16, 17

Purchase animals: 22, 23

Set eggs: 11, 12, 20, 21

Slaughter livestock: 4–6, 31

Wean animals: 19, 29



## GARDENING BY THE MOON'S SIGN

Use the October dates shown in the Moon's Astrological Place calendar below to find the best days for the following garden tasks:

TAP FOR  
MERCURY IN  
RETROGRADE  
DATES



TAP FOR  
OCTOBER  
MOON  
PHASES



**PLANT, TRANSPLANT, AND GRAFT:** Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces, or Taurus

**HARVEST:** Aries, Leo, Sagittarius, Gemini, or Aquarius

**BUILD/FIX FENCES OR GARDEN BEDS:** Capricorn

**CONTROL INSECT PESTS, PLOW, AND WEED:** Aries, Gemini, Leo, Sagittarius, or Aquarius

**PRUNE:** Aries, Leo, or Sagittarius. During a waxing Moon, pruning encourages growth; during a waning Moon, it discourages growth.

### THE MOON'S ASTROLOGICAL PLACE IN OCTOBER

**1** Virgo

**2** Libra

**3** Libra

**4** Scorpio

**5** Scorpio

**6** Scorpio

**7** Sagittarius

**8** Sagittarius

**9** Capricorn

**10** Capricorn

**11** Aquarius

**12** Aquarius

**13** Aquarius

**14** Pisces

**15** Pisces

**16** Aries

**17** Aries

**18** Taurus

**19** Taurus

**20** Gemini

**21** Gemini

**22** Cancer

**23** Cancer

**24** Leo

**25** Leo

**26** Virgo

**27** Virgo

**28** Virgo

**29** Libra

**30** Libra

**31** Scorpio

## MERCURY IN RETROGRADE

Sometimes the other planets appear to be traveling backward through the zodiac; this is an illusion. We call this illusion *retrograde motion*.

Mercury's retrograde periods can cause our plans to go awry. However, this is an excellent time to reflect on the past. Intuition is high during these periods, and coincidences can be extraordinary.

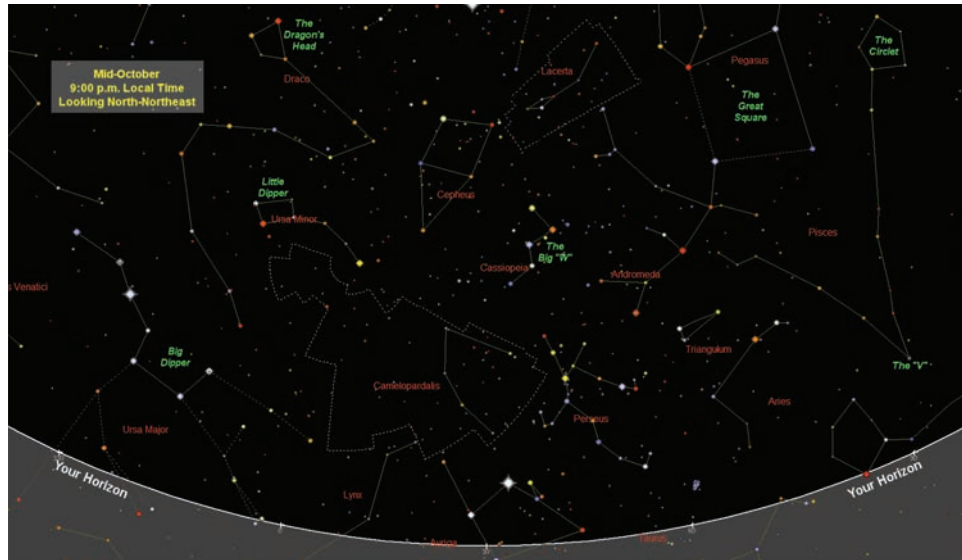
When Mercury is retrograde, remain flexible, allow extra time for travel, and avoid signing contracts. Review projects and plans at these times, but wait until Mercury is direct again to make any final decisions.

Mercury's remaining 2024 retrograde period is **November 25–December 15**.

–*Celeste Longacre*

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## CONSTELLATIONS, THEN AND NOW

**A**s human beings, it is in our nature to seek order from chaos, to find patterns even where none exist. It's no surprise, then, that no matter how far back we look into recorded history, we find ancient peoples drawing sky maps and inventing names for what they observed.

Inevitably, ancient observers of the sky saw patterns in the stars—patterns that we now call “constellations.” Beginning at least 7,000 years ago, early astronomers were documenting mythological creatures, supernatural beings—even ordinary tools and weapons—all composed of stars. Over time, the names and even patterns of most constellations have changed as different cultures have applied their own mythology to the night sky. In fact, the 88 constellations that we recognize today were not agreed upon until the 20th century.

For most of recorded history, only the brightest or most distinctive star patterns were recognized as constellations. For millennia, some parts of the sky belonged to no constellation



TAP TO GET  
A PRINTABLE  
**OCTOBER**  
SKY MAP



TAP TO  
FOLLOW  
OHIOAN JEFF  
DETRAY'S SKY  
ADVENTURES





at all. This was still the case in the 2nd century when Greek-Roman astronomer Claudius Ptolemy produced one of history's most important scientific writings, the *Almagest*. This colossal work comprised 13 books, each devoted to a different aspect of astronomy. Books VII and VIII concerned the stars and identified 48 constellations.

Over the next many centuries, astronomers slowly invented additional constellations from stars that Ptolemy had failed to include in his original 48.

This month's Sky Map shows two of them. In 1612, Dutch astronomer Petrus Plancius created the constellation **Camelopardalis, the Giraffe**, from a jumble of faint stars between Ursa Major and Perseus. The constellation **Lacerta, the Lizard**, was invented in 1690 by Polish astronomer Johannes Hevelius from otherwise unassigned stars between Cepheus and Pegasus. A prolific constellation inventor, Hevelius created seven new constellations where none had existed before.

The star pattern of Camelopardalis looks nothing like its namesake, but the stars of Lacerta can at least be imagined as a reptile of some sort.

Throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries, new constellations were gradually invented to fill in those parts of the sky that had none. Occasionally, there were conflicts, such as when Edmund Halley (of Halley's Comet fame) proposed a new constellation to honor King Charles II of England. Other astronomers rejected the idea of naming constellations for contemporary persons, so Charles's constellation never came to be.

The haphazard nature of constellations was on the agenda of the newly formed International Astronomical Union (IAU) at its first General Assembly in 1922. The assembled delegates decided that the sky would be divided into exactly 88 constellations and that their boundaries would be drawn so that every part of the sky lay within a constellation. No more unassigned stars!

All but one of Ptolemy's ancient 48 constellations made the IAU's modern list of 88. Because every point on the sky must lie within a constellation, the boundaries of some constellations resemble a gerrymandered Congressional district. Note the very convoluted outline of Camelopardalis on our Sky Map. The 88 IAU constellations are still in use today.

The items highlighted in green on our Sky Map are known as "asterisms." These are distinctive (but unofficial) star patterns that lie within constellations. When getting your bearings under the stars, it's often easiest to first spot an asterism and then use it as a guide to finding the parent constellation.

-Jeff DeTray

GARDENING



# Cold Comforts

*Grow vegetables that ripen in a frost and can be harvested in snow.*

PHOTO: MARTIN POOLE/GETTY IMAGES

## GARDENING

**A**utumn's cold nights usually signal the end of the harvest, but in some places, for some vegetables, the cold is the cure. The chill of a moderate frost or light snow actually improves the flavor of brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, kale, leeks, and parsnips. For best results in northern regions, prepare the bed, count the days, and plant varieties that withstand low temperatures. Come harvesttime, storing your winter crops could not be simpler: Just leave them in the ground.

### HAVE A PLOT PLAN

Before the ground freezes, prepare the garden for one of these in-ground storage methods:

- Insulate plants from winter's extreme temperatures and protect them from the damage of repeated thawing and freezing with organic mulch (leaves or hay).

In areas that experience severe winters, apply 10 to 12 inches of mulch before the ground freezes. For extra protection, add a row cover. (Remove the mulch and row cover in the early spring to allow the soil to dry out more quickly.)

- Dig a trench or hole 1½ to 2 feet deep with the bottom sloped toward one side for drainage. Line the bottom with 1 to 2 inches of straw and layer harvested root vegetables in the trench. Cover each layer with about 2 inches of straw. Add soil on top of final layer of straw to keep frost out. Cover the hole with plywood pitched to shed rainwater and use straw bales on top of the lid to protect the vegetables from freezing temperatures.

Regardless of which storage method you use:

- Do not wash vegetables after harvesting and before storing; just lightly brush

off any excess dirt.

- Place poles or other markers in the garden so that you will know where the vegetables are after a snowfall.

### BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Brussels sprouts are best when they are about 1 inch wide. Harvest the lower sprouts first, breaking off the leaves below each sprout. New sprouts will continue to form. About 3 weeks before the final harvest, remove the very top of the plant, including the top leaves, to encourage the growth of the remaining sprouts. After a moderate frost, remove all of the leaves, pull up the whole stalk—with the roots—and hang it upside down in a cool, dry basement or barn. Stalks may be stored for about a month in a root cellar or unheated basement. If you plan to harvest the sprouts directly from the garden during the winter, leave the top leaves intact to provide protection

## GARDENING

from the snow and cover the plants with 10 to 12 inches of mulch.

*Recommended varieties:* ‘Catskill’, ‘Diablo’, ‘Long Island Improved’, ‘Oliver’

### CABBAGE

Harvest cabbage heads when they are firm to the touch; mature heads left in the garden for too long may split. Cut as close to the base of the head as possible. Tear off any yellow leaves before storing; the loose green leaves will protect the head during storage. Store in an outdoor trench or root cellar. Alternatively, pull up the whole cabbage plant—roots and all—and hang it in a moist cellar that reaches near-freezing temperatures.

*Recommended varieties:* ‘Danish Ballhead’, ‘Stein’s Late Flat Dutch’

### CARROTS

Although carrots can be left in the garden, protected by heavy

mulch and deep snow, they can also be pulled before the ground freezes and stored in bins filled with dry sawdust or sand in a cool, dry area such as a basement. Harvest carrots within 2 weeks of maturity, cutting off all but ½ to 1 inch of the tops.

*Recommended varieties:* ‘Boloro’, ‘Napoli’, ‘St. Valery’

### KALE

Kale is known for its nonheading, leafy growth. The leaves of nondwarf varieties are usually not as curly as those of their dwarf counterparts, but because they grow taller, they are less susceptible to ground-level freezes. Mild frosts will improve the flavor. Kale’s roots run horizontally around the plant, merely inches below the soil, which makes mulching essential to guarantee a supply of mature leaves throughout the winter.

*Recommended*

*varieties:* ‘Redbor’, ‘Red Russian’, ‘Toscano’, ‘Winterbor’

### LEEKS

In regions where the ground never freezes, leeks can be harvested all winter long. In areas that experience harsh winters, apply 10 to 12 inches of mulch to keep the ground from freezing.

*Recommended varieties:* ‘Blue Solaise’, ‘Giant Musselburgh’, ‘Tadorna’

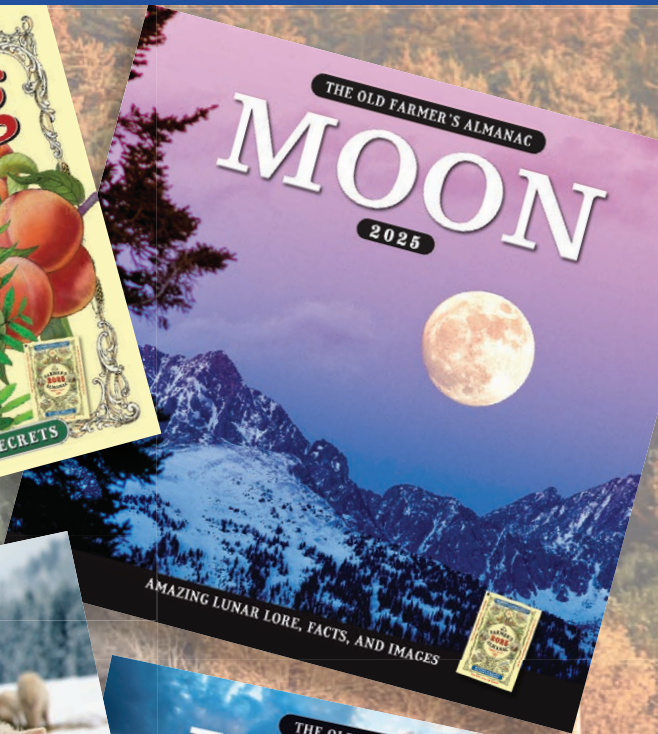
### PARSNIPS

Parsnips can be pulled throughout the winter. However, in harsher climates, heavily mulch parsnips before the ground freezes. Harvest all parsnips before the tops begin to grow the following spring, or they will become woody and bitter.

*Recommended varieties:* ‘All-American’, ‘Andover’, ‘Harris Model’  
—Martie Majoros

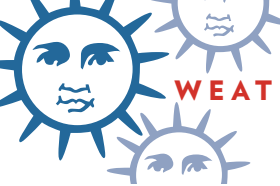


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## HOW WE MAKE OUR PREDICTIONS

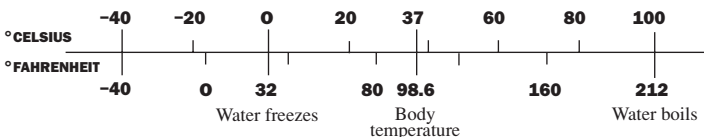
We derive our weather forecasts from a secret formula that was devised by the founder of this Almanac, Robert B. Thomas, in 1792. Thomas believed that weather on Earth was influenced by sunspots, which are magnetic storms on the surface of the Sun.

Over the years, we have refined and enhanced this formula with state-of-the-art technology and modern scientific calculations. We employ three scientific disciplines to make our long-range predictions: solar science, the study of sunspots and other solar activity; climatology, the study of prevailing weather patterns; and meteorology, the study of the atmosphere. We predict weather trends and events by comparing solar patterns and historical weather conditions with current solar activity.

Our forecasts emphasize temperature and precipitation deviations from averages, or normals. These are based on 30-year statistical averages prepared by government meteorological agencies and updated every 10 years. Our forecasts are based on the tabulations that span the period 1991 through 2020.

We believe that nothing in the universe happens haphazardly, that there is a cause-and-effect pattern to all phenomena. However, although neither we nor any other forecasters have as yet gained sufficient insight into the mysteries of the universe to predict the weather with total accuracy, our results are almost always very close to our traditional claim of 80 percent.

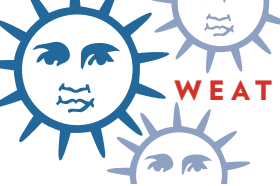
### CELSIUS-FAHRENHEIT TABLE



TAP TO FIND OUT THE WEATHER HISTORY OF THE DAY

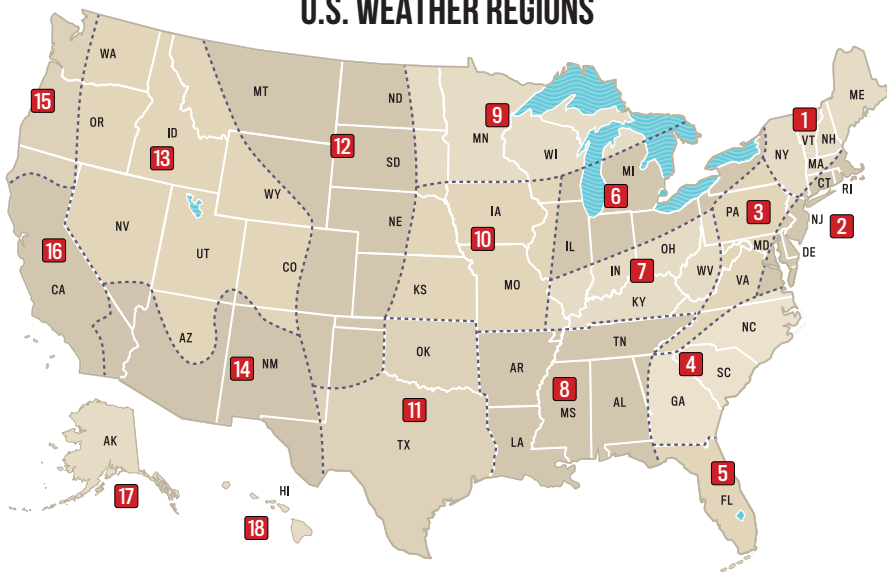


LOVE ALL THINGS WEATHER? TAP FOR THE WEATHER FOLKLORE OF THE DAY

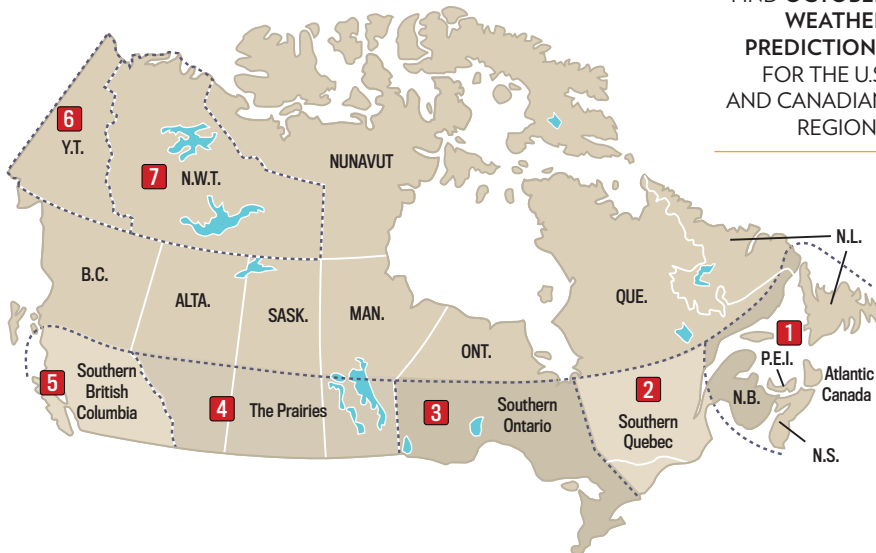


# WEATHER FORECASTS

## U.S. WEATHER REGIONS



## CANADIAN WEATHER REGIONS



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WEATHER  
PREDICTIONS  
FOR THE U.S.  
AND CANADIAN  
REGIONS





## SUNNY-DAY HARVESTS AND COOL GHOSTS

**O**ctober 7 is Child Health Day in the United States. There will be showers across northern New England, southern Florida, the Great Lakes, the Pacific Northwest, much of Alaska, and eastern and western portions of Hawaii—if you are driving the kids to the doctor for a checkup in any of these areas, you'll need to use your windshield wipers. Elsewhere across the country, it will be sunny and bright for the kids to get out and exercise.

On October 12, National Farmer's Day, it will be sunny and dry for the harvest from southern New England through the Southeast; westward through the Appalachians, Great Lakes, Ohio Valley, and the Deep South; and across central Hawaii. Across the rest of the country, stormy conditions and rainfall could slow down crop gathering.



October 14 is Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples' Day in the United States and Thanksgiving Day in Canada. The weather will cooperate for outdoor parades across much of the eastern United States, where it will be sunny and dry from a substantial portion of the Atlantic Coast through the Great Lakes; in the Ohio Valley, Deep South, and Pacific Northwest; and across central Hawaii. Rainfall could dampen outdoor plans for much of the rest of the country. Across Canada, rainy and cool conditions will occur in many of the provinces, so a warm turkey dinner with friends and family will hit the spot.

Alaska Day, October 18, celebrates the formal transfer of territories from Russia to the United States in 1867. Outdoor plans, including the reenactment of the flag-raising in Sitka, could be impacted by periods of rain and snow.

Halloween, October 31, will feature dry conditions for trick-or-treaters from the Northeast southward through Florida, westward across the Appalachians and the Ohio Valley, from the Deep South through Texas and the southern Plains, over the Pacific Northwest, and across central and western Hawaii. It will be cool across most of these areas, so an extra layer of warmth will help in the evening. Farther north and west, break out the winter coats for some snow and chill across the Upper Midwest, the High Plains, and Alaska. Elsewhere across the country, keep the umbrellas handy for some showers. In Canada, it will be sunny and dry across Atlantic Canada, the Prairies, and the Yukon. Elsewhere, showers could dampen outdoor plans, while snow flurries will fall across the Northwest Territories.

October temperatures will be cooler than normal from New England southward through the Atlantic Corridor and westward across the Appalachians and the Great Lakes through the Upper Midwest, and near to above normal across the rest of the country. Precipitation will be above normal from the Upper Midwest through the northern portions of the Heartland, across much of the Pacific Coast and Alaska, and near to below normal elsewhere. In Canada, October temperatures will be warmer than normal across Atlantic Canada, from the Prairies through British Columbia, and from the Yukon into southern portions of the Northwest Territories, and near to below normal elsewhere. Precipitation will be above normal across Atlantic Canada, the northern portion of southern Ontario, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, and near to below normal elsewhere.

*–Bob Smerbeck and Brian Thompson, Old Farmer's Almanac meteorologists*