

R R Calif Water Crisis **Wet Year**

Forecast *5/23/77*

BERKELEY (AP) — If a new long-range weather forecasting method under study at the University of California holds water, abundant rains should drench drought plagued Northern California next year.

The study compares weather patterns in Northern California with weather patterns in a section of western Mexico reaching from Mazatlan to Salina Cruz.

By this reckoning, rainfall during the next rainy season — Nov. 1, 1977, through April 30, 1978 — will total 160 per cent of normal, said climatologist Orman Granger.

Then, for the next two years, Granger's figures show, rainfall will be about normal.

Granger said the research shows that weather patterns here follow patterns in the Mexican area by seven years.

Granger claims the system, when checked against past experience, boasts an accuracy rating of 95 per cent. But he is quick to add that next year could be one of the "five times in 100 we are wrong."

The system compares weather patterns in similar areas. The latest research, to be published in the American Meteorological Society's Monthly Weather Review, matches rainfall figures for most of California against those for western Mexico.

The study was triggered by research comparing a North African drought area with one in the Mediterranean region.

Granger's thesis was based on the supposition that the earth's atmospheric system operates as a whole, and therefore there must be some long-range connections.

"We looked for parallels elsewhere and we found a strong relationship between what was happening in western Mexico and what is happening in California," he said. "But there was a time lag that lets us foreshadow what's going to happen."

Long-range forecasting is still a matter of hit and miss, and Granger insists his technique is "foreshadowing," not "predicting" weather.