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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 20, 2000

Released 4:00 P.M.

August 21, 2000

FLORIDA AGRICULTURE



WEATHER SUMMARY: Thunderstorms dropped significant amounts of rain over some localities during the week of August 13 through 19. Rainfall ranged from none at Daytona Beach to about two and a half inches at Miami. Homestead recorded about one and a half inches; Immokalee, over two inches; and the Palmetto-Ruskin area, traces to an inch. Temperatures at the major stations averaged near normal for the week over the Peninsula with Tallahassee and Pensacola temperatures averaging three to four degrees above normal. Significant showers over the western Panhandle and some inland Peninsula areas on Sunday, August 20 helped ease dry soil conditions.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil moisture throughout the State is mostly short to adequate with scattered areas of very short or surplus moisture. Rainfall has been scattered. Tobacco harvest is winding down. Tobacco marketing is active. Crops are stressed by heat and drought in some areas. Cotton is in fair to good condition. The sugarcane crop is in good condition. Soybeans are mostly in good condition. Armyworms are showing up in some areas. Haying is active weather permitting. Peanut condition is reported 54% fair, 39% good, and 7% excellent. Growers are starting to harvest peanuts.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	0	2	7	11
Short	35	34	53	35
Adequate	65	59	40	49
Surplus	0	5	0	5

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide, the condition of pasture and cattle is mostly fair to good. In the Panhandle counties, the cattle and pasture conditions are good to excellent. In the north, the condition of cattle and calves is good. However, there is damage to pasture by armyworms in some areas. In the west central area, cattle and pasture conditions improved and armyworms are active. In the central counties, the condition of pasture and range varies from poor to good, depending on amount of rain received in the past couple weeks. In the southwest, the pasture condition is good, and the condition of cattle is fair to good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	5	5	5
Fair	70	45	65	45
Good	25	50	30	50
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: There were showers and thunderstorms on the east and west coasts of Florida's citrus belt this week, however most of the interior was dryer than normal. Many growers on the ridge and the high and well drained soils were irrigating during the week due to the unusually dry and very hot weather. Lakes, ponds and streams are not refilling very rapidly this summer due to the irregular rainfall patterns. In spite of this week's dry spell, there continues to be a lot of new growth showing on both young and old trees in virtually all well-cared-for groves. New crop fruit is in very good condition. Some grapefruit are now softball size and there are a few Navels as large as baseballs. Most oranges are about average for the last of August. The Temples, tangerines and tangelos are variable with some well-cared-for groves showing good sizes with very clean fruit.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops that have grown tall and out of control. Many growers are applying their final fertilizations as September approaches. Summer sprays are being applied in all areas, particularly on those crops grown for fresh utilization. Hedging and topping have been reported in most areas. Dead tree removal is very active this summer. Burning of grove trash and debris continues.

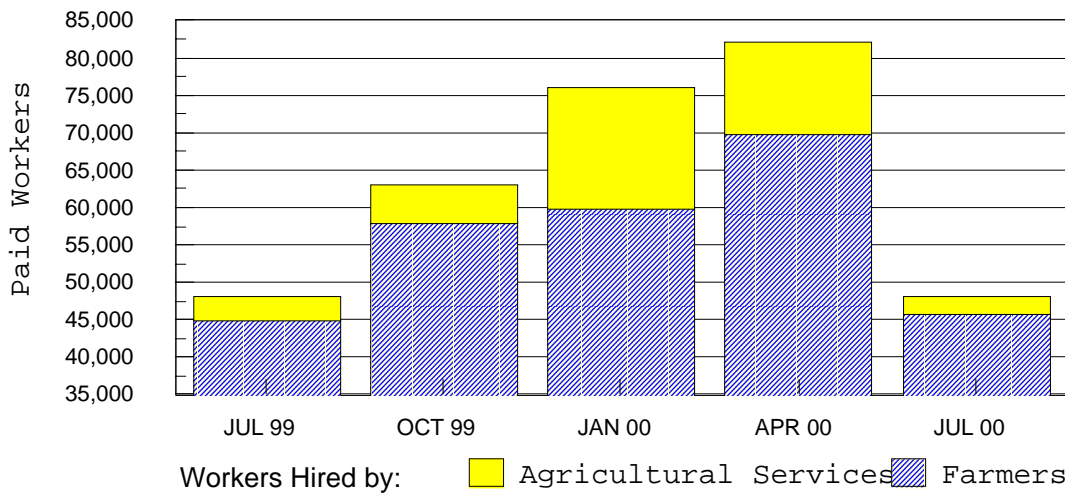
VEGETABLES: Dry soils are increasing the need for irrigation as the planting of fall crops gains momentum. Producers in the Immokalee region started planting tomatoes and peppers. The planting of tomatoes, watermelons and pickles is increasing in the Palmetto-Ruskin area with growers starting to plant eggplant. Tomato and pepper planting is underway in the East Coast area. Dade County producers are preparing land with squash planting to start in September and potato seeding to begin in October. Squash harvesting continues in the Palmetto-Ruskin region. Okra harvesting remains active in Dade County with growers planning to plant new fields in late August or early September.

In cooperation with the Florida Cooperative Extension Service whose county directors participate in supplying field information.

Agricultural labor: Workers and Wages, July 1999 through July 2000

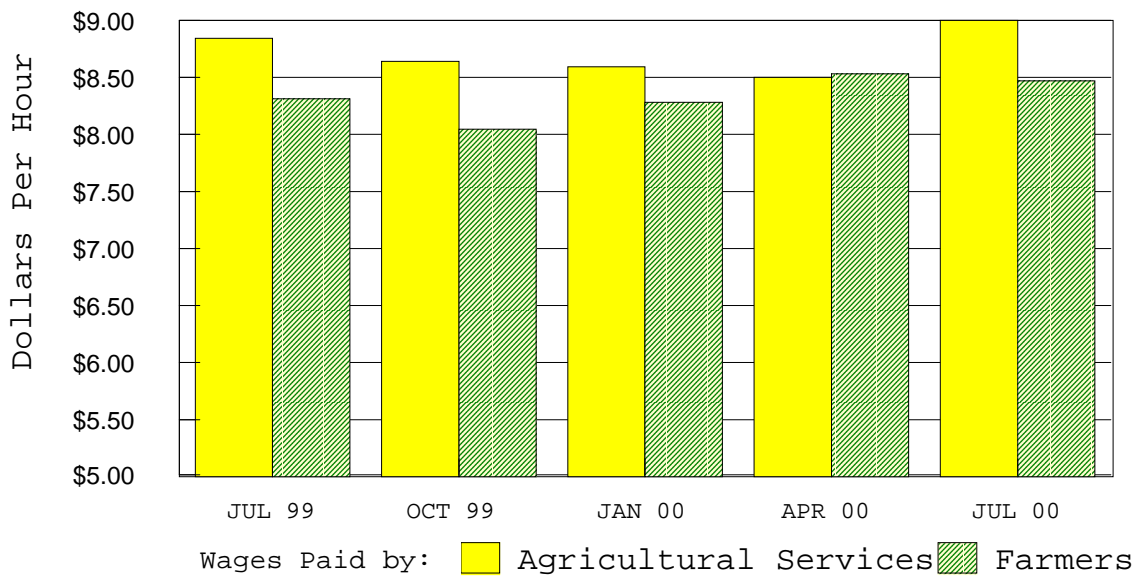
Agricultural Workers Hired in Florida

By Farmers and Agricultural Service Operators



All Hired Wages Paid in Florida

By Farmers and Agricultural Service Operators



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