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# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending October 1, 2000

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**FLORIDA  
 AGRICULTURE**



**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Strong winds from the Atlantic brought significant rainfall to many eastern coastal localities during the week of September 24 through 30. Daytona Beach recorded about four and three fourths inches of rain for the week; Vero Beach, three and three fourths inches; Hastings, about two and a quarter; Jacksonville and West Palm Beach, over two. Most inland localities received from less than a quarter inch to almost a half inch. Homestead reported two and a third inches with most falling in northern areas of Dade County. Cooler temperatures were felt over northern parts of the State with the weekly temperatures averaging one to three degrees below normal. Southern and central temperatures averaged one to two degrees above usual. Daytime highs were mostly in the 80s while nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s. Pensacola and Tallahassee had at least one daily low in the 50s.

**FIELD CROPS:** Topsoil moisture throughout the State is mostly adequate with scattered areas of short or surplus moisture. Cotton harvest is active. Tobacco marketing is active. The sugarcane crop is in good condition. Soybeans are mostly in good condition. Corn for grain harvest is winding down. Haying is active weather permitting. Armyworms are a problem in some hay fields. Peanut condition is reported at 68% fair and 32% good. Forty percent of the peanuts for nuts are reported harvested.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	1	0	1	0
Short	10	8	29	22
Adequate	79	82	68	73
Surplus	10	10	2	5

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** Statewide, pasture and range are mostly in good condition. In the Panhandle counties, pasture and livestock are in good shape. Stock ponds in some locations are still dry as rainfall has been minimal. In the north, armyworms are active and armyworm moths are reported. In the central area, pasture grass is green and growing, but stock ponds are still low. However, some pastures have standing water. In the southwest, the condition of pasture is good, and the condition of cattle and calves is fair to good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	0	0	0
Fair	30	30	25	25
Good	70	70	75	75
Excellent	0	0	0	0

**CITRUS:** Most areas in Florida's citrus belt received two or more days of rain and or thunderstorms this week. The southern and west coast grove lands were still very wet from the soakings associated with Hurricane Gordon the previous week. The rains have been welcomed as they have helped replenish the depleted water reservoirs. The recent moisture generated new foliage on

trees in well-cared-for groves. There have been reports of some fruit splitting in those areas where the rains have been the heaviest. New crop fruit continues to make good progress. The additional moisture will help fruit sizing. A lot of the early fruit varieties are showing good on-tree color break. Fresh fruit packing houses are shipping colored and white grapefruit, navels, Hamlin and Ambersweet oranges, Fallglo and Robinson tangerines. Some Satsumas have also been packed and shipped.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops. Growers are also removing vines from their trees. Fall sprays and fertilizations are slowing down. Hedging and topping along with burning of grove debris are active in all areas.

**VEGETABLES:** Mostly mild conditions over the major vegetable producing regions allowed fieldwork to progress on schedule. Tomato picking began in the Quincy area. Dade County producers continue to harvest okra.

**SNAP BEANS:** West Central--The crop is in good condition. Planting is increasing seasonally. Southwest--Condition is rated fair to good. Planting is increasing slowly. Dade--The crop is in good condition. Planting is increasing. Oldest plants are making good stands.

**CABBAGE:** Hastings--Growers are starting to plant cabbage. Crop is in good condition. Growth and development are normal.

**SWEET CORN:** Southwest--Condition is rated fair to good. Planting of a limited acreage is steady. East Coast--The crop is in mostly good condition. Workers are preparing fields for later planting.

**CUCUMBERS, Fresh Market:** West Central--Planting is active. Crop condition is fair to good. Growth and development are normal. East Coast--Oldest plantings showing good growth. Thinning is active in the oldest plantings. Good germination from reset seeding. Southwest--Planting is active. Crop condition is fair to good. Growth and development are normal.

**PICKLES:** West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is complete. Growth and development are normal. Central--Crop is making good progress.

**EGGPLANT:** East Coast--Oldest fields are in good condition. Transplanting of a limited acreage is active. Workers are staking and tying the oldest plants. West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is finished. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is increasing seasonally. Dade--Condition is rated very good. Planting is on schedule.

**OKRA:** Dade--Crop condition is rated very good. Young acreage is growing well. Harvesting continues with good quality available.

**BELL PEPPERS:** Southwest--Condition is fair to good. Planting is steady. West Central--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Planting is winding down with some growers finished. East Coast--The crop is in mostly good condition. Transplanting remains active. Workers continue to level land, lay plastic, stake, tie, and spray for the control of insects and disease.

**HOT PEPPERS:** Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is steady.

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

**POTATOES:** West Central--Planting started with the crop rated in good condition. Dade--Producers are plowing fields with planting to begin in late October.

**SQUASH:** Southwest--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Planting continues to gain momentum. East Coast--Plant growth and development are good. Fruit is nearing maturity on the oldest plants.

**STRAWBERRIES:** Plant City--Transplanting is getting underway. Palmetto-Ruskin--Transplanting is expected to begin over the next five to seven days.

**TOMATOES:** Quincy--Picking of a very limited acreage started. East Coast--Crop condition is mostly good. Transplanting is steady. Spraying, staking, tying, and pruning remain active. Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair condition. Transplanting is done. Workers are spraying for the control of insects and disease and making ties as needed. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Fruit set is fair. Fruit sizing is normal.

Transplanting is on schedule. Workers continue spraying, staking, pruning, and tying. Dade--Transplanting of a limited acreage continues. Producers are plowing and laying plastic with planting expected to increase during the last half of October.

**CHERRY TOMATOES:** Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition. Picking is expected to start within the next two weeks. Southwest--Condition is rated fair to good. Transplanting is steady.

**PLUM TOMATOES:** Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is fair to good. Harvesting is expected to begin within the next two weeks. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Transplanting is steady.

**WATERMELONS:** Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is fair to good. Growth and development are normal. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is finished.

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