



Florida Agricultural Statistics Service  
1222 Woodward Street  
Orlando, Florida 32803  
407 / 648-6013

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>

# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending November 5, 2000

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## FLORIDA AGRICULTURE



**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Dry weather prevailed during the week of October 29 through November 4. Most localities recorded no measurable rain for the week except for about three quarters inch falling at West Palm Beach. Avalon, Umatilla, Pensacola and Tallahassee reported trace amounts of rain of three tenths or less. Drought is worsening and the danger for fire is increasing for central and northern Peninsula localities and the Panhandle counties. Temperatures at the major stations averaged from nine degrees above normal at Pensacola to four degrees below at West Palm Beach. Most daytime highs were in the 80s while most lows were in the 50s and 60s. Jacksonville reported at least one low at 48 degrees.

**FIELD CROPS:** Topsoil moisture throughout the State is very short to short with scattered areas of adequate moisture. Dry soil is delaying peanut harvest in some areas. Cotton and sugarcane harvest are active. Soybean harvest is winding down. Hay harvest continues. Dry weather is delaying the planting of winter forages. Ninety five percent of the peanuts for nuts are reported harvested.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very short	11	34	7	18
Short	70	41	63	53
Adequate	19	25	30	29
Surplus	0	0	0	0

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** Statewide, pastures are mostly in fair condition. Pasture throughout the State suffers from drought. The reports from the field, without exception, reported the need for rain. It is too dry to plant winter forages in most of the counties. Cattle and calves are mostly in fair to good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very poor	5	15	0	0
Poor	25	20	5	5
Fair	40	45	45	50
Good	30	20	50	45
Excellent	0	0	0	0

**CITRUS:** Virtually all of Florida's citrus groves are very dry. Some areas had record low rainfall for the month of October and November is starting out very much the same. Ponds, lakes and reservoirs are generally lower than normal for the first of November. Rain is badly needed in the citrus belt. Irrigation is in full use in all areas to maintain good tree condition and to try to increase fruit sizes. There is very little new growth showing due to the cool nights, shorter days and lack of rain. Most all early fruit has good on-tree coloring for the first of November. Fresh fruit packing houses are shipping Navels, Hamlins, Ambersweet oranges, white and colored grapefruit, early tangerines and a few K-Early Citrus Fruit. There are a few processing plants taking grove run fruit and several are utilizing packing house eliminations.

Caretakers are cutting cover crops and removing vines. Most fall herbicides, sprays and fertilizations have been completed. Dead tree removal and burning of grove debris continues. Hedging and topping of harvested groves are active in many areas.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Oct 22	Oct 29	Nov 5
Navel oranges	108,000	137,000	207,000
Early & Mid oranges			
Including Ambersweet	143,000	220,000	1,084,000
All grapefruit	391,000	397,000	496,000
Tangerines	116,000	153,000	181,000
K-Early Citrus Fruit	1,000	2,000	7,000
Tangelos	0	2,000	6,000

**VEGETABLES:** Dry conditions continue to increase the need for irrigation. Dade County producers started planting potatoes for winter harvest. Vegetables harvested during the week include snap beans, cucumbers, pickles, eggplant, okra, peppers, squash, tomatoes and watermelons.

**SNAP BEANS:** West Central--Crop condition is rated fair. Harvesting is slowly increasing with a light amount sold. Quality and sizes are fair. Everglades--Harvesting of a small acreage is getting underway. Dade--The crop is in very good condition. Planting is on schedule. Picking is getting underway. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is steady. Harvesting is expected to start soon. East Coast--Crop condition is good. Plants are blooming and pin beans formed on oldest plants.

**CABBAGE:** Dade--Cabbage planting on schedule with the first fields planted starting to grow. West Central--Planting is gaining momentum. Crop condition is good. Growth and development are normal. Hastings--Growers are planting. The crop is in good condition. Growth and development are normal. Zellwood--The crop is in good condition. Harvest is expected to begin by mid-November.

**SWEET CORN:** Zellwood--Harvesting is active. Everglades--Picking of a light volume continues. East Coast--The crop is in mostly good condition. Ears are forming on oldest plants. Workers are preparing land for more plantings scheduled to start about mid-November. Dade--Crop condition is good. Planting is underway. Workers are irrigating as needed.

**CUCUMBERS, Fresh Market:** West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Growth and development are normal. Harvest is steady. Fruit quality is good. Fruit size is medium to large. Color is good. East Coast--Crop conditions are mostly good. Oldest plantings are being harvested with mostly good quality and color. Variable sizes are available. On later plantings runners are forming, and plants are showing blooms, fruit setting and fruit sizing. Volume is expected to increase as more plantings come into production. Southwest--Planting is active. Crop condition is fair to good. Growth and development are good. Harvest is steady and fruit quality and sizes are good.

**PICKLES:** West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Growth and development are normal. Harvest is active. Fruit quality is fair to good. Zellwood--Harvest is active. Quality and yield are good.

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

**EGGPLANT:** West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Harvesting is steady. Quality is fair to good. Color is good. Sizes are variable. East Coast--The crop is in good condition. Harvesting of regular and Italian types is active with good quality available. Volume is light. Color is good. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting of a small acreage is active. Harvesting started with good quality available. Dade--The crop is in very good condition. Oldest acreage is showing fruit.

**ENDIVE/ESCAROLE:** Everglades--Crop condition is good.

**LETTUCE:** Everglades---Crop condition is good.

**OKRA:** Dade--Crop condition is good. Harvesting continues with good quality available. Yield is good.

**BELL PEPPERS:** Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is steady. Picking is active with fair to good quality available. East Coast--Picking continues with good quality available. Sizes are mostly good. Workers are leveling land and laying plastic for winter crop planting. West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. U-Pic harvesting is expected to start over the next two weeks.

**HOT PEPPERS:** East Coast--Picking is active with good quality available. Volume is light. Southwest--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Planting is steady. Picking began with good quality available.

**POTATOES:** West Central--The crop is in good condition. Dade--Planting began with activity to continue through late December. Southwest--Crop condition is good. Planting is steady. Oldest plants are breaking the ground.

**RADISHES:** Everglades, Lake Placid--Harvesting is getting underway.

**SQUASH:** Dade--Picking is increasing. Quality is good. Yield is increasing. Planting is on schedule. Workers are irrigating and

applying fertilizer as needed. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting and picking are steady. Quality is good. West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Picking is increasing slowly. Quality and color are good. Sizes are variable. East Coast--The crop is in good condition. Harvesting started with good quality and color available.

**STRAWBERRIES:** Plant City--Crop condition remains good. Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is good. Harvesting is expected to start in about two weeks.

**TOMATOES:** Quincy--Picking is decreasing seasonally. Quality remains mostly good. Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is rated fair to good. All fruit has set. Harvesting is increasing. Quality is fair to good with 5x6 and 6x6 sizes available. Yield is increasing. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Cooler temperatures are aiding fruit setting. Fruit sizing is good. Planting is steady. Harvesting is gaining momentum. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are mixed. Yield is below normal. East Coast--Fruit set is improving on younger plants. Picking is active with mostly good quality available. Yield is below normal but increasing. Transplanting continues. Dade--The crop is in good condition. Oldest acreage is blooming. Planting continues to increase.

**CHERRY TOMATOES:** Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition. Picking is steady. Quality is fair to good. Color is good. Southwest--Condition is fair to good. Planting is steady.

**PLUM TOMATOES:** Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvesting is gaining momentum. Quality and color are good. Southwest--Crop condition remains fair to good. Planting is steady.

**WATERMELONS:** Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is fair. Picking is mostly steady. Quality is fair. Sizes are variable. Color is fair to good. Southwest--Condition remains fair to good.

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