



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 26, 2000

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**FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE**



WEATHER SUMMARY: Cold fronts again caused temperatures to dip into the 20s and 30s in many western Panhandle, northern and central Peninsula localities during the week of November 19 through 25. Crestview recorded at least one low at 19. Temperatures at the major stations averaged from one degree below normal at Miami to ten degrees below at Pensacola. Highs were mostly in the 60s and 70s with several stations recording at least one high in the 80s. The fronts brought much needed rain to most areas. West Palm Beach reported about four and a quarter inches falling for the week while Pensacola recorded about three and a third inches. Central Peninsula localities received from traces to about two thirds inches. On Sunday, November 26 more rain fell over northern and central parts with some localities recording up to an inch for the day.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil moisture in the Panhandle is mostly adequate. Moisture throughout the Peninsula is very short to short with scattered areas of adequate moisture. There was a hard freeze in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula on November 22. Winter forage planted was active in areas where moisture was available. Cotton harvest is winding down. Sugarcane harvest is active. Peanuts for nuts harvest is complete.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very short	22	15	17	15
Short	57	56	52	53
Adequate	19	26	29	31
Surplus	0	0	0	0

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide, the condition of pastures and cattle improved. In the north and Panhandle, small grain forage received enough rain to get a stand. However, a hard freeze reduced pasture condition. In the central counties, hay supplies are low. Lakes and ponds are low following prolonged drought. In the west-central area, the cattle condition fell off due to lack of good grass. The condition of pastures was reduced at mid-week by a frost. In the southwest, pastures were mostly good. However, some locations have standing water from recent rains.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very poor	5	5	0	0
Poor	15	15	5	5
Fair	80	35	65	50
Good	0	45	30	45
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: This was a very cold and generally dry week in Florida's citrus belt. Temperatures on Wednesday morning the 22nd were in the mid to low thirties and a few northern areas had recordings in the upper 20s. There was no appreciable damage to citrus due to short durations below 32 degrees. There were scattered showers with some areas receiving up to 1 inch of badly needed rainfall, however much more rain is needed. Ponds, lakes, and water reservoirs are at very low levels. Growers and caretakers are irrigating to maintain good tree condition and to help increase fruit sizes. Fresh fruit harvesters are

moving large amounts of early fruit for fresh holiday shipments. Several processing plants are taking field run early fruit and not just packing house eliminations.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping, and discing cover crops prior to harvesting and for fire protection. Few clean up sprays continue on a limited number of fresh crops. Dead tree removal continues along with the burning of general grove debris. A few early harvested groves are hedged and topped.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Nov 12	Nov 19	Nov 26
Navel oranges	187,000	284,000	160,000
Early & Mid oranges			
Including Ambersweet	2,622,000	4,093,000	3,863,000
All grapefruit	475,000	747,000	546,000
Tangerines	290,000	291,000	169,000
K-Early Citrus Fruit	8,000	4,000	0
Tangelos	43,000	77,000	50,000

VEGETABLES: Producer harvesting continues. Vegetables available include snap beans, cucumbers, pickles, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, okra, peppers, squash, strawberries, sweet corn, radishes, tomatoes, and watermelons.

SNAP BEANS: Dade--The crop is in very good condition. Picking is active. Yield and quality are good. West Central--Crop condition is fair. Growth and development are slow to normal. Harvest is steady. Quality and size are variable. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good with some wind burn due to cold windy conditions. Planting is steady. Harvest is gaining momentum. East Coast--Plant growth and bean development are good. Hand harvest provides good quality and color.

CABBAGE: Dade--Cabbage planting is on schedule. First fields are starting to make heads. Crop looks very good with cool weather helping. West Central--Crop condition is good. Planting is steady. Growth and development are normal. Harvest is starting. Hastings--Growers are actively planting cabbage. Crop is in good condition. Growth and development are normal. Zellwood--Growth has been good. Both red and green harvest is starting.

SWEET CORN: Everglades--Picking continues with increasing volume. Zellwood--Harvest continues with a light volume. Dade--Planting is active. Fields are up to good stands. Irrigation and spraying are active. East Coast--Recent plantings are starting to spike through the ground. Planting is becoming more active for the winter crop.

CUCUMBERS, Fresh Market: West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Growth and development are normal. Harvest is steady. Fruit quality is fair to good. Fruit size is variable. Color is good. East Coast--Crop conditions are mostly good. More rainfall is needed. The rainfall over weekend was helpful. Mid-growth plantings are forming runners, blooming, and setting fruit. New blocks being picked providing good quality and color. Harvest was moderate the first part of the week. Southwest--Planting is light. Crop condition is fair to good. Some plants have wind burn from the windy conditions. Growth and development are slow. 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

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

good. Zellwood--Harvest is active. Quality and yield are good. Dade--Pickles are being harvested with good quality and yield.

EGGPLANT: West Central--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Growth and development are normal. Harvest is steady. Quality is good. Sizes are medium to large. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting remains light. Growth and development are slow to normal. Harvest is steady. Quality is fair to good and is improving. East Coast--Crop conditions are mostly good. The young plants are showing good growth. Mid-growth plants are in bloom and setting fruit. There was a light volume harvest on Italian and regular eggplant this week. Fancy grades provide some good quality and color. Dade--Planting is slowing. Plants are in good condition. Fruit is showing in some fields.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE: Everglades--Harvesting continues.

LETTUCE: Everglades--Harvesting continues.

OKRA: Dade--Harvesting continues with declining seasonal volume. Cooler weather is effecting the quality and color of the pods.

BELL PEPPERS: Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition with slow to normal growth and development. Planting is steady. Harvest is steady with fair to good quality and improving size. East Coast--Crop condition is generally good. Cooler temperatures mid-week were helpful in aiding fruit sizing. Harvest was moderate during the week with picking green bells and lighter on reds. Quality was good from both varieties. There was a light harvest on specialty peppers. Laying plastic and transplanting were active while harvesting slowed slightly over the holiday. West Central--The crop is in good condition with normal growth and development. Harvest is gaining momentum. Quality and size are mostly good and mostly greens.

HOT PEPPERS: East Coast--Picking remains active. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting continues. Picking continues with good quality available.

POTATOES: Dade--Potato planting is active and on schedule. Weather is perfect and soil is perfect for planting. First fields are up to a good stand. Southwest--Crop is in good condition. Planting is steady. Growth and development are normal. West Central--Planting is starting.

RADISHES: Everglades, Lake Placid--Digging is active.

SQUASH: Dade--Harvest is active with good quality and yield. A good supply is available. Planting continues. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Some wind burn is reported due to cold windy weather. Growth and development are normal. Harvest is steady. West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Harvest is beginning to wind down. Color is good with fair to good quality and sizes. East Coast--The crop is in good condition. Harvesting of zucchini and yellow varieties continues with a light volume. Good quality and color are available from the fancy grades being picked.

STRAWBERRIES: Plant City--Cool weather has slowed the early harvest and helped fruit development. Quality is good as volume increases. Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is good. Harvest is gaining with fair to good quality. Sizes are variable and color is good. Dade--Planting is complete with some plants starting to bloom. Harvesting is expected to begin near mid-December.

TOMATOES: Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is steady. Plant growth is good. Cooler weather has slowed fruit sizing. Harvest is steady with improved quality and yield. Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is fair to good. Harvesting is active with good quality and variable sizes. Cooler weather has slowed things down. East Coast--Plants are in good condition. Harvest is active on all picks with mostly good quality. Quincy--Harvesting is almost complete. Dade--The crop remains in very good condition. Planting remains active.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvest is steady. Quality and color are good. Sizes are normal. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is steady. Harvest is gaining momentum with good quality available.

PLUM TOMATOES: Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvest is steady with good quality and color. Yield is down. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting continues. Harvesting is gaining momentum and quality is good.

WATERMELONS: Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is fair. Harvest continues to wind down. Quality is fair and sizes are variable. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is complete. Growth and development are slow. Harvest is starting with fair to good quality and size.

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