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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending June 3, 2001

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FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE



WEATHER SUMMARY: Scattered rains eased dry soil conditions in many central and some northern Peninsula localities during the week of May 27 through June 2. However, drought conditions still exist in some west coast areas from Naples to Pensacola while some northern Peninsula localities remain extremely dry. Storms dropped from traces to over five inches of rain during the week with nearly all localities receiving at least a trace. Immokalee reported about five and a quarter inches of rain for the week, while Homestead recorded over two and a half inches. The Palmetto-Ruskin region reported from traces to an inch falling. Ft. Pierce reported receiving about three and three fourths inches. Temperatures at the major stations averaged normal to two degrees above during the week. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were mostly in the 60s and 70s. Tallahassee recorded at least one low in the 50s.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are mostly very short to short with localities receiving recent rains reporting adequate soil moisture. Dry soils in some localities continue to delay the planting of peanuts and soybeans with planting in wetter areas becoming more active. Irrigated corn, sugarcane, tobacco, and cotton are in good condition. Producers indicate that 86 percent of peanuts are planted compared with 78 percent last week, 81 percent last year and the five-year average of 91 percent. Peanut condition is 10 percent poor, 70 percent fair and 20 percent good.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	57	25	44	24
Short	39	70	51	69
Adequate	4	5	5	7
Surplus	0	0	0	0

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, the pasture condition is very poor to fair and forage for hay is short due to drought. There is no significant improvement yet in pasture condition following recent rains. In the northern counties, the pasture condition is poor to fair. The pastures are suffering from drought. The cattle condition is only fair. Stock ponds are very low or dry. Very little hay has been cut. In the central areas, severe drought continues in most locations. The drought, coupled with very hot weather, has turned the pastures brown. In the west central and southern counties, range and pasture grass began to grow following recent rains. The cattle condition remains mostly fair. Statewide, the condition of the cattle is mostly fair.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	20	10	0	0
Poor	45	35	15	10
Fair	35	55	80	85
Good	0	0	5	5
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: The summer rains have started in virtually all areas of Florida's citrus belt. Some caretakers started alternating their irrigation systems and a few had sufficient rain to quit irrigating. Most

well-cared-for groves are showing new growth on the younger trees. New crop fruit is making good progress. Some of the remaining old crop Valencias and grapefruit are refirming with the help of the recent rains. Harvest of Valencia oranges continues active with some slowing where supplies are running low. Most of the grapefruit are being picked for the processors. Harvesting labor is scarce in some areas.

Caretakers are actively mowing, chopping and discing cover crops. Hedging and topping continue in some Valencia groves following harvesting operations. Fresh fruit groves are receiving their second, third and fourth sprays. Herbiciding and fertilizing continue in all areas.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	May 20	May 27	Jun 3
Valencia oranges	7,824,000	6,472,000	5,199,000
All grapefruit	803,000	530,000	177,000
Honey Tangerines	6,000	4,000	3,000

VEGETABLES: Harvesting of most crops is slowing seasonally. Vegetables available include watermelons, potatoes, sweet corn, tomatoes, cantaloups, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, snap beans, squash, okra and blueberries.

SNAP BEANS: North--Harvesting continues to slow seasonally. Quality is mostly good. West Central--U-Pic harvesting remains active. Southwest--Picking is finished. Dade, East Coast--Harvesting is complete.

BLUEBERRIES: North, Central--Picking is almost finished.

SWEET CORN: Everglades, Zellwood--Harvesting is slowing seasonally. Quality is mostly good.

CUCUMBERS, Fresh Market: North--Picking of a light volume is active but slowing seasonally. Quality is mostly good. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvesting is slowing seasonally. Quality is fair to good. West Central--Crop condition is fair. Picking is nearing the end. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are variable. East Coast--Harvesting is finished. Workers are pulling plastic and discing acreage.

PICKLES: West Central--Crop condition is fair. Harvesting continues but is starting to slow seasonally. Quality is fair. Zellwood--Picking is nearly finished. Quality is mostly good. Southwest--Harvesting is virtually finished.

EGGPLANT: East Coast--Crop condition is rated mostly good. Harvesting is slowing seasonally. Quality is very good and color is excellent. Volume of fancy grades is light with supplies available until about mid-month. Dade--Cutting for local sales remains active. Palmetto-Ruskin--U-pic harvesting continues. Quality is good. Southwest--Harvesting is finished.

OKRA: Dade--Crop condition remains very good. Warm temperatures and rains continue to aid crop development. Harvesting continues at an active pace. Quality is good. Yield is increasing with a good volume available through early July.

BELL PEPPERS: West Central--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvesting remains active with some fields completely picked. Quality is good with medium and extra large sizes available.

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

Color is good. Southwest--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Picking continues to slow seasonally. Quality is fair to good. East Coast--Crop condition is fair to good. Hot temperatures are causing foliage to wilt. Harvesting is winding down with supplies available over the next seven to ten days. Crown picks are yielding very good quality and very large sizes. Workers continue to mow acreage completely picked and remove plastic.

HOT PEPPERS: Southwest--Crop condition is fair. Picking is winding down. Quality is good.

POTATOES: Hastings--Digging remains active but is slowing seasonally. Quality is mostly good.

RADISHES: Everglades, Lake Placid--The season is virtually finished.

SQUASH: North--Picking is nearing the end. Dade--Heavy rains damaged the small acreage remaining. Harvesting for local sales is active but nearly finished. Quality is fair. Southwest, East Coast--Picking is completed.

TOMATOES: Quincy--Picking is getting underway. Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is mostly fair to good. Harvesting is slowing

seasonally. Fruit quality is fair to good with 5x6 and 6x6 sizes available. East Coast--Condition remains fair to good. Picking is slowing seasonally with supplies available until about mid-month. First and second picks are producing good quality and sizes. Third picks are yielding a light volume with some third picks not made. Southwest--The season is finished. Workers are removing strings, stakes and plastic, leveling land and cleaning ditches. Dade--Picking is done. Growers are cleaning fields and planting cover crops.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Southwest--The crop is in fair condition. Harvesting is nearing the end. Quality is good. Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Picking is slowing seasonally with some growers finished. Quality is fair to good.

PLUM TOMATOES: Quincy--Harvesting is getting underway. Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is fair to good. Harvesting is nearing the end. Quality is fair to good. Southwest--Picking is complete.

WATERMELONS: Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvesting is active. Quality is good. Sizes are mostly small and medium with some large sizes available. Southwest--Crop condition is fair. Picking is nearing the end. Quality is good. Jefferson County--Harvesting is expected to begin soon.

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