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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending June 10, 2001

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FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE



WEATHER SUMMARY: A clash of sea breezes caused many thunderstorm outbreaks over the Peninsula during the week of June 2 through 9. Rainfall for the week ranged from less than one tenth inch at Lake Alfred to about four and a quarter inches at Ona. Some burning bans for farmers were lifted due to increased soil moisture. Temperatures for the week averaged one to three degrees above normal at the major stations. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were mostly in the 70s.

Significant rains occurred during May over many southern Peninsula localities with Hialeah recording over nine and a half inches for the month. Other localities remained dry with Plant City and Usher Tower recording only traces of rain falling during May. May rainfall totals were below normal for most localities and ranged from about a tenth inch below normal at Miami to almost four inches below at St. Leo. The Hialeah total was almost three inches above normal. The total for Melbourne was about one and three fourths inches above normal while the total of about four inches at Myakka River State Park was about four tenths above. Temperatures during May ranged from almost two degrees above normal at Sanford to about two degrees below at Madison and Tavernier.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil moisture throughout the State is very short to short with scattered areas of adequate moisture. Some areas of the state are starting to get summer rains. Farmers are planting the last of the peanuts and cotton in areas that have received rain. Irrigated corn, sugarcane and tobacco are in good condition. Dryland crops are showing stress from drought. Hay fields are showing drought signs. Farmers are cutting hay in irrigated fields. Farmers reported 94 percent of the peanuts are planted compared with 86 percent last week, 93 percent last year, and a five-year average of 84 percent. Fifteen percent of the peanuts are reported pegged. Peanut condition was reported as 4% poor, 75% fair, and 21% good.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	25	15	24	26
Short	70	57	69	51
Adequate	5	28	7	23
Surplus	0	0	0	0

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and north counties, pasture condition is poor to fair as drought continues. Wildfires continue because the rain has not been enough to stop them. In the central area, much pasture is still crisp from continued drought. Recent rains have not yet resulted in much grass growth in pastures. Some pastures in the southeast have standing water from recent rains. In the southwest, pastures show good improvement following recent rains. Statewide, cattle condition is mostly fair.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	10	5	0	0
Poor	35	20	10	10
Fair	55	70	85	85
Good	0	5	5	5
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: There was rain in all areas of the citrus belt on several days this week. Rainfall accumulations varied from 1/2 inch to more than 3 inches in many groves. The summer flush of new growth is starting to show on both old and young trees. New crop fruit is starting to size very well. Shedding of new crop fruit is virtually over except for those later blooming trees. Valencia harvest is slowing as many of the processors have closed for the season. Utilization of the few hundred thousand boxes of remaining grapefruit is very slow as only a few fresh fruit houses and processors are still taking fruit. Harvesting labor is getting to be very hard to come by due to economics and other crop demands. Very few Honey tangerines remain to be picked.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops. Summer sprays and fertilizations are being applied in all areas. Hedging and topping continue along with burning of grove debris. Growers are resetting new trees in older groves. Very few new groves are being planted.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	May 27	Jun 3	Jun 10
Valencia oranges	6,180,000	5,199,000	4,193,000
All grapefruit	412,000	177,000	148,000
Honey Tangerines	5,000	3,000	1,000

VEGETABLES: Producers are finishing the harvest of many crops over the central and southern Peninsula. Major vegetables available include potatoes, watermelons, tomatoes, cantaloups, peppers, eggplant and okra.

SNAP BEANS: North--Harvesting is virtually finished. West Central--Picking is complete.

BLUEBERRIES: North, Central--Harvesting is virtually done.

SWEET CORN: Everglades, Zellwood--Picking is nearly finished.

CUCUMBERS, Fresh Market: West Central, East Coast, Southwest--Harvest is complete. North--Picking of a light volume is active but slowing seasonally. Quality is mostly good.

PICKLES: West Central, Dade, Zellwood--Harvest is complete. Southwest--Harvest is virtually complete.

EGGPLANT: East Coast--The crop remains in mostly good condition. Cutting is nearly completed. Volume is light with very good quality and color available. Southwest--Crop condition is rated poor to fair. Picking is nearly done. Quality is fair to good. Dade, Palmetto-Ruskin--Harvesting is completed.

OKRA: Dade--The crop is in very good condition. Harvesting is active with a good supply available for the next five weeks. Quality is good.

BELL PEPPERS: West Central--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Picking is slowing seasonally. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are variable. East Coast--The crop is in fair to good condition. Growers finished crown picks with a small volume of good quality and large sized fruit harvested. Workers removed strings and stakes, mowed down plants and pulled up plastic. Discing for fall plantings is active with growers hoping to lay the first plastic in early July. Southwest--Harvesting is finished.

HOT PEPPERS: Southwest--Crop condition remains fair. Harvesting is nearing the end. Quality is good.

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

POTATOES: Hastings--Harvesting continues. Volume is decreasing seasonally. Quality is mostly good.

SQUASH: North, Dade--The season is virtually over.

TOMATOES: Quincy--Harvesting is active. Volume is light as the season gets started. Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair condition. Picking continues to slow with some growers finished. Volume is light. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are variable. Light supplies are expected for the next two to three weeks. East Coast--Crop condition is fair to mostly good. Producers finished all crown crop picks. Second picks are producing good quality and variable sizes with growers to finish harvesting this week.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to

good condition. Picking continues to slow. Quality is fair to good. Workers continue to prepare land for fall crop planting. Southwest--Harvesting is finished.

PLUM TOMATOES: Quincy--Picking is active. Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is fair to good. Picking is nearly done. Quality is fair to good. Volume is very light. Southwest--Condition is fair. Growers are finishing up for the season.

WATERMELONS: North--Harvesting is active. Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Picking continues but is starting to slow. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are variable. Color is good. Southwest--Condition is fair. Harvesting is nearing the end with most fields open to pinhookers. Quality is fair

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