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WEATHER & CROP NEWS



Week ending June 17, 2001

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Afternoon and evening thunderstorms brought heavy rains to many localities during the week of June 10 through 16. However, some spots remain dry, especially along the Gulf coast. Tallahassee received over ten inches of rain and Jacksonville reported almost two inches falling as the remains of Tropical Storm Allison passed over northern counties. The clash of the sea breezes produced daily storms which dropped from traces to almost four inches of rain over many Peninsula localities. Immokalee and Hastings reported almost two and a half inches falling while Alachua received over three inches. Ft. Pierce recorded almost an inch while Dover reported almost three fourths inch of rain for the week. Temperatures at the major stations averaged from normal to four degrees above. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil moisture in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula is adequate to surplus. Topsoil moisture in the rest of the State is very short to short with scattered areas of adequate moisture. Remnants of Tropical Storm Allison brought rain to the Panhandle and northern Peninsula during the week. Some washing was reported in fields due to the heavy rains. Farmers are planting the last of the peanuts and cotton. Irrigated corn, sugarcane, and tobacco are in good condition. Dry land crops and hay fields are showing drought signs in the central and southern Peninsula. Farmers are cutting hay in irrigated fields. Eighty two percent of the peanuts are reported pegging. Peanut condition was reported as 2% poor, 57% fair, and 41% good.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	15	11	26	24
Short	57	41	51	33
Adequate	28	41	23	41
Surplus	0	7	0	2

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pasture and hay fields are responding with rapid growth following ample rains. In the central counties, the drought continues in some areas where cattlemen must continue to provide supplemental hay for the cattle. Localized rains brought the pastures back somewhat but pastures and hayfields have not recovered. In the southwest area, grass growth picked up but more rain is needed to continue the growth. Water holes are still much below normal. Cattle are looking much better. Statewide, the condition of cattle continues mostly fair.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	5	5	0	0
Poor	20	15	10	10
Fair	70	55	85	75
Good	5	20	5	15
Excellent	0	5	0	0

CITRUS: Rain this week varied from heavy thunderstorms to light soaking showers. Most groves recorded around one to 3 inches. However, there were those isolated areas where torrential downpours

dumped more than 5 inches of the much needed moisture. These well-cared-for groves have trees of all ages showing a lot of new summer growth. New crop fruit continues to make very good progress with the help of frequent rains. Harvesting operations are slowing as supplies of available fruit are dwindling. Labor is also getting very hard to come by in some of the rural areas. Most of the fresh fruit packing houses and processing plants have closed for the season. However, there are a few packers still packing Valencias and both white and colored grapefruit. The Honey tangerine harvest has ended for the season.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops. Several fresh fruit crops of all varieties are receiving their summer sprays. Hedging and topping continue. Many burn permits are now being issued due to the frequent rains.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Jun 3	Jun 10	Jun 17
Valencia oranges	6,347,000	4,193,000	3,861,000
All grapefruit	172,000	148,000	210,000
Honey Tangerines	2,000	1,000	1,000

VEGETABLES: Rains interrupted field activities in many areas. Growers are harvesting to meet the July 4th demand. Major vegetables available include potatoes, watermelons, tomatoes, cantaloups, peppers, eggplant and okra.

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, Southwest, Zellwood--Harvest is complete.

EGGPLANT: East Coast--Crop condition is rated good. Harvesting of fancy grades is active with good quality and color available. Cutting is expected to continue for about two more weeks. Southwest--Harvesting is nearly finished.

OKRA: Dade--Crop condition remains very good. Recent showers are aiding crop development. Harvesting remains active with good quality available. Volume is good with supplies available through mid-to-late July.

BELL PEPPERS: West Central--The crop is in fair condition. Harvesting is nearing the end with most activity to finish over the next five to seven days. Quality is fair to good. East Coast--Picking is complete. Growers continued to clean acreage entirely harvested, level land for fall crop planting and clean irrigation and drainage ditches. Fall crop planting is expected to begin about mid-July.

HOT PEPPERS: Southwest--Picking is virtually done.

POTATOES: Hastings--Digging remains active with recent rains delaying some activity. Quality is mostly good. Supplies are light.

TOMATOES: Quincy--Picking is increasing seasonally with recent showers delaying some field work. Quality is mostly good. Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is rated fair. Harvesting is nearly complete. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are variable. East Coast--Growers finished harvesting.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Palmetto-Ruskin--Producers completed harvesting for the season.

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

PLUM TOMATOES: Quincy--Harvesting continues with volume increasing seasonally. Recent rains delayed some field work. Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is fair to good. Harvesting is nearing the end. Quality is fair to good. Supplies are very light. Southwest--Harvesting is virtually finished.

WATERMELONS: North--Picking continues with showers curtailing some harvesting. Quality is mostly good. Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition. Picking is winding down with some acreage open to U-Pic harvesting. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are small to medium. Color is fair to good. Southwest--Picking is virtually finished.

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