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WEATHER & CROP NEWS



Week ending September 16, 2001

Released 4:00 P.M.

September 17, 2001

WEATHER SUMMARY: Tropical Storm Gabrielle brought large amounts of rain to most of Florida at the end of the week. As Gabrielle crossed the State the large amounts of rain caused some flooding. The Pierson area reported over 14 inches. Temperatures were mostly a little cooler due to the rains and cloud cover. Less rain was received around the Tallahassee and Pensacola areas. Highs at the major stations were mostly in the 80s and 90s. Lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Tropical Storm Gabrielle crossed the Peninsula on Friday. Topsoil moisture conditions are rated mostly adequate to surplus with scattered areas of short moisture. Corn harvest is starting. Haying is active. Tobacco harvest is complete. Field preparations are starting for planting winter grazing crops. Farmers are getting ready to start cotton harvest. Peanut condition is rated 9 percent poor, 29 percent fair, 38 percent good, and 24 percent excellent. Fifteen percent of the peanuts for nuts have been harvested. Corn, cotton, soybeans, and sugarcane remain in good condition.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	0	0	0	1
Short	24	10	30	15
Adequate	63	39	65	45
Surplus	13	51	5	39

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Pasture in the Panhandle and north is in fair to good condition. Land preparation for winter forage planting is underway. In the central counties, pastures are in fair condition with some locations near drought before the weekend rains and others with surplus moisture. In the west central and southwest counties, pasture is in fair condition and some pastures are flooded. There is also some damage from armyworms. Statewide, the condition of cattle is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	0	0	0
Fair	40	10	20	15
Good	45	90	70	85
Excellent	10	0	10	0

CITRUS: All areas of Florida's citrus belt were soaked this week from rains associated with Tropical Storm Gabrielle. The rains started Wednesday in the southern counties and continued through Saturday morning in many northern areas. Minimal rainfall accumulations were in the four to five inch range with some west coast and southern counties recording around ten to twelve inches. Growers and caretakers started pumping into main canals as early as Thursday and Friday and continued through the weekend removing the excessive water. New growth continues on just about all of the trees. Fresh fruit packing houses are testing fruit for early shipments. There have been some white and colored grapefruit, Navel and Ambersweet oranges, Fallglo and Robinson tangerines packed and shipped so far this month.

Caretakers were very busy this week ditching, deep plowing and trying to remove standing water from some of the trees root systems. There was a little spraying and fertilizing the first of the week before the rains arrived at mid-week. Dead tree removal continues along with burning of the branches and limbs.

VEGETABLES: At the beginning of the week growers were actively planting and preparing to plant in most areas. At the end of the week, strong winds, heavy rains, and some flooding caused delays and some damage in the Central and Southern areas.

SNAP BEANS: Dade--Some beans were planted this week but most growers plan to start in October. Southwest--Planting is expected to start next week. East Coast--A limited amount of acreage was being worked before fall planting.

SWEET CORN: Everglades, Zellwood--Sweet corn is in good condition. East Coast--Cleaning out ditches and discing blocks continued.

CUCUMBERS: West Central--Planting was active before the rains. Southwest--Crop condition is good and planting is gaining.

EGGPLANT: Southwest--Condition is fair to good. Planting is gaining and development is normal. East Coast--Plant growth is good on the oldest plantings. Limited planting was delayed mid-week. West Central--The crop was in fair to good condition before the rains. Dade--A few more eggplant were set this week. Fields are off to a good start.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE: Everglades--Planting is starting.

LETTUCE: Everglades--Planting is starting.

OKRA: Dade--Okra fields look good. Quality and yield are good. Movement is a little slow. Young fields are looking good and should have a good supply.

PEPPERS: Southwest--Planting is gaining. Crop condition is fair to good with slow to normal growth and development. West Central--The crop is in fair to good condition. East Coast--Wet fields delayed laying plastic and transplanting Thursday and Friday. Over the weekend fields starting drying out and workers were spraying crops. Transplanting and laying plastic were active until the heavy rainfall. Oldest plants are showing good plant growth.

HOT PEPPERS: Southwest--Planting is gaining with the crop in slow to normal growth and development. Crop condition is fair to good.

SQUASH: East Coast--Crop is in mostly good condition. Germination is fair to good on the oldest planting. West Coast--Crop condition is good. Planting is gaining. West Central--Rains delayed some plantings.

TOMATOES: Dade--More plastic is being laid and beds made. Most growers are expecting to start setting in October. Southwest--Crop condition remains fair to good. Planting is steady as weather permits. Plant growth is good on older plants. Plants just set are starting slower. Some small acreage has a fruit set. Spraying is steady. Staking continues as weather permits. It's unknown if the rains have knocked off any fruit or blooms. Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop was in mostly good condition before the rains. It is unknown if the rains caused any major problems. East Coast--Oldest plantings are in fair to good shape with some showing a light setting of fruit. Leveling of blocks, laying of plastic, and transplanting were active until the heavy

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

rainfall started. By the weekend fields were starting to dry out and transplanting and spraying of the crop commenced again.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Palmetto-Ruskin, Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is gaining.

PLUM TOMATOES: Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop was in good condition

before the rains. It is unknown if the rains caused any major problems. Southwest--Crop is in fair to good condition with planting gaining. Development is normal.

WATERMELONS: Southwest--Planting is starting. Palmetto-Ruskin--The crop is in fair to good condition.

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