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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending November 11, 2001

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Cooler conditions continued during the week of November 4 through 10. Temperatures at most of the major stations averaged one to three degrees below normal. Pensacola temperatures averaged three degrees above normal for the week. Daytime highs were in the 70s. Nighttime lows were in the 40s, 50s and 60s. Tallahassee and Jacksonville recorded at least one low in the 30s with some Panhandle, northern Peninsula, and a few north central areas reporting scattered frosts. Most localities received from none to only traces of rain. A few areas near the Atlantic coast received significant rains totaling up to one and two thirds inches. A few southwestern localities reported about a third inch of rain for the week. Dry weather prevailed on Sunday and Monday, November 11 and 12 with high and low temperatures remaining mostly moderate.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil moisture supplies are mostly short to adequate with mainly southeastern coastal areas reporting surplus supplies and several northern Peninsula and Panhandle areas reporting very short supplies. Subsoil moisture is mostly short to adequate with some northern Peninsula and western Panhandle areas reporting short to very short supplies and a few southern Peninsula localities reporting surplus supplies. Some northern growers stopped planting small grains for forage due to dry soils while others are irrigating seeded acreage to ensure good stands. Cotton picking and hay harvesting are making rapid progress due to the dry conditions in the north. Some hay making in southern Peninsula localities was delayed due to surplus soil moisture caused by rains from Hurricane Michelle. Peanut digging is 99% completed compared with 98% last year and the five-year average of 99%. Sugarcane planting and harvesting are active in the Everglades area.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	10	14	7	8
Short	24	28	20	29
Adequate	58	53	62	56
Surplus	8	5	11	7

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: The Panhandle remains dry, with poor pasture conditions and cattle in fair to good condition. Most planting of cool season pasture ceased due to lack of rain. Hay is being fed to supplement the poor pastures. In the north, scattered frost reduced permanent pasture growth and cool season forage growth slowed dramatically due to dry weather. In the central area, pasture conditions are poor to fair due to continued dry weather. The planting of small grains for winter forage is being delayed due to dry soil conditions. In the southwest and southeast, both cattle and pastures are in fair to good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	5	0	0
Poor	10	20	5	5
Fair	45	30	25	35
Good	45	45	70	60
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: There was almost ideal weather throughout the citrus belt this week with mild days, cool nights and very little, if any, rain. A few growers on the high sand hills and some on the well drained flatwoods soils started irrigating to maintain good tree condition during this normally drier season. New growth is generally limited to the younger trees in the warmer locations. Fruit maturity continues to be ahead of the last few years for this same time due to the general uniform bloom and the regular summer rains. Most all fresh fruit packing houses are open and running long hours to meet the needs for fresh fruit utilization during the Thanksgiving season. Most of the processors are open, or are opening very soon, taking both field run fruit and packing house eliminations.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops prior to harvesting or cutting those that have grown out of control. The last of the fall herbicides are being applied. Some young trees are being fertilized and sprayed. Dead tree removal continues along with the burning of branches and stumps.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Oct 28	Nov 4	Nov 12
Navel oranges	164,000	124,000	232,000
Early & Mid oranges including Ambersweet	258,000	777,000	3,332,000
All grapefruit	500,000	377,000	666,000
Tangerines	140,000	218,000	350,000
K-Early Citrus Fruit	9,000	0	0
Tangelos	2,000	3,000	24,000

VEGETABLES: Planting and picking gained momentum as the ground dried out from recent rains and more fruit reached maturity. Cooler temperatures are delaying some fruit ripening with some harvesting delayed for a few days. Producers are harvesting tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, pickles, eggplant, snap beans, squash, okra and watermelons.

SNAP BEANS: Dade--Young acreage is in very good condition while older acreage is mostly good. Drier weather is helping slow mold growth with quality improving. Planting continues. Harvesting is active. West Central--The crop is in fair to good condition. Picking started with fair to good quality available. Color is good. North--Harvesting in the Santa Fe area is active with growers marketing some through the Belle Glade area. Southwest--Crop condition is good. Planting is active. East Coast--Crop condition is mostly good. Older plants continue to form pin beans. Young plants show good foliage growth and are blooming.

SWEET CORN: Zellwood--Harvesting is nearly done. Everglades, Lake Placid--Crop condition is rated good. Picking is expected to start in mid to late November with most acreage scheduled to start in early December. East Coast--Oldest plants are showing silks. Ear development is mostly good. Workers continue to prepare land for planting of winter crop acreage. Southwest--Crop condition is fair.

CABBAGE: Dade--Crop condition is good. Oldest plants continue to form heads. Planting continues.

CUCUMBERS, fresh market: Palmetto-Ruskin, Plant City--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvesting continues at a steady pace. Quality is fair to good with small, medium, large and extra large sizes available. Color is good. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Plant growth is slow. Planting remains steady. Harvesting is

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

mostly steady depending on the market. East Coast--The crop is in fair to mostly good condition. Planting is almost finished. Harvesting is gaining momentum with good quality and color available. Zellwood--Picking of pickle varieties for fresh market remains active with good quality available.

CUCUMBERS, pickles: Dade--Harvesting remains active. Quality is good. Volume is expected to increase over the next few weeks. West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Picking is increasing seasonally. Quality is fair. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting of a limited acreage is active. Picking of a light volume continues. Quality is good.

EGGPLANT: East Coast--Fruit sizing is good. Harvesting of regular and Italian varieties is active. Quality and color are good. Grade out for scars on the first cutting is light. Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is fair to good. U-Pic harvesting started with fair quality and medium sizes available. Color is fair to good. North--Harvesting is active. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting of a limited acreage continues. Dade--Crop condition is very good with plants recovering well from recent strong winds. Workers are staking as needed. Picking is expected to begin in two to three weeks.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE: Everglades--The crop is developing well.

LETTUCE: Everglades--Crop condition is good. Harvesting is expected to begin in late November with most acreage scheduled to start in early December.

OKRA: Dade--Harvesting remains active. Volume is decreasing seasonally with some acreage completely harvested.

BELL AND OTHER SWEET PEPPERS: Southwest--The crop is in fair to mostly good condition. Planting is steady. Picking of Bell varieties is variable depending on the market. Quality is good. Harvesting of other sweet varieties is steady with good quality available. East Coast--Cooler temperatures are aiding fruit sizing. Recent strong winds burned the tops of some plants with recovery expected. Picking is active with good quality and large sizes available. Workers are laying plastic and planting. West Central--Condition is fair to good. U-Pic harvesting is underway with fair quality available. Color is good. Sizes are mostly medium.

HOT PEPPERS: Southwest--Crop condition is good. Planting and harvesting remain steady. Quality is good. East Coast--Picking remains active with good quality available.

POTATOES: Southwest--Crop condition is good. Planting is steady. Dade--Planting gained momentum as fields dried out. West Central--Planting is expected to start in late November.

SQUASH: Southwest--Crop condition remains fair to good. Planting of a limited acreage continues. Harvesting is steady with good quality available. East Coast--Young acreage is in good condition. Harvesting of medium and fancy grades of zucchini and yellow varieties continues with good quality and color available. Workers are pulling plants from acreage completely picked. Dade--Young fields are in good condition. Planting is active. Harvesting is increasing seasonally. Quality is good. Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition is fair. U-Pic harvesting is gaining momentum. Quality is fair. Sizes are variable. Color is good. North--Picking is active.

STRAWBERRIES: Plant City, Dover, Floral City, Palmetto-Ruskin--Crop condition is rated good. Dade--Transplanting of U-Pic acreage is active.

TOMATOES: Quincy--Picking is active. Quality remains mostly good. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is steady. Cooler temperatures are slowing fruit sizing. Picking is slowly increasing. Quality is fair to good. Sizes are variable. Spraying, staking, pruning and tying are active. West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Fruit sizing is fair. Picking is increasing slowly. Quality is fair to good with 5x6 and 6x6 sizes available. Workers continue to tie as needed. East Coast--Fruit sizing is improving. Transplanting is active. Growers are making first and second picks with good quality available. Workers continue to make plant beds, lay plastic, stake, prune, tie and spray as needed. Dade--Condition is fair to good. Oldest plants are setting fruit. Planting is active. Workers are making plant beds, laying plastic, staking and spraying as needed. Growers repaired a small amount of plastic ripped by recent strong winds.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Southwest--Condition is rated fair to good. Planting is steady. Picking is underway with fair to good quality available. West Central--Crop condition is fair to good. Harvesting remains steady. Fruit quality and color are good. Sizes are normal.

PLUM TOMATOES: West Central--The crop is in fair to good condition. Harvesting is steady. Quality is good. Sizes and color are fair to good. Volume is fair. Southwest--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Planting remains steady. Picking is getting underway with some fruit not harvested due to poor quality.

WATERMELONS: Palmetto-Ruskin--Condition remains fair to good. Harvesting is slowing seasonally. Quality and color are good. Sizes are variable. North--Harvesting is nearing the end.

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