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# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 4, 2002

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**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Daily showers brought varying amounts of rain to the major stations during the week of July 28 through August 3. Rainfall totaled from less than half an inch at Pensacola to nearly three and a half inches at Orlando. Temperatures averaged within two degrees of normal. Daytime highs were in the 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 70s. The Panhandle and northern Peninsula received more rain on August 4 as Tropical Storm Bertha formed in the Gulf of Mexico and another low pressure center stalled off the northeastern Atlantic Coast. Pensacola recorded over an inch and Jacksonville reported nearly two inches of rain falling on August 4.

**FIELD CROPS:** Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are mostly adequate with scattered pockets of surplus supplies where rainfall has been abundant and scattered areas of short supplies in drier localities, especially for the southeastern Peninsula. Recent rains shortened the fungicide spraying interval for peanuts. A few peanut growers are combating tomato spotted wilt virus in some fields. Peanuts are in mostly good to excellent condition with 95 percent of the crop pegged. Last year, 94 percent of peanuts were pegged by this date. The five-year average of peanuts pegged by this date is 91 percent. Sugarcane is in good to excellent condition. Tobacco harvesting is progressing rapidly with a few growers nearly finished. Overall, about half of the tobacco crop is harvested. Some corn yields fell below usual due to southern leaf blight setting in before maturity. Cotton condition is good to excellent with some reports of a significant amount of squares falling off. Weed and worm populations are escalating rapidly in some wetter areas. Hay baling is active between showers.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	0	1	0	5	0	0
Short	15	1	2	10	7	13
Adequate	70	47	64	70	43	55
Surplus	15	51	34	15	50	32

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** The condition of pastures in the Panhandle, north and southwest areas is mostly good, with some pasture in the Panhandle in excellent condition. However, in the Panhandle, some locations have heavy infestations of armyworms in hayfields and pastures. In the central area, the condition of pasture ranges from poor to good. Stock ponds are below normal levels. Statewide, cattle are mostly in good condition.

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Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	10	0	0	0
Fair	5	10	15	5
Good	80	85	80	95
Excellent	5	5	5	0

**CITRUS:** There were a lot of thunderstorms and pounding rains in all areas of the State's citrus belt this week. The easterly and westerly winds and storms collided over central and southern Florida generating heavy rains with lightning during the afternoon hours for most of the week. Caretakers have had a difficult time applying their summer sprays because of the frequent daily downpours. Some fertilizer and herbicide applications had to be supplemented due to the rains. There continues to be an abundance of new growth on all well-cared-for trees of all ages. New crop fruit is progressing very well with good sizes on all regular bloom crops. June and later bloom fruit are showing on trees that were harvested later than normal and in some poorly cared for groves.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops. Some growers had to deep plow the middles of groves to move excessive water away from the tree's roots. Vines are being removed from trees before they cover the tree tops and shade the new fruit foliage. Dead trees are being pushed out and burned and replaced where new trees are available.

**VEGETABLES:** Rainfall delayed some tomato transplanting in the Quincy area. Miami-Dade County growers continue to harvest okra. Field preparations and planning for fall crop planting over the southern and central Peninsula continues.

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