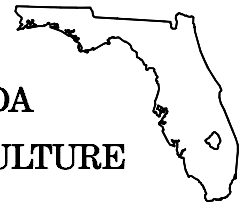




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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 11, 2002

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Tropical Storm Bertha dropped significant rains over the Panhandle early in the week of August 4 through 10 as the storm traveled the Gulf coast to Texas. The formation of Tropical Storm Cristobal off the east coast kept most Peninsula areas dry until the middle of the week when a front passing over from the north and outer rain bands from Cristobal caused showers and thunderstorms in many eastern, central and southern Peninsula localities. Rains from Cristobal helped ease dry conditions, especially over the southeastern Peninsula. Rainfall totaled from traces at Jacksonville to about three and a half inches at Avalon. Cloud cover and the frontal system kept temperatures normal to three degrees below at the major stations with several localities recording the coldest lows on record at the end of the week. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: The drier days earlier in the week left more areas with very short to short topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies, especially in the Big Bend area. However, most topsoil and subsoil moisture is adequate to surplus. The scattered rains left a few cotton and peanut fields flooded and producers irrigating some acreage in drier areas. Cotton and peanuts are in mostly good condition. Growers are combating fall armyworms, southern armyworms, velvet bean caterpillars and corn ear worms in some peanut fields. Insect infestations in cotton are fairly low with producers spraying for southern armyworms and other pests. Oldest cotton fields are blooming. Hay producers are spraying for fall armyworms. Recent rains reduced the quality of some hay. Hay and tobacco harvesting are active.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	0	0	5	5	0
Short	20	15	0	20	10	11
Adequate	59	70	77	55	70	68
Surplus	20	15	23	20	15	21

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide, pastures are generally in good condition, with seasonal armyworm damage showing up in the Panhandle and North. In the north, most pastures are in good condition, with some in fair condition due to short soil moisture. Flooding lowered the condition of pastures in the central and southern counties. Statewide, most cattle are in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	10	0	0
Fair	15	5	5	15
Good	80	80	90	80
Excellent	5	5	5	5

CITRUS: All areas of Florida's citrus belt had light to moderate showers on several afternoons this week. Virtually all citrus trees are in very good to excellent condition as a result of the daily summer rains and good grove care. There is an abundance of new growth on trees of all ages. Those groves that were hedged and topped in the spring have new growth showing on almost every limb and twig. New crop fruit is generally in very good condition and sizing well. There are varying quantities of June and later bloom on some groves. Very few fresh squeeze juice operations are open due to the lack of available fruit.

Caretakers are very active mowing, chopping and discing cover crops and removing vines that are covering the tops of trees. Hedging, topping and sprouting continues on an as needed basis. Summer fertilizations, herbicide treatments and sprays on fresh fruit crops are being applied in all areas. Dead trees are being removed and burned. Resets are being planted in the larger groves with irrigation.

VEGETABLES: Fall crop planting is becoming more active in southern Peninsula areas. Okra harvesting remains active in Miami-Dade County.

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