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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending November 17, 2002

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Rains during the week of November 10 through 16 delayed some field work in nearly all areas. Rainfall ranged from three quarters of an inch to about five inches with the heavier amounts falling over parts of the Panhandle and Big Bend areas, and the southwestern and central Peninsula. Temperatures during the week averaged one to four degrees above normal in the major cities with a cold front bringing near freezing temperatures to some Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities at the end of the period. Most daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s while most nighttime lows were in the 50s and 60s. At the end of the week, temperatures dipped into the 30s and 40s in most areas except for the extreme southern Peninsula. The cold crept south on Sunday, November 17 with Melbourne recording a low of 39 and West Palm Beach, a low of 45.

FIELD CROPS: The abundant rains during the week replenished topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies, especially over the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Topsoil and subsoil moisture is rated adequate to surplus over the Panhandle and mostly adequate over the Peninsula with pockets of short and very short supplies. Rainfall continued to reduce the quality and yield of cotton across the Panhandle with harvesting in some counties severely delayed. Peanut harvesting is at a standstill with only 97 percent of the crop dug, equal to last week. Last year, 99 percent of peanuts were dug by this date while the five-year average progress is also 99 percent dug. The recent rains lowered the quality and yield of some peanuts, too. Sugarcane harvesting was active between showers in the Everglades region.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	3	3	9	3	3	5
Short	25	25	24	22	25	26
Adequate	62	70	57	70	70	59
Surplus	10	2	10	5	2	10

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern counties, the warm season pasture grass is almost gone and cool season forages are not developed enough to graze. Some ranchers began feeding supplemental hay. In the central areas, the conditions of pasture and cattle is mostly fair. In the southern areas, the pasture is in good condition due to good growing conditions. The cattle are mostly in good condition. Statewide, cattle and calves are in fair to good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	0	0	0
Fair	50	35	35	35
Good	40	65	60	65
Excellent	5	0	5	0

CITRUS: Temperatures and moisture varied greatly this week. The first of the week was generally dry with only a few light scattered showers. The rains started Friday night and lasted until Sunday afternoon. Temperatures Saturday night and Sunday were only in the 60s and going lower Sunday night. The moisture was needed as these were just about the first significant rains of November. Most foliage on older trees has turned dark green. Some young trees are still showing a little new growth. Harvest of all early fruit is increasing rapidly as virtually all of the processors are open or plan to open this week. Many crops of Hamlins, Parson Browns and Ambersweet oranges have low acid levels and are going lower. Fresh fruit packers are busy shipping Navels and other early oranges, white and colored grapefruit, tangerines and tangelos for the Thanksgiving markets.

Caretakers are busy mowing, chopping and discing cover crops. Fresh fruit growers are still spraying a few crops for later shipments. Dead and dying trees are being pushed out and burned.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Nov 3	Nov 10	Nov 17
Navel oranges	169,000	261,000	172,000
Early & Mid oranges including Ambersweet	1,102,000	3,126,000	3,980,000
All grapefruit	693,000	856,000	542,000
Tangerines	221,000	312,000	208,000
Tangelos	25,000	39,000	76,000

VEGETABLES: The harvesting of fall acreage expanded as growers try to meet the Thanksgiving Day demand. Rains delayed some picking, especially around Immokalee. Vegetables available include snap beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, radishes, squash, tomatoes and very light supplies of Chinese cabbage, endive, escarole, strawberries and watermelons. Strawberry growers around Plant City and Dover welcomed the cold temperatures at the end of the week to help fruit maturation.

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