



Florida Agricultural Statistics Service  
 1222 Woodward Street  
 Orlando, Florida 32803  
 407 / 648-6013

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>



# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending January 19, 2003

Released 4:00 P.M.

January 21, 2003

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Cold conditions continued during the week of January 12 through 18. Temperatures averaged from five degrees below normal to ten below in the major cities. Lows varied from the 20s to the 50s with all northern, most central and a few southern Peninsula localities recording at least one low in the 20s. Highs were in the 50s, 60s and 70s. Most areas received only traces of rain for the week except from about a half inch to nearly an inch falling at Ft. Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. During the weekend of January 19 and 20, freezing temperatures dipped into the Everglades with some crop damage reported.

**FIELD CROPS:** Dry weather lowered soil moisture especially in the northern Peninsula and some localities of the Panhandle. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are rated short to mostly adequate. Very short soil moisture supplies are reported for the southeastern Peninsula, while some surplus still exists in the northeastern Peninsula. Sugarcane harvesting continues in the Everglades region with some leaf damage to new plantings and the ratoon crop caused by the cold temperatures. Plants are expected to recover slowly.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	1	1	1	1	0
Short	19	4	27	9	4	37
Adequate	75	85	72	85	80	63
Surplus	5	10	0	5	15	0

**VEGETABLES:** Freezing temperatures caused damage to some crops in the Everglades region with some minor supply shortages expected. Strawberry growers continued to run overhead sprinklers to form ice caps on plants as cold protection to save the plants and immature fruit during the colder nights. Vegetables available include snap beans, cabbage, celery, cilantro, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, miscellaneous herbs, parsley, peppers, radishes, squash, tomatoes, strawberries and very light supplies of carrots.

**FOLIAGE AND FLORICULTURE:** Producers of leatherleaf ferns, other cut greens and potted foliage in the Pierson and Apopka areas used sprinklers and heaters to help protect most plants from the recent cold temperatures with some loss expected.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** In the Panhandle, cold weather slowed growth of winter pastures for grazing. Hay supplies are adequate for the present. In the north, small grains for forage are doing satisfactorily with compacted soils limiting some root growth. In some locations the poor condition of pasture is due to drought. Some disease is present in the rye fields. In the central counties, the condition of pasture ranges from very poor to good with most in poor to fair condition due to the cold and

frost. In the south, range is poor to good with most range in good condition. Statewide, the condition of cattle and calves is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	5	0	0
Poor	30	15	5	5
Fair	20	35	35	20
Good	50	45	60	75
Excellent	0	0	0	0

**CITRUS:** A large mass of arctic air covered Florida's citrus belt Friday through Sunday night. Temperatures flirted with the freezing mark in most central and southern areas of the State. Some of the coldest areas had readings below 32 degrees. However, temperatures did not go low enough long enough to do any significant damage to citrus trees or fruit. There was widespread frost on Sunday and Monday killing most of the grasses and ground covers. The cold weather will help hold most citrus trees in a semi-dormant condition and prevent any widespread immediate flushing of new growth. Virtually all of the fruit in the coldest pockets and low lands has already been harvested. Harvesting for processing is very active in all areas. Some processing plants are limiting deliveries so that they may have an orderly flow of fruit for the next several weeks. Fresh fruit packing houses are also limiting their deliveries so that they do not have fruit waiting to be moved. Shippers and packers are waiting for an increase in export movement.

Caretakers are busy mowing, chopping and discing cover crops for fire protection and prior to harvesting crews arrival. Dead trees are being pushed out and burned where burn permits can be obtained. Hedging and topping continue in harvested groves. A few growers in the southern and coastal counties are applying fertilizers.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Jan 5	Jan 12	Jan 20
Navel oranges	113,000	166,000	130,000
Early & Mid oranges	8,114,000	8,220,000	8,331,000
Valencia oranges	0	1,000	2,000
All grapefruit	887,000	981,000	1,473,000
Early tangerines	28,000	8,000	3,000
Honey tangerines	108,000	147,000	122,000
Tangelos	226,000	275,000	217,000
Temples	23,000	44,000	66,000

To receive this report via e-mail, send message to [listserv@newsbox.usda.gov](mailto:listserv@newsbox.usda.gov) with the following message: **subscribeusda-fl-crop-weather your.name** An example: **subscribe usda-fl-crop-weather John Smith**. The report will be e-mailed automatically to your e-mail address each week.

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