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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending July 27, 2003

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Showers became more numerous during the week of July 20 through 26 as the remains of Tropical Depression six passed northward along the Atlantic Coast and redeveloped into Tropical Depression seven. Rainfall totaled from about a quarter inch in Miami to nearly four inches in West Palm Beach. Panhandle localities escaped the heavier showers with Jay recording only about a third inch for the week. Temperatures in the major cities averaged from one degree above normal in Miami to four degrees below in Pensacola. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Abundant rains and mild temperatures are boosting growth and development of peanuts and cotton in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Some low lying areas that are retaining water have reduced yield prospects. Peanuts are in mostly good to excellent condition with a small acreage reportedly in fair condition. Peanuts are ninety percent pegged compared with eighty-five percent last year and the five-year average of ninety percent pegged by this date. Tobacco producers continue to deliver contract poundage to the collection centers. Soil moisture in the Panhandle is adequate to mostly surplus. Northern Peninsula reporters show soil moisture mostly adequate to surplus. Most southern Peninsula soil moisture is adequate with spotty areas of surplus and short supplies depending on the amount of rain received.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	1	1	0	0	0
Short	4	19	3	5	5	8
Adequate	70	65	45	80	80	41
Surplus	25	15	51	15	15	51

VEGETABLES: Okra harvesting continues in Dade County. Producers delayed some fall crop planting until the weather became drier.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, most pasture is in good to excellent condition. However, pasture in some locations is in very poor condition due to too much rain. Excessive rain made haying virtually impossible in Washington County. In the northern counties, rainfall of the past week helped grass growth. In the central areas, armyworms have been spotted in Lake County. In the southwest, cattle are in good to excellent condition with pasture in fair to excellent condition. Horse producers are concerned over West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis as the mosquito population grows. Some armyworm problems were noted. The rain caused delays in fertilizer applications. Statewide, the condition of the cattle is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	0	0	0
Fair	10	10	5	15
Good	75	75	75	75
Excellent	15	15	20	10

CITRUS: Summer patterns of hot, humid weather continue with moderate and widely scattered rainfall. Thunderstorms were severe in some areas with the heaviest rainfall in the interior areas of the citrus belt. Sebring reported the most rain, almost 2.5 inches for the week, with all coastal areas receiving over 1.5 inches. Growers suspended irrigation in most areas as rainfall is sufficient at this time. In areas with heavy soils, growers are deep plowing middles to move water away from tree roots. Trees in all areas are reported in excellent condition. Fruit sizes are reported good at this time with golf ball size oranges and softball size grapefruit showing in all areas. Growers and caretakers continue with summer cultural practices including cover crop control, summer spraying for mites and insects, and dead tree removal.

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