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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 17, 2003

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WEATHER SUMMARY: A tropical wave, passing over the southern Peninsula before becoming Tropical Storm Erika in the Gulf, brought significant rainfall to many localities during the week of August 10 through 16. Rainfall ranged from traces at West Palm Beach to over five and a quarter inches at Tallahassee. Only about a quarter inch fell in Live Oak, Tavares and Umatilla. Bradenton, Jay, Marianna, Ona and the Loxahatchee area recorded about three and a half to three and three-quarters inches for the week. Temperatures averaged normal to two degrees below in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were mostly in the 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Rains continue to prevent pesticide spraying. Disease is increasing in some peanut fields but is mostly under control. Peanuts are in mostly good to excellent condition with wetter fields rated poor to fair. Nutrient leaching and standing water are causing some yellowing on cotton and causing some to stunt. The rainfall continues to delay hay making and corn harvesting. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies remain mostly adequate to surplus with very short to short supplies reported for drier areas along the southeastern coast and a few inland localities of the southern Peninsula.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	1	1	0	0	2
Short	1	1	20	1	2	27
Adequate	38	43	69	39	48	56
Surplus	60	55	10	60	50	15

VEGETABLES: Rains from the tropical wave delayed some fall crop planting in the central and southern Peninsula. Okra harvesting remains active in Dade County.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern counties, cattle and pastures are in good to excellent condition. Some low lands have very wet soil conditions. Sunshine is needed. In the central areas, excess soil moisture in some locations is reducing forage quality and providing increased mosquito challenges resulting in weight loss on cattle. Army worm damage is hurting some pastures. In the southeast, pasture and cattle are in good condition. Stock ponds are full. In the southwest, range conditions vary from very poor to excellent with the very poor areas suffering from excess moisture. Statewide, the condition of cattle is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	1	5	0	0
Poor	8	5	0	0
Fair	15	15	22	10
Good	61	55	68	70
Excellent	15	20	10	20

CITRUS: Hot and humid weather was interrupted this week by a fast moving tropical wave that crossed the lower citrus areas of the state on Thursday. Waves of heavy rainfall were experienced in all except the extreme northern citrus areas. Thunderstorms were severe but no damaging winds were reported. Some isolated groves with heavy soils in the western and central areas are experiencing soggy ground and where soil drainage is inadequate, tree stress is beginning to show. Southern and interior counties reported over two inches of rainfall for the week with some areas almost three. Growers are maintaining middles and lateral ditches to keep water moving away from tree roots. Summer spraying continues between rains with some fresh fruit crops receiving more sprays than normal to keep insect populations from building up. Fruit growth is reported good and the majority of trees are in excellent condition because of all the rainfall.

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