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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending October 12, 2003

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Warmer temperatures aided the germination of small grains and the maturation of late field crops and vegetables during the week of October 5 through 11. Temperatures averaged one to two degrees above normal in the major cities. Daytime highs were mostly in the 80s. Nighttime lows were mostly in the 60s and 70s. Tallahassee, Jay and Quincy recorded at least one low in the 50s. Virtually no rain fell over the west central and southern Peninsula. Alachua reported over three inches of rain for the week. Most localities reported one to two inches.

FIELD CROPS: Rains this week perked up crops and helped soften soils which had hardened and had made digging peanuts difficult. The amount of rain, however, was barely enough for drilling small grains. Cotton harvest is progressing with yields variable. Weekend rains halted harvest temporarily. Armyworms continue to be a problem in new growth hay fields. Peanuts in Marion County look very good. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies declined slightly with supplies rated mostly adequate to surplus. A few localities in southwestern Peninsula reported surplus soil moisture while soil moisture is rated short in a small area in the southeastern Peninsula and a few areas in the northern Panhandle.

Percentage of Peanuts Harvested To Date

This year	80
Last year	68
5 - year average	69

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	1	5	1	0	5
Short	19	14	19	17	10	20
Adequate	64	55	69	63	55	68
Surplus	16	30	7	19	35	7

VEGETABLES: The drier, warmer weather across the west central and southern Peninsula aided the maturation of oldest fields with harvesting slowly gaining momentum. Tomato picking around Quincy remained active with scattered rains delaying some progress. Other vegetables available include very light amounts of cucumbers, okra, peppers and squash.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, cool nights have slowed growth of warm season forages. Hay is now being fed. In Jackson and Jefferson counties, rain fell that was needed for planting winter small grains for grazing. In the northern counties, winter annual pastures are being planted now that it

has rained. Baker County reports mole cricket damage on pastures. In Taylor County, there is armyworm damage to cool season forages. In the Big Bend area, the condition of pasture is fair due to drought. In the west central areas, the condition of cattle and pasture is good following rain. In the southwest, the range is in good condition as it is drying out. Statewide, the condition of the cattle is poor to excellent, with most in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	1	1	0
Fair	30	20	15	10
Good	60	64	80	75
Excellent	5	15	4	15

CITRUS: Rainfall was widely scattered with some interior and southern areas receiving none. Coastal areas received light amounts with Ft. Pierce reporting almost 1.50 inches. Warmer temperatures returned with highs in the upper 80s accompanied by high humidity levels. Growers welcomed the dryer weather. Mowing and disking continues to control summer cover crop growth. Some summer spraying continues with 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 in sand hill locations are in excellent condition because of all the summer rainfall. Natural color break is showing on more crops including early tangerines, early oranges, and grapefruit. More fresh fruit packing houses are open with most planning to be open by the middle of October. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, and Fallglo tangerines.

Estimated boxes harvested week ended

Crop	Sep 28	Oct 5	Oct 12
Navel oranges	25,000	18,000	74,000
Early & Mid oranges	20,000	17,000	69,000
Grapefruit	61,000	121,000	334,000
Tangerines	78,000	84,000	89,000

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