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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending November 2, 2003

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Wetter, warmer weather during the week of October 26 through November 1 aided the growth and development of crops and pastures. Rainfall for the week ranged from about a quarter inch at Ft. Pierce, Lake Alfred, MacClenny, Pierson, Tavares and Tampa, to nearly four inches at Live Oak. Most localities reported from a half inch to one inch accumulation. A few localities in Jefferson, Madison and St. John's County received four to eight inches of rain over the past two weeks. Temperatures in the major cities averaged one to four degrees above normal. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 50s, 60s and 70s with several localities recording at least one low in the 40s.

FIELD CROPS: Rains slowed some cotton harvesting in the Panhandle early in the week with activity back on schedule by the end of the week. Cotton harvesting is about seventy percent finished in Santa Rosa County with yields averaging two or more bales per acre. Jackson County cotton yields are very good with some harvesting 70 percent done. Peanut digging is virtually done in Jackson County; statewide harvest is 98 percent completed. Scab infestations following abundant rains in July and August are lowering pecan yield prospects in Jefferson County. Some Panhandle producers are making the final cuts of hay. Sugarcane harvesting continues in the Everglades region. The rains during the week replenished soil moisture supplies, especially in the Panhandle. Most supplies are rated adequate with short to very short supplies reported for a few southeastern coastal, inland Peninsula and Panhandle localities and surplus supplies reported for some spots in Hendry, Madison and Okeechobee counties.

Percentage of Peanuts Harvested To Date

This year	98%
Last year	96%
5 - year average	96%

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	5	2	2	5	3
Short	14	35	23	13	30	28
Adequate	83	59	68	80	60	66
Surplus	2	1	7	5	5	3

VEGETABLES: Strawberry transplanting is nearly finished in the Plant City area with most picking for the holiday markets to start in late November. Snap bean picking is increasing slowly as more acreage reaches maturity. Rain delayed some tomato picking around Quincy early in the week with most activity on schedule by the end. Frequent rains in the Homestead area reduced the effectiveness of pesticides which increased insect populations. Other vegetables available include sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, squash and watermelons.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, permanent pasture condition is in seasonal decline. A slow drizzle rain helped pasture and gave needed moisture for recently planted small grain winter grazing. Small grain planting continues. Much of the oats and rye winter forage is up and growing well, helped by cooler temperatures. Most producers are making the final cutting of hay. Armyworm pressure was light this season. In the northern counties, rain early in the week was great for planting winter forage. Ranchers are seeing problems with armyworms and grassworms. In Taylor County, some small grain forage was damaged by heavy rain. Statewide, the condition of cattle is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	5	0	5
Fair	30	35	20	20
Good	70	50	70	65
Excellent	0	10	10	10

CITRUS: Rainfall occurred, although widely scattered, in most of the citrus producing areas of the state. Some areas received only trace amounts while others received over 1.5 inches. Windy weather the last of the week dehydrated surface soils and trees but light rain returned over most areas as a low pressure system moved across south Florida. Most growers have returned to frequent irrigation in the sand hill locations to maintain surface moisture levels and to keep fruit growing. Warmer temperatures prevailed all week. Fall cultural practices include limited spray applications in some groves with fresh fruit crops. Cover crop control and dead tree removal and replacement are also occurring in some groves. Fruit growth is reported good and the majority of trees in sand hill locations are in excellent condition. Natural color break is showing on all crops of early tangerines, early oranges, and grapefruit. Most fresh fruit packing houses are open. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, Sunburst tangerines, and Nova and Orlando tangelos. Several processing plants are receiving eliminations and others are opening this week or next to receive field run fruit.

Estimated boxes harvested week ended

Crop	Oct 19	Oct 26	Nov 2
Navel oranges	127,000	162,000	158,000
Early and Mid oranges	111,000	421,000	1,356,000
Grapefruit	559,000	688,000	750,000
Tangerines	110,000	182,000	244,000
Tangelos	0	3,000	3,000

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National Agricultural Statistics Service

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