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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending November 23, 2003

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Cooler temperatures were felt in most areas during the week of November 16 through 22. Temperatures averaged normal to five degrees above in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 40s, 50s and 60s with MacClenny and Brooksville recording at least one low in the 30s. Rainfall ranged from none at Tavares and Umatilla, to one and three quarters inch at Quincy. Most Peninsula localities reported a half inch or less of rain for the week.

FIELD CROPS: Cotton harvesting in Santa Rosa County is over 90% complete with showers delaying some progress. Peanut digging is virtually done. Sugarcane harvesting remains active in the Everglades region. Rains in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula increased soil moisture with supplies rated mostly adequate. Light showers over the central and southern Peninsula maintained most soil moisture supplies at adequate levels. Only the southeastern coastal area and a few spots in the northern Peninsula reported very short to short soil moisture supplies. Some localities in Okaloosa, Seminole and Brevard counties reportedly have surplus topsoil moisture.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	0	1	1	0	1
Short	19	20	11	19	14	19
Adequate	79	80	78	79	84	71
Surplus	1	0	10	1	2	9

VEGETABLES: Potato field preparation and planting are active in the Hastings area. Growers continued harvesting to help meet the holiday demand. Harvesting of leafy crops in the Everglades and central Peninsula areas is getting underway. Tomato picking around Quincy is nearly done while harvesting in central and southern Peninsula areas is increasing seasonally. Other vegetables available include snap beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, squash and watermelons.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide, pasture is in good condition with several locations hurt by drought. In the Panhandle and northern areas, winter forage crops are mostly planted with a few ranchers still sowing. Earlier planted small grain forage has received enough moisture to grow well, and some will be ready for grazing by Thanksgiving Day. Bahia grass is playing out seasonally, though warm daytime

temperatures are permitting some grass growth. Patchy frost is reducing grass growth. In the west central areas, pasture greened up following light rains. Southwest, the condition of most of the cattle and range is good. Statewide, most of the cattle are in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	5	5	0
Fair	25	35	15	35
Good	65	55	70	60
Excellent	5	5	10	5

CITRUS: Very limited rainfall occurred in the citrus producing areas of the state as a cold front moved through in the middle of the week. Only trace amounts occurred in most areas with up to one half inch reported by some stations. Most growers are irrigating in the sand hill groves to maintain surface moisture levels. Warmer temperatures prevailed early in the week and then turned cooler as the front passed through the State. Cover crop control ahead of harvest and dead tree removal and replacement continues. Fruit growth is reported good and the majority of trees are in excellent condition. Growers and packers report good natural color and excellent external appearance on 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. All processing plants are reported open and receiving eliminations and field run fruit. As more harvesting crews arrive, volume for processing is expected to increase.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Nov 9	Nov 16	Nov 23
Navel oranges	180,000	189,000	264,000
Early and Mid oranges	2,856,000	4,338,000	5,340,000
Grapefruit	700,000	438,000	893,000
Tangerines	291,000	315,000	308,000
Tangelos	11,000	25,000	35,000

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