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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending May 31, 2004

Released 4:00 P.M.

June 1, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: Dry, hot weather increased the danger of wildfire during the week of May 23 through 29. Virtually no rain fell during the period with only traces reported in West Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale and Ft. Pierce. Temperatures in the major cities averaged from normal at Miami to five degrees above at Jacksonville. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s. A few northern localities reported at least one low in the 50s. On Tuesday, May 31, temperatures in some east coast localities reached 99 degrees.

FIELD CROPS: Most cotton fields are in good condition. Some producers are waiting on rain before finishing peanut planting. A few others are waiting until small grain harvesting is finished before planting peanuts as a double crop. Hay making is in full swing in Washington County. The dry weather caused soil moisture to drop with most supplies rated very short to short. A few spots in Seminole County still have surplus moisture.

PERCENTAGE OF PEANUTS HARVESTED TO DATE

This year	75%
Last year	86%
5 - year average	84%

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	30	13	5	15	10	4
Short	55	50	23	70	50	15
Adequate	14	37	68	14	40	77
Surplus	1	0	4	1	0	4

VEGETABLES: Hot temperatures are bringing most harvesting to an end in the southern and central Peninsula. Some truck shortages are hindering the movement of potatoes from the central Peninsula and Hastings areas. Most blueberry, snap bean and squash harvesting is finished for the season. Other vegetables and non-citrus fruit available includes cantaloupe, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, radishes, tomatoes and watermelons.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, north, and central counties, pasture condition is declining rapidly due to the dry, hot weather. Pasture on high ground is especially stressed while pasture on bottom land is still looking pretty good. Cattle condition ranges from poor to good. In the south, pasture condition ranges from very poor to good with most fair to good. Throughout the State cattle are being fed supplemental hay with supplies dwindling in several areas. Statewide, cattle condition is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	5	5	1	1
Poor	30	15	5	4
Fair	40	45	30	40
Good	25	35	63	50
Excellent	0	0	1	5

CITRUS: Hot, dry weather continued this week in the citrus belt with daytime high temperatures reaching into the mid and sometimes high 90s in several areas. Growers in all areas report needing rain as soil moisture levels declined dramatically. All stations reported no rainfall all week. Irrigation is being used extensively to maintain soil moisture levels in this important fruit set period. Water restrictions are in force in some locations and several major flood canals on the east coast are too low to pump water from. Cultural practices are continuing including fertilizations, hedging, and the resetting of young trees. Most fresh fruit packinghouses are closed for the season but several continue packing Valencia oranges and decreasing amounts of colored grapefruit. Processing plants are receiving and processing fruit with weekly volumes of grapefruit declining. Valencia orange weekly harvest is declining as plants close for the season.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	May 16	May 23	May 31
Navel oranges	1,000	1,000	0
Valencia oranges	8,452,000	7,887,000	6,774,000
Grapefruit	329,000	265,000	89,000
Honey tangerines	9,000	1,000	1,000

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