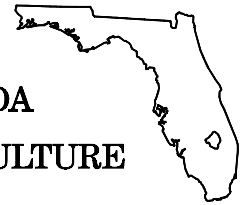




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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending October 17, 2004

Released 4:00 P.M.

October 18, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: Mostly warm, dry conditions allowed vegetable and field crop harvesting to progress at a normal pace with scattered showers in some areas during the week of October 11 through 17. Temperatures averaged normal at Miami, while the other major stations were one to three degrees below normal. Daytime highs were 80s with a few reports in the 70s. Miami recorded at least one daytime high in the 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 50s, 60s and 70s. Several localities in the Panhandle and the northern and central Peninsula recorded at least one low in the 40s. Most rainfall fell over the Panhandle and southern Peninsula localities in Balm, Bradenton, Homestead, Marianna, Pensacola, Quincy, and Tallahassee with totals ranging from over one inch to over six inches. Recorded precipitation in other localities ranged from less than a quarter of an inch to almost one inch.

FIELD CROPS: Peanut quality is down due to the effects of the recent storms. Some peanut digging slowed because of rains during the latter part of the week with progress reportedly behind normal in some localities due to earlier hurricanes and more recent storms. Cotton picking is active with Washington County growers reporting some loss due to Hurricane Ivan. Drier conditions for most of the week allowed producers to make hay. Mostly drier weather during early-to-mid week allowed some soils to dry. Soil moisture supplies are rated mostly adequate to surplus with some very short to short supplies reported in parts of Washington, Jackson, Gadsden and Wakulla counties, as well as spots over the southeastern Peninsula.

PERCENTAGE OF PEANUTS HARVESTED TO DATE

This year	80%
Last year	87%
5 - year average	83%

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
<i>Percent</i>						
Very short	1	1	1	1	1	0
Short	9	4	15	9	4	19
Adequate	70	55	76	70	45	68
Surplus	20	40	8	20	50	13

VEGETABLES: Fall crop harvesting in central and southern Peninsula areas continued to increase slowly. Tomato picking remained active around the Quincy area. In addition, growers around Quincy assessed the damage and reportedly lost up to 50 percent of the tomatoes due to wind damage from recent hurricanes. Tomato harvesting is getting started in central and southern Peninsula areas. Dade County growers

continue to cut okra. Snap bean, pepper and eggplant harvesting are getting underway. Strawberry picking is scheduled to get underway by early-to-mid November. Sweet corn picking is slowly gaining momentum in the Everglades region. Producers are marketing very light supplies of pickles, squash and watermelons.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern areas, planting of small grains for winter forage is moving forward. Cool nights slowed growth of warm season forages. Haymakers got up some good hay this week. Pasture condition was mostly good in all areas. However, in the central and southwest areas there is still a lot of pasture flooded. Statewide, the condition of cattle was mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	5	1	0	0
Poor	15	2	5	0
Fair	35	66	30	55
Good	40	25	60	35
Excellent	5	6	5	10

CITRUS: Rainfall was widely scattered with some eastern and western coastal areas receiving more than an inch. The center of the State was drier, with most stations reporting about a half-inch or less. Cooler temperatures came through towards the end of the week, dipping to the low 50s by Friday in most areas. Soggy ground in low lying groves with heavy soils in the western and central areas still continues to be a problem. Growers are maintaining middles and lateral ditches to keep water moving away from tree roots. Mowing and discing continue to control summer cover crop growth. Trees are still recovering from storms in many areas. Natural color break is showing on more crops including early tangerines, early oranges and grapefruit. Only about a dozen fresh fruit packing houses are open with three processing plants also running. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit and Fallglo tangerines.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Oct 3	Oct 10	Oct 17
Early & Mid oranges	0	9,000	24,000
Navel oranges	0	3,000	26,000
Grapefruit	9,000	40,000	77,000
Tangerines	19,000	49,000	90,000

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