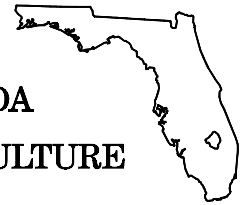




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# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending October 31, 2004

Released 4:00 P.M.

November 1, 2004

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Dry, warm conditions prevailed across the Peninsula and parts of the Panhandle localities during the week of October 25 through 31. The western Panhandle received the most precipitation with nearly an inch falling in Jay. No rainfall was recorded in several localities statewide. Precipitation in the few localities getting storms, ranged from less than a tenth of an inch to almost an inch of rainfall. Temperatures in the major cities averaged one to nine degrees above normal while West Palm Beach was one degree below normal. Daytime highs were in the 80s. Nighttime lows ranged in the 50s and 60s.

**FIELD CROPS:** Peanut digging neared the end in most Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities. In Santa Rosa County, cotton growers finished picking about half of the crop. In Jefferson County, most cotton is lying down and matted from storms which will make picking difficult and inefficient. Warm weather caused most deciduous nursery stock to hold foliage in some northern Peninsula and Panhandle areas. Cool mornings and hot afternoons made hay baling difficult in northern Peninsula localities. Sugarcane harvesting is getting underway around Lake Okeechobee. The recent low rainfall caused soil moisture to dry out with most localities rating supplies short to adequate. A few areas reported surplus soil moisture in Madison, Union, Marion and Lake Okeechobee counties. Less than one percent of soil moisture was rated very short, mainly along the extreme southeastern coast.

### PERCENTAGE OF PEANUTS HARVESTED TO DATE

This year	94%
Last year	97%
5 - year average	96%

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
<i>Percent</i>						
Very short	0	1	2	0	0	3
Short	20	11	20	5	3	18
Adequate	70	55	76	80	64	74
Surplus	10	33	2	15	33	5

**VEGETABLES:** Fall crop harvesting gained momentum in central and southern Peninsula localities. Tomato harvesting continued around Quincy and began in southern Peninsula areas. Okra harvesting continued in Dade County. Union County growers expect to begin planting collard, mustard, and turnips by late December. Producers marketed sweet corn, cucumbers, squash, and watermelons with light supplies available. Harvesting of snap beans, eggplant and peppers is getting underway.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** Statewide, the condition of range and pasture is mostly fair. In the Panhandle, land preparation and small grain seeding is well underway for winter grazing. In the north, cool season forages are being planted. Winter grazing that has been planted needs some rain. In the central areas, pasture condition is fair to excellent. Small grains for winter pasture are being planted where fields are dry enough to work. In the southwest, pasture is poor to good, with short soil moisture hurting grass growth in several counties. Statewide, the condition of the cattle is mostly fair.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	15	20	5	0
Fair	45	25	50	30
Good	39	50	40	60
Excellent	1	5	5	10

**CITRUS:** The weather for the last week has been hot and dry with essentially no rain being reported in the citrus producing areas. The west coast station reported small amounts of rainfall accumulating to less than a tenth of an inch. For the second week in a row, above average temperatures have been predominant throughout, with moderately cool temperatures in the evening and morning hours. The lack of rain is adding to the groves continuation of drying in both the trees and surface soils. Some growers are beginning to irrigate to compensate for the lack of precipitation and warm weather over the past few weeks. Fruit growth is reported slow, with natural color break showing on all crops of early tangerines, early oranges, and grapefruit. Still only about half of the fresh fruit packing houses are open with only about three processing plants running. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, Fallglo tangerines and small amounts of Sunburst tangerines.

### ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Oct 17	Oct 24	Oct 31
<i>In Thousands of 1-3/5 Bu. Boxes</i>			
Early & Mid oranges	48	62	97
Navel oranges	33	58	80
Grapefruit	96	115	163
Tangerines	123	127	103

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