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# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending November 21, 2004

Released 4:00 P.M.

November 22, 2004

**FLORIDA  
AGRICULTURE**



**WEATHER SUMMARY:** The week of November 15 through 21 was mostly warm and dry. Most major stations reported temperatures slightly above normal for the week; however, West Palm Beach was two degrees below normal. Daytime highs were in 70s and 80s. Nighttime lows were mostly in the 40s, 50s, and 60s with at least one low recorded in the 30s in some Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities. Light showers brought over one inch of precipitation to Marianna while other areas across the State received barely an inch of rainfall. Most localities recorded less than a quarter of an inch of rain for the week.

**FIELD CROPS:** Topsoil and subsoil moisture is mostly short to adequate with some central and southern Peninsula localities reporting surplus supplies. Very short moisture supplies were reported for Broward County. Washington County growers continue to harvest cotton and expect to complete harvesting within two weeks. Rains are needed to finish planting small grains in Washington County. Some cotton yields in Jackson County were lower due to disease. Sugarcane harvesting remains active in the Everglades area. Peanut condition is 99 percent finished compared to 100 percent for acreage dug by this date last year and the five-year average of 99 percent.

### PERCENTAGE OF PEANUTS HARVESTED TO DATE

This year	99%
Last year	100%
5 - year average	99%

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	1	0	1	0	0	1
Short	24	52	19	18	35	18
Adequate	72	47	79	70	64	80
Surplus	3	1	1	12	1	1

**VEGETABLES:** Harvesting to meet the Thanksgiving demand continued at an active pace. Warm days and mostly cool nights aided crop development which allowed field work to progress on schedule. Potato field preparation and planting are active in the Hastings area. Strawberry harvesting around the Plant City region is increasing even though planting was delayed due to hurricanes. Tomato picking around Quincy is virtually complete while central and southern Peninsula areas are increasing seasonally. Celery growers expect to begin harvesting by early December. Producers are picking snap beans, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, pickles, and squash. Light supplies of sweet corn, okra, radishes, and watermelons are available.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** In the Panhandle and northern areas, production of warm season grass is declining seasonally. Planting of small grain for winter forage continues. Rain is needed to finish planting of cool season forage. Pastures are getting dry and grass has really started to slow down. Cows are starting to calve and cow condition is down due to calving and poor quality grass. In the central and southwest, range condition is poor to good, with most in good condition. Some locations in Okeechobee County have pastures flooded. Statewide, the condition of cattle and calves is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	20	10	5	0
Fair	35	55	40	25
Good	44	34	54	65
Excellent	1	1	1	10

**CITRUS:** Overall, temperatures were slightly above average in the citrus producing areas. Small amounts of rainfall were recorded across the citrus belt, with no significant amount in any given area. Color is improving on early tangerines, early oranges, some mids, and grapefruit. Fruit droppage of most varieties appears to be evident in hurricane affected areas. Horticultural practices in response to the effects of the hurricanes include hedging and topping, and adjusted fertilizing practices. Removing of completely damaged trees and the recovery of partially defoliated trees is also taking place in areas where hurricane damage occurred. Minimal irrigation practices on surface roots and ground is occurring where dry conditions over the last few weeks have been prevalent. About half of the fresh fruit packing houses are open with a few more processing plants opening during the last week. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, Fallglo and Sunburst tangerines and small amounts of Tangelos.

### ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Nov 07	Nov 14	Nov 21
	<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>		
Early & Mid oranges	134	160	1,180
Navel oranges	104	101	122
Grapefruit	309	312	332
Tangerines	142	201	221
Tangelos	3	9	59

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