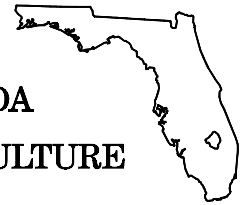




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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending December 12, 2004

Released 4:00 P.M.

December 13, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: Cool and mostly dry weather prevailed throughout the period of December 6 through 12 with light showers in some localities. Temperatures at the major stations averaged four to nine degrees above normal. Frost and light freezes occurred across many areas from the Panhandle to the southern Peninsula. Nighttime lows were in the 30s to 60s. Lows in the central and southern Peninsula localities were mostly in the 50s and 60s; however, near the end of the week light showers preceded a cold front which caused temperatures to dip into the 30s and 40s. In the Panhandle and northern Peninsula, some localities experienced temperatures below freezing. Daily highs were in the 70s and 80s. MacClenny recorded over one and half inches of rainfall while over three inches of rain fell at Pensacola. Many localities received less than an tenth of an inch of precipitation while a few got almost one inch of rainfall for the week.

FIELD CROPS: Flower and foliage producers prepared heaters and overhead irrigation to provide protection to plants from cold temperatures at the end of the week. Nursery stock in Jefferson County was still holding leaves with dormancy delayed. Small grain growth is nearly ideal in Washington County. Clear weather kept sugarcane harvesting progress on schedule in the Everglades. Showers over some Panhandle, Big Bend and northern Peninsula localities replenished topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies with most supplies statewide rated short to adequate. Holmes, Brevard, Okeechobee and Union counties reported a few spots of surplus soil moisture while St. Lucie County reported a few areas of very short soil moisture.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	7	15	10	7	13	6
Short	22	20	16	10	13	16
Adequate	68	52	73	75	60	77
Surplus	3	13	1	8	14	1

VEGETABLES: Harvesting was very active to meet the holiday demand. Cool and mostly dry weather in the major vegetable producing areas allowed field work to progress normally. Cooler temperatures aided strawberry development. Producers marketed snap beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, squash and tomatoes. Light supplies of endive, escarole, lettuce, okra and radishes were also available.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, small grain forage has ideal growing conditions. Many small-grain pastures are now being grazed. In the north and central areas, cool season forages established six weeks ago are doing well. Small grains for forage are still being

planted. Warm season pastures are still hanging on but grass growth is slight. Supplemental hay is being fed. Cattle condition in the north and Panhandle is good to excellent. In the central and southwest, pasture condition is poor to good due to drought and the seasonal decline in permanent pasture grass. Statewide, the condition of the cattle is poor to good with most in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	25	15	10	0
Fair	35	40	45	45
Good	40	45	40	40
Excellent	0	0	5	15

CITRUS: Small traces of rainfall fell this week in all citrus producing areas in conjunction with a cold front that moved through the State on Saturday and Sunday. All reporting stations recorded less than one-half an inch, while the east coast, northern and southern stations reported less than one-tenth of an inch. With the exception of the cold front, temperatures were above normal levels for the week, with highs in the 80s and lows in the 50s on most mornings. Clean-up is still continuing in hurricane affected areas. Fall cultural practices include cover crop control, dead tree removal and replacement. Most growers continue to irrigate in areas where the rainfall has been sparse. Growers are continuing to mow, with herbiciding finishing up in many areas. Color break on late oranges is only sporadic at this time, with fruit maturities running slightly behind normal. The majority of the fresh fruit packing houses and processing plants are running. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navels and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, Sunburst tangerines and increasing amounts of tangelos.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Nov 28	Dec 05	Dec 12
	<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>		
Early & Mid oranges	1,784	3,785	N/A
Navel oranges	103	246	N/A
Grapefruit	246	339	N/A
Tangerines	138	218	N/A
Tangelos	39	112	N/A

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