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# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending March 13, 2005

Released 4:00 P.M.

March 14, 2005

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Frequent showers crossing from the Panhandle down to the southern Peninsula brought moisture to all areas during the week of March 7 through 13. Rainfall ranged from about a quarter inch at Jay to over three inches at West Palm Beach. Immokalee received over two inches of rainfall while a few other localities recorded over an inch of rainfall. Several areas recorded over a quarter of an inch of precipitation to nearly an inch of rainfall for the week. Temperatures ranged from three to seven degrees below normal in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 60s and 70s with many areas recording at least one high in the 80s. Nighttime lows were mainly in the 40s and 50s with some localities reporting at least one low in the 30s.

**FIELD CROPS:** Sugarcane harvesting is slowing seasonally in the Everglades area. Showers slowed some ground preparations for planting in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Rainfall increased soil moisture in most areas with supplies rated mostly adequate to surplus except for some spots of very short to short moisture in Washington, Jackson, Leon, Jefferson, Hernando, Indian River, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward and Dade counties.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	1	2	1	1	1	0
Short	6	11	25	12	10	26
Adequate	78	84	70	72	84	68
Surplus	15	3	4	15	5	6

**VEGETABLES:** Some field activity was delayed due to showers. Producers marketed snap beans, cabbage, celery, potatoes, strawberries, sweet corn and tomatoes. Light supplies of cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, peppers, radishes and squash were also available.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** In the Panhandle, pasture improved following nice rains. In the northern areas, pasture grass began to emerge due to warmer temperatures. The warm weather, combined with some moisture, has the winter grazing finally growing. The Bahia grass pasture is starting to green up. In the southwest, pasture condition is good. Statewide, condition of cattle is fair to good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	5	5	5	5
Poor	10	20	10	15
Fair	50	45	40	40
Good	35	30	45	40
Excellent	0	0	0	0

**CITRUS:** For the third week in a row, all citrus producing counties recorded some rainfall. Immokalee recorded above average rainfall at over two inches; Lake Alfred recorded the least at one third of an inch. All areas recorded daytime temperatures in the upper 70s, and nighttime temperatures in the low 40s. Scattered bloom was reported across the State from pencil eraser size bloom buds to blossoms erupting, primarily on weaker trees. Abundant feathery new growth appeared on most varieties with generous flush coming on strong in many areas. Most growers are finishing or have finished mowing, hedging and topping. They are now applying fertilizers, copper sprays and herbicides. Early and mid orange harvesting is winding down with increasing amounts of late oranges (Valencias) being picked primarily for processing. Tangelos are still being picked for processing while white and colored grapefruit are being picked for both fresh and processing.

### ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Feb 27	Mar 06	Mar 13
	<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>		
Early & Mid oranges	3,662	2,453	1,163
Navel oranges	4	0	0
Late oranges	205	690	1,424
Grapefruit	578	606	543
Tangelos	47	49	30
Sunburst tangerines	1	6	1
Honey tangerines	117	119	116
Templets	80	105	26

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