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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending April 10, 2005

Released 4:00 P.M.

April 11, 2005

**FLORIDA
 AGRICULTURE**



WEATHER SUMMARY: Significant showers crossing from the Panhandle down to the southern Peninsula slowed some field activities throughout the week of April 4 through 9. Statewide, rainfall ranged from traces at Avalon to over seven inches in Pensacola. Most southern Peninsula rainfall ranged from over a half an inch at Bradenton to over five inches at Miami with several locations receiving an inch to two inches. Several areas throughout the central and northern Peninsula received rains that ranged from under a tenth of an inch at Tavares to over three inches in Tallahassee. Ocklawaha and Putnam Hall received over two and a quarter inches of rainfall. Several areas of the Panhandle recorded substantial showers with most areas receiving one to four inches of rainfall. Temperatures for the week at the major stations averaged around normal in Jacksonville and Daytona Beach; however, at other stations temperatures were one to three degrees below normal. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 50s and 60s with several localities recording at least one low in the 40s. Tallahassee reported at least one nighttime low in the 30s.

FIELD CROPS: The ample rains over the Panhandle again delayed most land preparation and planting due to soggy fields with flooding reported in many localities. Recent heavy rains caused a lot of soil erosion in Jefferson County. Drier weather in scattered localities of the northern, central and southern Peninsula allowed field work to remain on schedule. Soil moisture supplies remained adequate to surplus in most Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas. Lesser amounts of rain over most central and southern parts kept soil moisture supplies adequate except for Citrus and Hernando counties, which reported short supplies, and some spots of the southeastern coast where supplies remained very short.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
<i>Percent</i>						
Very short	1	1	14	0	1	9
Short	9	3	41	2	4	44
Adequate	60	50	44	78	50	47
Surplus	30	46	1	20	45	0

VEGETABLES: Wet conditions delayed some field activity and planting during the week. Central Peninsula producers picked blueberries with very light supplies available. Strawberry harvesting continued to slow seasonally around Plant City. Some early potato digging was curtailed by rains. Growers continued to harvest snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, potatoes, radishes, squash, and tomatoes. Light supplies of endive, escarole, and lettuce were also available.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and Northern areas, pastures are fair to excellent. Some pasture is flooded from recent heavy rains. Permanent pasture is starting to grow as temperatures increase. Cattle condition is poor to excellent. In the central areas, good rains this spring resulted in good pasture condition. Cattle condition is fair to good. Pastures in the southern areas are mostly good. Statewide, most of the cattle are in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	5	0	10
Fair	25	35	20	40
Good	60	60	75	50
Excellent	10	0	5	0

CITRUS: This past week had fairly mild weather in citrus producing areas, with temperatures reaching the mid 80s during most days in all areas, and dropping down at night to the low to mid 50s. There was some rainfall recorded on Thursday morning in all areas. Totals were between less than one tenth of an inch in Tavares to almost two inches in Ft. Pierce. Oranges and grapefruit are in full bloom in all counties with petal drop in some. Growers continue to conduct post harvest herbiciding, fertilizing, aerial spraying and grove maintenance clean-up. Early and mid orange harvesting is relatively complete. Harvest of late oranges (Valencias) continues in full swing with most of the fruit being picked for processing. White and colored grapefruit harvesting, being picked for both fresh and processing, is decreasing. Tangelo harvesting is complete and Temple harvesting is winding down. Honey tangerine harvest slowed down some, but they are still being picked, primarily for the fresh market.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Mar 27	Apr 03	Apr 10
<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>			
Early & Mid oranges	84	18	4
Late oranges	3,958	4,990	5,297
Grapefruit	426	406	394
Tangelos	4	0	0
Honey tangerines	118	104	99
Temples	10	6	4

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