

DRIER WEATHER LETS GROWERS COMBAT DISEASE, INSECTS

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Daily scattered storms added varying amounts of moisture to several localities during the week of August 15 through 21. No rainfall was recorded at Hastings, Kenansville, Lake Alfred, Live Oak and Palmdale. Other rainfall amounts ranged from traces at Alachua to over six inches in Apopka. Localities in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula received the least precipitation with most areas recording less than an inch. Jacksonville received over one and half inches of rainfall and many other areas in the central and southern Peninsula received one to two inches. Hot, humid weather prevailed throughout the week with average temperatures ranging from near normal to four degrees above normal at the major stations. Some major stations broke record highs with Orlando and Tallahassee recording a weekly average of 96. Tampa and West Palm Beach both reached record highs last week with an average of 93. Most other stations recorded daily highs in the low to upper 90s. Evening temperatures were mostly in the 70s with a few areas recording at least one low in the 60s.

FIELD CROPS: Drier conditions over the northern Peninsula and in some parts of the Panhandle allowed producers to apply pesticides to crops as needed. Peanut condition was rated one percent poor, twenty-five percent fair, fifty-four percent good and twenty percent excellent which showed only a slight change from last week. White mold and tomato spotted wilt virus started to appear in some Washington County fields. Rust was noticed in sentinel plots of soybeans in Jefferson County but no outbreaks were reported, so far, in commercial fields. Recent excessive rainfall greatly reduced hay production in Washington County, lowering both quantity and quality. Some pecan trees in Jefferson County started defoliation early due to scab and aphid infestations. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies remained about the same as last week with scattered rains continuing to leave some localities dry and others soaked.

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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	0
Short	13	8	10	14	6	5
Adequate	65	67	49	61	65	58
Surplus	21	25	40	25	29	37

VEGETABLES: Land preparation for fall crop planting was very active in the southern Peninsula. Growers in Highlands County started to plant squash and a limited acreage of watermelons. Planting of eggplant, peppers and tomatoes in the Immokalee region started. Dade County producers prepared land with squash planting expected to begin in early to mid-September. Okra harvesting remained active in Dade County with growers planning to plant new fields in late August or early September.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pasture and cattle are in fair to excellent condition. Bahia pastures on deep sands show drought stress. Permanent pasture forage quality dropped. In the northern areas, pasture and cattle are in fair to good condition. There is some damage from armyworms. In the central areas, pasture is in fair to good condition with some pasture flooded. In the southwest, cattle and pasture conditions ranges from poor to good. The conditions are poor in some areas due to drought and in others from flooded pasture. Statewide, the condition of cattle ranges from poor to fair 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	10	10	5	5
Fair	30	25	20	20
Good	50	60	60	70
Excellent	10	5	15	5

CITRUS: August 15-21 was hot most of the week with near record highs in several citrus regions across the State. Six of seven stations recorded temperatures at over 95 degrees with the highest in Lake Alfred at over 97 degrees. Rainfall ranged from less than a tenth of an inch in Ft. Pierce to almost an inch and a half in the center of the State. New crop fruit is in very good condition and sizing well with little evidence of off or late bloom. Drying out of trees and soil due to the consistent hot weather prompted growers to begin irrigation. Practices including fertilizing, spraying, and young tree care took place in most areas. Grove access is limited in some areas due to the canker eradication program.

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