

Weather Crop Report

Week ending December 25, 2005

COOL TEMPERATURES SLOWED SOME VEGETABLE GROWTH

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Citrus and vegetable harvesting progressed rapidly as several central and southern Peninsula areas received no significant rainfall during the week of December 19 through 25. Rainfall for the week ranged from none to about an inch at Marianna. Cloud cover kept temperatures in the major cities one to seven degrees below normal. Daytime highs averaged in the 50s, 60s and 70s while nighttime lows averaged in the 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s. Several Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities reported frosts and freezes during the week with some hard freezes occurring, especially in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula.

FIELD CROPS: Sugarcane harvesting remained active around Lake Okeechobee. Recent rainfall over the Panhandle, Big Bend area and the northern Peninsula kept soil moisture supplies mostly adequate. Mostly dry conditions over the southern Peninsula held back soil moisture with supplies rated about half short and half adequate. Most Central Peninsula localities reported adequate soil moisture. Marion and Brevard counties reported some spots of surplus moisture.

| Moisture Rating | Topsoil | | | Subsoil | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | This week | Last week | Last year | This week | Last week | Last Year |
| | <i>Percent</i> | | | | | |
| Very short | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Short | 19 | 13 | 12 | 19 | 12 | 15 |
| Adequate | 79 | 81 | 72 | 77 | 86 | 78 |
| Surplus | 1 | 6 | 13 | 3 | 1 | 5 |

VEGETABLES: Dry weather allowed planting and harvesting in the central and southern Peninsula to progress rapidly during the week with growers pausing to observe the holiday at the end of the period. Cool temperatures slowed some plant development. Vegetables available included snap beans, cabbage, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries and tomatoes.



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LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern areas, cool to freezing temperature slowed forage growth. Winter forage growth is behind because of dry weather during the past few months. Feeding of hay to livestock remained active. Permanent pasture grass is finished for the season. Cattle are in fair to good condition. In the central areas, pasture is recovering from drought stress in November. Lots of hay is being fed. Most of the cattle are in good condition. In the southwest, much of the range is in fair condition stressed by drought. Cattle are in fair to excellent condition. Statewide, cattle condition is mostly fair.

| Condition | Range | | Cattle | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | This week | Last week | This week | Last week |
| | <i>Percent</i> | | | |
| Very poor | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Poor | 15 | 15 | 0 | 0 |
| Fair | 50 | 30 | 30 | 25 |
| Good | 25 | 30 | 60 | 55 |
| Excellent | 10 | 20 | 10 | 20 |

CITRUS: The citrus producing counties recorded no significant rainfall this past week. Temperatures dropped to the high 30s and low 40s several mornings in the majority of the citrus belt. More cool weather prepared trees to survive a freeze, if any, this winter. Growers put out some fertilizer, cleaned ditches and repaired irrigation equipment. Color on all varieties is good. Harvesting of early and midseason oranges continued to be between four to five million boxes per week. Grapefruit for the past several weeks was around a half million boxes per week with a large percentage going to processing. Other varieties picked included early tangerines, Tangelos, and a small quantity of Honey tangerines going to processing. Twelve processing plants ran oranges this past week with another scheduled to open sometime after the New Year. Most plants closed Friday or early Saturday before Christmas and were scheduled to restart late Monday or early Tuesday.

| ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED | | | |
|--|---|--------|--------|
| Crop | Dec 11 | Dec 18 | Dec 25 |
| | <i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i> | | |
| Navel oranges | 367 | 320 | 139 |
| Early and Mid oranges | 4,052 | 4,448 | 3,443 |
| Grapefruit | 488 | 563 | 423 |
| EarlyTangerines | 261 | 289 | 210 |
| Honey Tangerines | 4 | 7 | 1 |
| Tangelos | 112 | 73 | 24 |

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