

DRY WEATHER INCREASING WILD FIRE POTENTIAL

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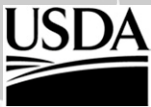
January 30, 2006
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WEATHER SUMMARY: Dry conditions continued over most of Florida during the week of January 23 through 29. Some western Panhandle and some Big Bend localities received from a quarter inch to three quarters of an inch of rain. Elsewhere, less than a tenth of an inch of rain fell with a few areas reporting no measurable rain for the week. The potential for wild fire outbreaks is very high in some eastern areas of the north central Peninsula. Temperatures in the major cities averaged three to seven degrees above normal. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 30s, 40s, 50s and 60s with Carrabelle, Monticello and Tallahassee recording at least one low in the 20s.

FIELD CROPS: Sugarcane harvesting remained active around Lake Okeechobee. Pine tree planting continued in Taylor County. Soil moisture supplies declined over the Peninsula while supplies increased slightly in the western Panhandle and some parts of the Big Bend area. St. Lucie, Lee and Hernando counties reported spots of very short moisture while Okeechobee and Hernando reported some localities with surplus moisture.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	12	12	1	8	8	1
Short	27	25	34	20	18	25
Adequate	60	62	64	70	72	73
Surplus	1	1	1	2	2	1

VEGETABLES: Producers around Quincy continued land preparation for the transplanting of spring crop tomatoes. Digging of a small acreage of low carb potatoes is getting underway in the Hastings area. Rains from Hurricane Rita delayed potato planting around Lake Okeechobee, Palmetto-Ruskin and Immokalee by about two weeks with harvesting expected to get started by mid-February. Vegetables and non citrus fruit marketed during the week included snap beans, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, sweet corn and tomatoes.

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LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern areas, small grain forage is in fair to good condition. Late-planted cool season forage is doing well. Cool nights and warm days with a little bit of moisture is finally letting some of the winter grazing start to grow, but it's not healthy and vigorous. Cattle condition is poor to excellent, with most in fair condition. Supplemental hay is being fed. In the central areas, pasture is in poor to good condition, with most in fair condition. In the south and southwest areas, condition of the range is poor to fair due to drought. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from poor to good, with most in fair condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This Week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	5	0	0
Poor	15	20	5	5
Fair	80	50	60	45
Good	5	5	35	30
Excellent	0	20	0	20

CITRUS: The last week of January finished up what has been a very warm and dry month. Weekly rain totals in all areas were less than one tenth of an inch, and monthly totals equaled slightly over a tenth of an inch in the north to less than half of an inch in the western coastal citrus region. High temperatures for the week were in the low to mid 80s in all citrus areas. Growers in most areas are running irrigation, beginning fertilizing and applying herbicide following harvest. Some have begun herbicide applications as time and weather permits. Weekly harvesting of early and midseason oranges has been lower than expected, while some growers are waiting for maturity and ratios to reach more desirable levels. Grapefruit harvesting has been steady since before the beginning of the year, with an increasing percentage going to processing, during the last couple of weeks. Honey tangerines and Temples are beginning to be picked, primarily for the fresh market. All major processing plants are now open, with the exception of one that may or may not open for the season.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Jan 15	Jan 22	Jan 29
<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>			
Navel oranges	114	118	106
Early and Mid oranges	6,373	4,872	4,978
Grapefruit	843	611	635
EarlyTangerines	112	49	24
Honey Tangerines	92	109	121
Tangelos	113	89	97
Temples	25	29	27

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