

Weather Crop Report

Week ending April 2, 2006

DRY CONDITIONS INCREASED WILD FIRE DANGER

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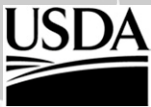
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WEATHER SUMMARY: Nearly all localities recorded no measurable rain for the week of March 27 through April 2, except for Ft. Lauderdale which reported traces for the week. The conditions favorable for wild fire outbreaks continued to increase during the week. At the end of the week, the National Interagency Coordination Center reported two forest fires, one in Santa Rosa County and another in Miami-Dade County. Cold temperatures at the beginning of the week gave way to hot days and mild nights by the end of the week. Temperatures for the week averaged normal to five degrees below in the major cities. Daytime highs averaged in the 70s with most localities recording at least one high in the 80s. Nighttime lows averaged in the 40s, 50s and 60s. Several areas reported at least one low in the 30s while Tallahassee, Alachua and Brooksville recorded at least one low at 29 degrees.

FIELD CROPS: Field work in Washington County stopped with the germination and growth of plants slowed by frost and drought. In Jackson County, producers continued to prepare fields for cotton and peanuts with planting to begin over the next two weeks, barring cold weather. In Jefferson County, small grains need rain. Sugarcane harvesting is virtually done around Lake Okeechobee. Soil moisture supplies over the southern Peninsula are mostly short to adequate. Elsewhere, soil moisture is rated short to mostly adequate. Counties reporting areas of very short soil moisture supplies included Washington, Gadsden, Baker, Marion, St. Lucie, Palm Beach, and Lee.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	30	30	1	27	11	1
Short	55	43	3	30	45	4
Adequate	15	27	52	43	44	54
Surplus	0	0	44	0	0	41

VEGETABLES: Planting and harvesting remained active in central and southern Peninsula areas as growers started to satisfy the mid-April holiday demand. Potato growers in the Hastings area continued to plant with some acreage double cropped following the cabbage harvest. In Jefferson County, watermelon planting is finished. No major damage was reported in the Immokalee area from the recent storms and cold weather. Tomatoes in the Palmetto-Ruskin area suffered no significant damage from the recent cold weather with picking to get underway by mid-April. Blueberry harvesting got underway in central Peninsula areas with a very light volume available. Other vegetables and non-citrus fruit harvested during the week included snap beans, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, potatoes, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, sweet corn and tomatoes.



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LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pastures are greening up with the warm temperatures, but very little growth.. Growth of clover overseeded in pastures is way behind. Most cattlemen continue to feed hay. The calving season is mid-way on beef cow and calf operations. There is a demand for high quality feed. Winter small grains and ryegrass pastures need rain. Permanent pasture is slow to emerge due to late frost and low moisture last week. Pasture in the Big Bend area was in poor to fair condition. In the southwest, cattle condition is very poor to good with most in fair condition. Pasture was poor to fair due to drought. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from poor to good condition with most in poor condition.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	5	0	0	0
Poor	5	10	50	35
Fair	50	55	45	50
Good	40	35	5	15
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: Daytime temperatures across the citrus belt became increasingly warmer throughout the week with all areas reaching the mid-80s by the weekend. No rainfall was recorded in any of the monitored stations. Lack of rainfall for the past several weeks caused growers to continue regular irrigation programs and in some cases increase irrigation frequency. The dominant grove activity included spraying and herbiciding with some caretakers discing, chopping and mowing cover crops prior to and following harvesting. All varieties reached full bloom with some varieties beginning petal drop and forming of pea-sized fruit. Early midseason harvest is relatively over for the season. Valencia harvesting continued to pick up as the main effort. About ten processing plants are now open. Grapefruit harvest is still fairly strong, with the majority of both colored and white going to processing. Honey tangerine utilization is running between one hundred and one hundred fifty thousand boxes a week being picked primarily for the fresh market, while the large majority of Temples being picked are going to processing.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Mar 19	Mar 26	Apr 02
<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>			
Navel oranges	6	2	0
Early and Mid oranges	1,132	365	62
Valencia	1,922	3,169	4,327
Grapefruit	939	1,050	1,027
Honey Tangerines	142	122	176
Tangelos	3	1	3
Temples	54	100	32

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