



# WEATHER CROP



Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
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Week ending March 11, 2007

## DRY CONDITIONS INCREASE WILD FIRE DANGER

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Nearly all areas reported no measurable rain falling during the week of March 5 through 11. The danger for wild fire remained high in many central and southern Peninsula localities. At least two new significant fires were reported in the Everglades region while several smaller brush fires were contained in other areas. Cool temperatures at the start of the week in most areas warmed by week's end. In the major cities, daily temperatures averaged from normal in Miami to five degrees below in Tallahassee. Daytime highs were in the 60s, 70s, and 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 30s, 40s, 50s, and 60s. Alachua reported at least one daily low in the upper 20s at the beginning of the week.

**FIELD CROPS:** Clear conditions accelerated land preparation for spring crop planting in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Cooler temperatures over the Panhandle and northern Peninsula retarded the growth of small grains and hay. Sugarcane harvesting continued in the Everglades region. The dry weather depleted soil moisture in most areas, especially across the central and southern Peninsula. Reports showed soil moisture ratings of mostly very short for the southern Peninsula. Elsewhere, soil moisture was rated short to mostly adequate. Jackson County reported a few localities with surplus moisture supplies.

| Moisture Rating | Topsoil        |           |           | Subsoil   |           |           |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                 | This week      | Last Week | Last year | This week | Last week | Last Year |
|                 | <i>Percent</i> |           |           |           |           |           |
| Very short      | 40             | 39        | 9         | 29        | 19        | 4         |
| Short           | 32             | 36        | 42        | 37        | 51        | 25        |
| Adequate        | 27             | 25        | 49        | 33        | 29        | 71        |
| Surplus         | 1              | 0         | 0         | 1         | 1         | 0         |

**VEGETABLES:** Clear conditions allowed planting and harvesting to proceed on schedule. Recent cool temperatures slowed the growth of some crops, especially squash. Potato and cabbage harvests remained very active as growers shipped for the mid-March holiday. Other vegetables and non-citrus fruit harvested included snap beans, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, parsley, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, and tomatoes. Very light amounts of watermelons were picked with most fields expected to reach maturity in April and May. Very light amounts of blueberries were also harvested.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition is very poor to good. Most pasture is in poor condition due to drought and cold. Some pasture is greening up following recent rain. Hay feeding is very active, but supplies are short. Cool nights have kept new grass from growing quickly. Most pasture is overgrazed. Cattlemen are actively feeding any hay they can get. In the southwest areas, pasture condition is very poor to fair with most in very poor condition due to drought and near freezing temperatures. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from very poor to excellent with most in fair condition.

| Condition      | Cattle    |           | Pasture   |           |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                | This week | Last week | This week | Last week |
| <i>Percent</i> |           |           |           |           |
| Very poor      | 5         | 0         | 30        | 15        |
| Poor           | 25        | 10        | 40        | 50        |
| Fair           | 40        | 65        | 25        | 30        |
| Good           | 25        | 25        | 5         | 5         |
| Excellent      | 5         | 0         | 0         | 0         |

**CITRUS:** Daytime temperatures in the citrus producing region were about average for the week, with highs in the low to mid 80s across the State. No rainfall was recorded for the week in any of the monitored citrus groves. The east coast and the southern areas are very dry and need precipitation. "Pinhead" blooms have formed on trees in many groves across the State. The cooler nighttime temperatures and dry conditions have held back the bloom from coming completely out. Groves are being hedged and topped after harvest. Applications of pesticides and nematicides are being applied to the trees after hedging. Irrigation has picked up to two or three times a week in most areas. Harvest of early and midseason oranges is almost over for the season with processors beginning to run grapefruit and later variety oranges. Grapefruit harvest has held steady at over one and a half million boxes for the past two weeks. The quality of grapefruit continues to be very good, with a large portion of the colored grapefruit going to fresh. Honey tangerine harvest is still between one and two hundred thousand boxes per week.

| ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED    |        |        |        |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Crop                                      | Feb 25 | Mar 04 | Mar 11 |
| <i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i> |        |        |        |
| Navel oranges                             | 1      | 4      | 8      |
| Early and Mid oranges                     | 1,778  | 728    | 169    |
| Valencia                                  | 534    | 1,099  | 1,672  |
| Grapefruit                                | 1,406  | 1,612  | 1,517  |
| Sunburst Tangerines                       | 3      | 1      | 2      |
| Tangelos                                  | 4      | 4      | 12     |
| Honey Tangerines                          | 161    | 139    | 168    |
| Temples                                   | 65     | 138    | 74     |

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