



# WEATHER CROP



Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
1222 Woodward St., Orlando, FL 32803  
(407) 648-6013 · (407) 648-6029 FAX · [www.nass.usda.gov/fl](http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl)

Week ending March 25, 2007

## RAIN NEEDED; DRY CONDITIONS INCREASED WILD FIRE DANGER

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Mild temperatures along with sunshine during the week of March 19 through 25 allowed growers to continue with spring plantings. The potential for wildfires remains high across the central and southern Peninsula with some outbreaks of wild land fires reported while smaller brush fires were contained. Most localities reported no measurable rainfall during the week, except for over an inch in Fort Lauderdale and Homestead. Over a half an inch of precipitation fell in Fort Pierce. Cold temperatures brought freezes and frost to some Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas. Temperatures at the major stations were one to four degrees below normal. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 30s, 40s, and 50s. Jacksonville and Pensacola reported at least one low in the 20s. Tallahassee recorded one nighttime low of 18 degrees.

**FIELD CROPS:** The dry, clear conditions allowed land preparations for field crop planting to continue in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas. Sugarcane harvesting slowed seasonally around Lake Okeechobee with most mills closed. In Jackson County, some field corn germinated well and is reported in good condition. Wheat is also in good condition, but rains are needed for complete development. Cotton planting is expected to begin in mid-April provided adequate rains come. Significant rains are needed to elevate soil moisture supplies especially in the central and southern Peninsula areas. Soil moisture supplies in the Panhandle were very short to mostly adequate. Topsoil moisture supplies are rated very short to adequate in the northern Peninsula. Areas throughout the central and southern Peninsula had mostly very short soil moisture with a few pockets of adequate supplies.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	51	47	28	49	42	10
Short	39	35	43	39	39	45
Adequate	10	17	29	12	18	45
Surplus	0	1	0	0	1	0

**VEGETABLES:** Dry conditions allowed planting and harvesting to proceed on schedule. The continued drought conditions are impacting growth development of vegetables in central and southern Peninsula areas. Cabbage cutting remains active in the Hastings area with harvesting expected to be completed by the end of April. Potato digging also remains active around the Hastings area. Producers marketed snap beans, blueberries, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, parsley, peppers, squash, strawberries, and tomatoes.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** In the Panhandle and northern areas, permanent pasture is greening up with the warm weather, but rain is needed for growth to occur. Stock ponds water levels are receding quickly. Pasture continues to be overgrazed and small grain forage condition is declining. In the central areas, pasture is poor to good with most in fair condition. Permanent pasture grass is beginning to grow but conditions are becoming dry. In the southwest areas, pasture is very poor to fair with most in very poor condition due to drought. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from very poor to good with most in fair condition.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	5	5	45	35
Poor	35	40	35	35
Fair	45	40	15	25
Good	15	15	5	5
Excellent	0	0	0	0

**CITRUS:** All citrus areas have experienced bloom over the last two weeks. Most coastal and upper interior areas are in full, open bloom, while a few of the Valencia orange groves are showing abundant petal drop. Field personnel in the lower interior area groves are reporting an even, heavy bloom on all varieties. Only the east coast received over a half an inch of rainfall for the week, with three of the other six monitored areas receiving no rainfall. The dry weather could cause a problem if it does not end shortly. Most growers are returning to frequent irrigation due to the lack of rainfall. Valencia harvesting has picked up significantly over the past two weeks. Harvesting is running ahead of the last two years so far, indicating an earlier maturing crop. Grapefruit harvest has been steady over the last several weeks and continues to be picked at high levels with about two thirds going to processing. Honey tangerine harvesting is still running steadily between one and two hundred thousand boxes per week. In addition to the normal maintenance programs, growers are scouting for greening and removing diseased trees.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Mar 11	Mar 18	Mar 25
<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>			
Navel oranges	7	2	3
Early and Mid oranges	201	101	39
Valencia	1,901	3,667	4,066
Grapefruit	1,578	1,515	1,289
Sunburst Tangerines	3	1	0
Tangelos	10	4	0
Honey Tangerines	171	151	120
Temples	100	51	16

We encourage all subscribers of this report to consider receiving it by e-mail. To do so, log onto:

[http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/Florida/Subscribe\\_to\\_FL\\_Reports/index.asp](http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Florida/Subscribe_to_FL_Reports/index.asp). Select Florida Crop-Weather. Enter your first and last name. Enter your Email address. Click on Subscribe. The report will be sent automatically each week. Or you may call us at 800/344-6277 and we will enter the subscription for you.