



WEATHER CROP

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending May 13, 2007

SOME PLANTING DELAYED BY DRY SOILS

WEATHER SUMMARY: Dry conditions persisted during most of the week of May 7 through 13. At the end of the week, a cold front, combined with the west and east coast sea breezes, spawned storms over the central and southern Peninsula, which brought some relief to the dry conditions. Umatilla and Okahumpka reported around an inch and a half from these storms while Brooksville recorded about an inch. Although Miami recorded nearly three inches for the week, Ft. Lauderdale received about half an inch and Homestead recorded only about two tenths. However, the showers dropped only traces to half an inch of rain in most localities with Balm, Immokalee, Marianna, Pensacola, Putnam Hall, and Sebring reporting no measurable rain for the week. The storms produced hail, especially in Desoto and Glades counties. Temperatures for the week averaged three degrees below normal to three degrees above in the major cities. Daytime highs averaged in the 80s with many stations reporting at least one high in the 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 50s, 60s, and 70s with several Panhandle and a few northern Peninsula localities recording at least one low in the 40s. The danger for wildfire is high in all areas. As of Sunday evening, active fires totaled 237 and covered 164,226 acres according to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Division of Forestry. Smoke from these fires closed some roads due to poor visibility and lowered air quality over most of the State.

FIELD CROPS: Peanut and cotton planting in irrigated fields remained active during the week. However, the lack of rain in some Panhandle areas, especially in Jackson County, caused peanut and cotton planting to come to a standstill while most of the irrigated acreage has been planted. Recent, intermittent showers in the western Panhandle, especially in Santa Rosa County, helped keep soil moisture in dryland fields adequate for planting with some peanuts already germinated. Statewide, peanut planting increased to 25 percent finished compared with 19 percent done by May 14th last year, and the five-year average planting progress of 29 percent. Winter wheat is in very good condition in the western Panhandle. Corn acreage planted is significantly above average in the western Panhandle. However, dry soils in other Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas prevented some corn planting and some growers returned seed to suppliers. Soil moisture supplies are mostly very short to short in the Panhandle and southern Peninsula, very short to short in the northern Peninsula, and very short in the Big Bend area. Small areas of adequate soil moisture were reported in Santa Rosa, Polk, and Jackson counties.

Percentage of peanuts planted to date:		
This year	Last year	5-year average.
25	19	29

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	70	44	37	60	44	37
Short	28	28	41	25	27	32
Adequate	2	28	19	15	29	31
Surplus	0	0	3	0	0	0

VEGETABLES: Harvesting increased in central and northern areas as southern Peninsula harvesting slowed seasonally. Most growers are picking to meet the Memorial Day demand. In the Gadsden County areas, drought continued to slow the growth of crops. In the Suwannee Valley area, cucumber, squash, and organic vegetable harvests started despite the pollution from wildfire smoke. In Jackson County, irrigated vegetables are in good condition; however, dryland watermelon stands are thin with plants coming up poorly; some stands are as much as three weeks behind schedule. Other vegetables and non citrus fruit marketed during the week included snap beans, blueberries, cabbage, cantaloupes, celery, sweet corn, eggplant, okra, peppers, radishes, and watermelons. Also, very small amounts of endive, escarole, lettuce, parsley, and strawberries were harvested with the season near the end for all.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: There is significant stress on pastures due to drought. In the Panhandle, the pasture condition is very poor to good with most in poor condition. Drought is severely affecting pastures and hay crops. Pasture grass is green but grazed to the nub. Most cattlemen are still feeding supplemental hay, if they can find it. Some cattle are being marketed due to the lack of feed. In the northern areas, pasture condition is very poor to fair and cattle condition is mostly fair. In the central and southwest areas, pasture condition is very poor to fair. Wildfires are a real concern. 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	20	0	45	15
Poor	30	5	35	20
Fair	40	45	19	60
Good	9	50	1	5
Excellent	1	0	0	0

CITRUS: Severely dry conditions continue to plague citrus regions across the State. A cold front on Sunday passed across the State and brought less than half an inch of rain to the east coast. Canals and lake levels are still very low. The dry weather is putting continual stress on the trees and mid-afternoon tree wilt is apparent, especially on older declining trees. Areas in the southwest are still under water restrictions and some areas along the east coast are under a “burn ban”. Valencia harvest is over two thirds complete with several weekly amounts over five million boxes. Grapefruit harvest is decreasing for both fresh and processing. More packinghouses have closed for the season with Honey tangerine and fresh grapefruit harvest drawing to a close. Greening has been found in many places. Caretakers are taking steps to minimize any damage. Also, other field practices being observed are irrigating, mowing, removing of dead trees, and hedging and topping after harvest.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Apr 29	May 06	May 14
	<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>		
Navel oranges	2	2	3
Early and Mid oranges	12	11	11
Valencia	5,398	4,581	4,676
Grapefruit	683	479	298
Honey Tangerines	72	46	24
Temples	1	1	3

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