



WEATHER CROP



Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending September 14, 2008

MOSTLY DRY CONDITIONS ALLOWED FOR FIELD WORK PROGRESS

WEATHER SUMMARY: Scattered showers brought less than a half an inch across the State last week. Most farmers had a nice, dry week for field work. The most rain reported was in Lee County, 2.69 inches, and areas of the central Peninsula, between 1 and 2 inches. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s, lows in the 60s and 70s. Major cities reached high temperatures in the 80s and 90s, lows in the 60s, 70s, and 80s.

FIELD CROPS: Peanut condition was rated 29% fair, 55% good, and 16% excellent. Growers continued peanut harvesting in Jackson County and began digging in surrounding counties of the Panhandle. Disease, late harvest, and recent rains delayed peanut progress in Levy County. Peanut digging is 8 percent complete, compared with 9 percent last year, and a five year average progress of 11 percent. The cotton and soybean crop looked good in Okaloosa County and some corn was harvested. Hamilton County harvested corn, and worked to recover a few hundred acres damaged by Tropical Storm Fay. In central Florida, farmers were busy baling hay, now that fields were drying out. For many this was the first cutting. Central and northern Peninsulas reported infestation of armyworms in the hay fields. Sugarcane was near harvesting in Lee County. Farmers were spraying the crop and expect average yields. Soil moisture conditions were mostly adequate in all areas.

| Peanut Progress – Week Ending September 14, 2008 | | | |
|--|------|------|--------------|
| Stage | 2008 | 2007 | 5-yr Average |
| <i>Percent</i> | | | |
| Harvested | 8 | 9 | 11 |

| Moisture Rating | Topsoil | | | Subsoil | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | This week | Last week | Last year | This week | Last week | Last Year |
| <i>Percent</i> | | | | | | |
| Very short | 2 | 1 | 10 | 1 | 0 | 19 |
| Short | 13 | 10 | 32 | 9 | 12 | 29 |
| Adequate | 68 | 58 | 57 | 67 | 53 | 52 |
| Surplus | 17 | 31 | 1 | 23 | 35 | 0 |

VEGETABLES: Squash was planted in Hernando County. Tomatoes were planted in Highland and Hardy counties. The tomato crop was not affected by recent storms and looked good. Vegetable preparation was good and planting was underway in Lee County. Growers were busy planting tomatoes, peppers, snap beans, and corn. Okra and avocados continued to be marketed last week.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle area, pasture condition was mostly fair to good. In Washington County, pasture grass has grown some but the quality declined. The cattle condition was mostly good. In the northern areas, pasture was mostly good, and the range condition improved. The cattle condition was mostly fair to excellent. In the central areas, pasture was in very poor to excellent condition, with most fair to good. The rainfall from Tropical Storm Fay and following rains had much pasture under water, damaging pastures. Some damage from loopers and armyworms was reported. In Sumter County, pasture grass growth had slowed. Most of the cattle are in good condition. In the southwest areas, pasture condition was very poor to excellent. Statewide, cattle condition was poor to excellent, with most in good condition.

| Condition | Cattle | | Pasture | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | This week | Last week | This week | Last week |
| | <i>Percent</i> | | | |
| Very poor | 0 | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| Poor | 5 | 9 | 5 | 5 |
| Fair | 15 | 20 | 25 | 20 |
| Good | 75 | 50 | 55 | 50 |
| Excellent | 5 | 20 | 10 | 20 |

CITRUS: Hurricane Ike, far southwest of the coastline in the Gulf of Mexico, generated just over two and a half inches of rain in the Immokalee area. Not related to Ike, Apopka had about an inch and a half of rainfall. All other monitored areas in the citrus producing counties had a half inch or less. Daily high temperatures were in the upper 80s to lower 90s across the citrus belt. Growers in the Indian River area are still dealing with the effects of standing water from Tropical Storm Fay over three weeks ago. Isolated groves had yellowing of leaves, dying trees, and additional small percentages of fruit drop. Other citrus producing areas have gone back to general maintenance schedules to include mowing, fertilizing, herbiciding, tree removal, and preparing for harvest. Some dryer areas were back on regular irrigating schedules. Only one packinghouse has opened, however several are planning on opening in the next two weeks. The citrus season overall progressed well with good sizes on both oranges and grapefruit. Trees looked good with heavy foliage and healthy looking fruit, and owners were optimistic about a good season.

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