



# WEATHER CROP



Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
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## WARMER TEMPERATURES, MUCH NEEDED RAIN

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Scattered rain fell late last week over much of the State. Orange, Hillsborough, Osceola, and Volusia counties each reported about a quarter of an inch of rain. Several southern counties received a third of an inch or more. Broward County had the highest total of rainfall for last week, with 4.67 inches. Jackson, Santa Rosa, and Leon counties reported localized heavy rains of up to 4 inches. Little precipitation was reported for the Big Bend area. Throughout the State high temperatures were in the 70s and 80s, while lows were mostly in the 40s 50s, and 60s. Overall temperatures were one to six degrees above normal.

**FIELD CROPS:** Potatoes continue to be harvested. Field work proceeded at a rapid pace in preparation for spring planting. Alachua County growers planted corn and prepared for peanuts. The Taylor County agent reported that pine tree planting remained active. Wheat conditions were fair to good in Jackson and Calhoun counties. Recent showers greatly improved Santa Rosa County's wheat crop. Corn was planted in Hamilton County. Sugarcane harvest continued in Glades County. Soil moisture levels were very short to short for most of Florida. Reports showed soil moisture as mostly adequate in the Panhandle.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	41	33	13	41	30	6
Short	41	49	25	36	46	43
Adequate	17	18	59	22	24	49
Surplus	1	0	3	1	0	2

**VEGETABLES** Harvesting of winter vegetables started wrapping up while spring planting continued. Despite recent rain, many fields struggled with dry conditions and were irrigated. More rain is still needed to reduce the salt concentration in well water. Producers have noticed slower growth in some vegetables as a result. The strawberry crop in Plant City was winding down as temperatures got warmer. Watermelons were planted in Hillsborough, Dixie, Alachua, and Gulf counties. Strawberries were in full swing in Bradford County, and onions were harvested as well. Small volumes of cantaloupe were harvested in Collier and Hendry counties. Other vegetables moving through the market were snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, eggplant, endive, escarole, greens, peppers, radishes, squash, and tomatoes.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** Pasture condition was low due to drought. Supplemental hay was being fed throughout the State. In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition was very poor to good with drought the leading factor in poor forage growth. Rain over the weekend and warmer weather improved grazing conditions in the Panhandle. Cattle condition was poor to excellent. Summer grass (Bahia) started to emerge after recent rain in Holmes, Escambia, and Washington counties. Spring clover forage was growing well. Cattlemen were feeding hay to supplement declining winter grazing. New pastures are being seeded. In the central areas, pasture was mostly very poor to poor with some pasture fair to good. Cattle condition was very poor to good with most poor to fair. Pasture condition in the southwest was very poor to good. Cattle condition was very poor to excellent with most fair to good. Supplemental hay was being fed. Statewide, cattle condition was very poor to excellent.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	14	9	30	20
Poor	20	25	35	45
Fair	40	40	30	30
Good	25	25	5	5
Excellent	1	1	0	0

**CITRUS:** Warm, seasonal temperatures were reported across the State ranging from the low 50s to the high 80s. Widely scattered showers brought almost a half inch of rain to Highlands and Hardee counties. The greatest amount of rain for a citrus-producing region was the Fort Pierce area recording almost two inches of precipitation. The natural start of the new crop is evidenced by widespread observations of the spring citrus bloom. Growers and caretakers reported new growth flush with full open bloom on many citrus trees. Well-cared-for groves were in excellent condition. Caretakers were conducting fertilizer and pesticide applications with some irrigation to help support the fruit set. Harvesting has increased significantly for the late Valencia crop. Packinghouses are still accepting small quantities of the early and midseason varieties. The Honey tangerine harvest has decreased slightly while the white and colored grapefruit remains at a good pace with many boxes still left for harvesting.

Estimated Boxes Harvested - Week Ended			
Crop	Mar 08	Mar 15	Mar 22
	<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>		
Early and mid oranges	2,272	816	20
Temples	90	56	31
Valencia oranges	1,025	1,945	3,479
Navel oranges	2	1	2
Grapefruit	1,301	1,084	960
Tangelos	4	1	1
Sunburst tangerines	0	0	0
Honey tangerines	98	64	54

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