United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

WEATHER CROP

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending January 10, 2010

Freezing Temperatures, Little Rainfall

Weather Summary: Last week's highs were mostly in the 50s, 60s, with a few 70s in the southern Peninsula. Low temperatures ranged from the teens to the 20s and 30s. Sub-freezing conditions were reported for almost all locations. In major cities, average temperatures averaged 13 to 19 degrees below normal. All Florida Automated Network Weather (FAWN) stations reported very little precipitation. The southern Peninsula saw the highest rainfall amounts with many areas receiving about a quarter of an inch of rain last week.

Field Crops: Freezing conditions across the Panhandle and northern counties have brought fieldwork almost to a halt. Some clover was planted when conditions allowed. In the central Peninsula, significant damage to ferns was reported by growers and nurseries. Growers were running irrigation to minimize freeze damage, but made the shade houses too wet to harvest. In the Hasting area, potato planting was further delayed. Growers were heating storage areas to prevent freezing of seed stock. In the southern Peninsula, damage was reported to the sugarcane crop. Young cane was reported as burned back. Older cane had the tops frozen and growers rushed harvest on some damaged fields to minimize sucrose loss.

Soil Moisture Ratings

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	Previous week	Previous year	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	0	15	1	1	16	1
Short	26	39	16	25	32	22
Adequate.....	65	45	78	62	48	73
Surplus.....	9	1	5	12	4	4

Vegetables: Several nights of sub-freezing temperatures have caused extensive damage to vegetable crops. Some crops were reported as a total loss. Harvest was at a virtual standstill. Damage to fields with ripening fruit and plants setting blooms will impact harvest over the next few weeks. The full extent of losses will not be determined for several more days. Vegetables harvested prior to the freeze and moving through the markets included snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, peppers, radishes, squash, tomatoes, and strawberries. To assist growers, a state of emergency for agricultural crops was issued last week, easing restrictions on truck weights and on water limitations for irrigation.

Livestock and Pastures: Cold and freezing temperatures caused severe damage to pastures throughout the State. Supplemental hay feeding was required in most of the State. The pasture condition was mostly poor in all regions. In the Panhandle, cold temperatures stopped all winter forage growth and there was very little surplus forage. It will take two to three weeks of warmer temperatures for winter pasture to recover. In the northern areas, cool season forage growth slowed due to unusually cold temperatures the last two weeks. Winter forage was not able to keep up with grazing demands and hay feeding was very active. In the central area, consecutive freezes significantly damaged pastures, including stockpiled pastures. Rye pasture was the exception. Cattle producers relied on by-products and stored forages for their herd's nutritive and roughage requirements. Hay was being trucked in. Some planting of clover for forage was planted when conditions allowed. In the southwest, cold weather damaged pastures. The cattle condition in the Panhandle and northern areas was poor to excellent with most in fair to good condition. In the central and southern areas, the cattle condition was very poor to excellent with most fair to good. Statewide, the condition of the cattle was very poor to excellent condition with most fair to good. The freezing weather was detrimental to tropical fish operations with dead fish seen floating on ponds.

Cattle and Pasture Condition

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	Previous week	Current week	Previous week	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very poor	0	1	5	10
Poor	20	14	20	50
Fair	40	35	45	35
Good	35	45	30	4
Excellent	5	5	0	1

Citrus: Many areas in the citrus-producing region reported dangerously low temperatures this week, making freeze damage a possibility. High temperatures for the week ranged from the upper 50s to the lower 70s, while lows fell to the mid-teens in many areas. Alachua recorded the lowest temperature of 16 degrees on Saturday. Rainfall was light, with most stations receiving less than a quarter-inch. North Port received the most at 0.33 inches. All of the packinghouses have now opened. Varieties being packed included early oranges (Navel and Hamlin), white and colored grapefruit, and tangerines (predominately Sunburst and Murcotts, with a few Dancys). Seventeen processors have opened and were accepting fruit. Plants were running at or near capacity. Early and midseason oranges and grapefruit comprise the majority of fruit going to the plants. Other than harvesting and standard practices, grove activity included increased grove irrigation to protect as much fruit as possible from the cold temperatures.

Citrus Estimated Boxes Harvested

[In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes]

Crop	December 27, 2009	January 3, 2010	January 10, 2010
	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)
Early and mid oranges	3,143	5,938	6,286
Navel oranges	55	31	38
Grapefruit	262	408	752
Tangelos	22	58	68
Tangerines	85	156	163

This report is available, at no cost, on the NASS web site: **http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Florida/Subscribe_to_FL_Reports/index.asp**. To set-up this free subscription, select Florida Crop-Weather; enter your name and your email address, click on Subscribe. This report will be sent automatically each week; or call us at 800/344-6277 and we will enter the subscription for you. The precipitation and temperature data used in this report originates from the Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN). Data for individual reporting stations is available at: **http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu** maintained by UF/IFAS Information Technologies.