



WEATHER CROP



Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending October 9, 2011

Weekend Storms Helped Alleviate Dry Conditions

Weather Summary: Heavy, non-stop rain poured in central and southern Florida during the Columbus Day weekend, while other areas received moderate to negligible amounts. Up until the weekend rains, most agricultural extension agents along with farmers reported dry conditions. The effects of the summer's drought were noticeable in north Florida. According to the Florida Department of Agriculture's Forest Service, over 275,000 acres have burned within the State since the beginning of the year. As of October 4, 2011, nine percent of the State was rated as having extreme drought conditions. Overall, 29 percent of the State had some degree of drought, greater than last year's 18 percent. Florida Automated Weather Network Stations with the highest weekly cumulative inches of rain included: Fort Pierce (14.26), Indian River (12.11), Frostproof (9.58), and lowest Jay (0.01), Carrabelle (0.04), and Quincy (0.54). Most stations recorded between one and four inches of rainfall. Average temperatures for the week were mostly four to five degrees below normal except for Miami and West Palm Beach areas where temperatures were either normal or one degree above normal. Lows were in the 40s, 50s, and 60s. Highs were in the 80s. Approximately 70 percent of the topsoil and subsoil moisture ratings were adequate or surplus.

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	4	7	6	7	7	4
Short	17	30	25	18	21	26
Adequate	70	59	58	64	69	61
Surplus	9	4	11	11	3	9

Field Crops: Cotton was defoliating in the Panhandle region with the harvest on schedule. Weather has affected the peanut harvest. In Holmes County, peanut digging was slowed due to lack of moisture; whereas in Columbia County, peanut digging was delayed due to rains. In Dixie and Gilchrist counties, peanut harvesting was virtually complete. The peanut crop condition declined slightly from the previous week, with 51 percent of the crop rated as good to excellent compared to 59 percent the previous week. Sugarcane harvesting continued while young cane was being planted.

Peanut Progress for Week Ending: October 9, 2011

Stage	2010	5-year average	2011
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Harvested	60	47	54

Vegetables: The fall vegetable harvest was just beginning. In the tri-county area, cabbage planting continued in fields that were not inundated by rain. Fields in Miami-Dade, Brevard, and Marion counties were flooded. Strawberry planting continued in Hillsborough County. Vegetable movement according to the Agricultural Marketing Service included: avocados, okra, and tomatoes.

Livestock and Pastures: Statewide, pasture condition declined from the previous week due to drought, cool weather, and some flooding. The condition overall ranged from very poor to excellent, with 50 percent in good condition. The cattle condition ranged from very poor to excellent, with 63 percent in good condition. In the **Panhandle** and **northern** areas, pasture condition ranged from very poor to excellent. Drought was the first limiting factor, but also cool nighttime temperatures limited permanent pasture growth. Some pasture had sod worms. Pastures continue to decline in quantity and quality. Protein supplementation was fed to enable cattle to utilize the poor quality roughage. Some oats and ryegrass was planted for winter forage where soil conditions permitted. The cattle condition was mostly good. Hay feeding was active on operations where pasture was short. In the **central** area, pasture condition ranged from poor to excellent, with most good. The pasture condition declined due to drought and because the growing season was ending. Land was being worked for planting ryegrass. In the **southwest**, the condition of pastures ranged from fair to excellent, with most in good condition. The first limiting factor to condition was flooding from heavy rainfall at week's end. Seasonally, cooler weather also lowered the pasture condition. The condition of the cattle ranged from fair to good, with most in good condition.

Cattle and Pasture Condition

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	Previous week	Current week	Previous week	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very poor.....	0	1	0	1
Poor.....	1	1	5	4
Fair.....	35	25	26	30
Good.....	57	63	57	50
Excellent.....	7	10	12	15

Citrus: Weather conditions were warm and mild most of the week in the citrus region. During the weekend, a front stalled over the State dropping heavy rain in most areas. Fort Pierce reported the most precipitation with 14.26 inches and Palmdale the least with 0.59 inches. Grove activity included limited harvesting, irrigating, applying herbicides, and mowing. Scouting for greening by growers and caretakers continued. Twenty-four packinghouses have opened and began shipping fruit; three processing plants began running fruit in small quantities. Varieties being packed included early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, Fallglo tangerines, and a few Nova Tangelos.

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