



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
**FLORIDA CROP PROGRESS &
CONDITION REPORT**



In cooperation with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services and the UF/IFAS Extension Service
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Week Ending: March 4, 2012

Northern Florida Rainfall Welcomed

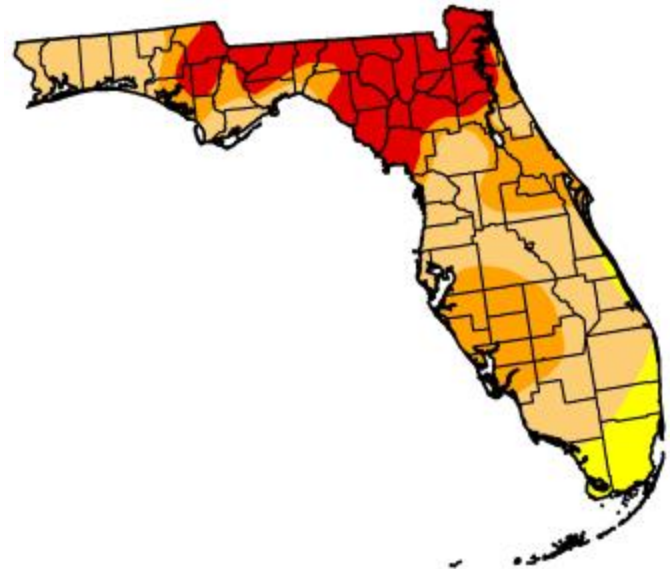
Weather Summary: Producers welcomed rainfall across the Panhandle and northern Florida last week. Those beneficial rains tapered off further downstate. The heaviest amounts of precipitation recorded at Florida’s Automated Weather Network (FAWN) stations were at Marianna (6.37 inches), Monticello (4.95 inches), Carrabelle (3.24 inches), Live Oak (2.77 inches), Quincy (2.77 inches), and Frostproof (2.25 inches). Eight other FAWN stations recorded between one and two inches of rainfall. Six stations recorded between one half inch and one inch of rainfall and 16 stations recorded less than one half inch of rainfall. The heaviest rainfall in northern Florida helped drench the driest areas of Florida as identified by the U.S. Drought Monitor. Lake Okeechobee’s water level was at 12.93 feet as of March 4. This compares with 12.02 feet at this time last year and the average of 14.50 using the 1965-2007 period on record. Year-to-date precipitation at Daytona, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Pensacola, Tallahassee, Tampa, and West Palm Beach ranged from one half inch to six inches below average. Some of last week’s storms were accompanied by gusty winds that caused damage to trees and property. It was a warmer than average week with temperatures averaging from seven to nine degrees above average. At FAWN stations, the high temperatures averaged in the high 80s and lows averaged in the 40s. The highest temperature was 90 degrees recorded at Avalon and Pierson. The lowest temperature recorded at a FAWN station was 35 degrees reported at Alachua.

Soil Moisture Ratings

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		
	Previous week	Previous year	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	10	10	9
Short.....	48	37	44
Adequate.....	40	51	41
Surplus.....	2	2	6

Field Crops: The warm, wet weather was beneficial to the winter wheat growing area in northern Florida. With

U.S. Drought Monitor: February 28, 2012



Intensity:

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional

an improvement in the soil moisture in northern Florida and the Panhandle, seasonal preparations for planting field crops continued; however, progress was limited where rainfall was heaviest. Producers began planting corn and preparing fields for peanuts in Nassau County. Corn planting was starting in Clay County. The sugarcane harvest continued at full pace in Palm Beach County. It was anticipated that the sugarcane mills would be finished processing the cane in the next three to five weeks.

Fruits & Vegetables: The harvesting of winter vegetables was ongoing in south Miami-Dade County. Producers were planting watermelons in Clay County. Supplies of strawberries increased as growers met the demands of the March Strawberry Festival. USDA’s Marketing News Service vegetable movement included snap beans, cabbage, celery, escarole, radishes, sweet corn, eggplant, bell peppers, squash, and tomatoes. The supply was reported as being light by the USDA-Market News Service for white sweet corn, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, endive, escarole, and squash.

Livestock and Pastures: Statewide, pasture conditions varied from very poor to excellent with most poor to fair, a slight improvement over the previous week. Drought, cold, and disease were limiting forage growth. The cattle condition varied from very poor to excellent with most in fair condition. Hay and supplements were being fed. In the **Panhandle** and **northern** areas, the conditions of most pastures ranged from poor to good. In Jefferson and Marion counties, general rain over the past two weekends and above average temperatures enhanced pastures. Bahia pastures started to green up in Walton and Dixie counties due to warm weather. In the **central** areas, most pastures were in poor to fair condition, hampered by drought, cold, and disease. The cattle were in very poor to excellent condition with most in fair condition. In the **southwestern** areas, most pastures were in poor to fair condition. Drought and cold temperatures slowed forage growth.

Cattle and Pasture Condition

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	Previous week	Current week	Previous week	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very poor.....	0	1	15	10
Poor.....	10	10	35	39
Fair.....	60	57	40	40
Good.....	25	30	9	10
Excellent.....	5	2	1	1

Citrus: Temperatures were moderate with highs reaching the upper 80s in most of the citrus region. Rainfall was generally light across the region. Frostproof received the most with 2.25 inches, while Ona received the least with 0.03 inches of precipitation recorded. Seven FAWN stations recorded over an inch of rain and all of them recorded some precipitation this week. Drought conditions existed across the entire citrus region, ranging from abnormally dry on the eastern coast to severe on the west coast. Drought conditions were from the U.S. Drought Monitor; last updated February 28, 2012. Two plants were processing most of the early and midseason oranges. The rest of the processing plants were running Valencias. The Valencia harvest almost doubled as the harvest of early and midseason fell off. Temple orange and tangerine harvesting increased while the grapefruit, tangelo, and Navel harvests slowed. Citrus bloom continued to be observed on trees in the citrus region as next season’s crop progresses. Cultural practices included irrigation, young tree care, and limited hedging and topping.

Citrus Estimated Boxes Harvested

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

Crop	Feb 13-19, 2012	Feb 20-26, 2012	Feb 27-Mar 4, 2012
	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)
Early & mid oranges.....	3,037	1,663	580
Valencia.....	544	1,219	2,409
Navel oranges.....	5	4	3
Temples.....	67	77	94
Grapefruit.....	1,161	1,289	853
Tangelos.....	10	17	1
Tangerines.....	153	246	138
Total.....	4,977	4,515	4,078

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