



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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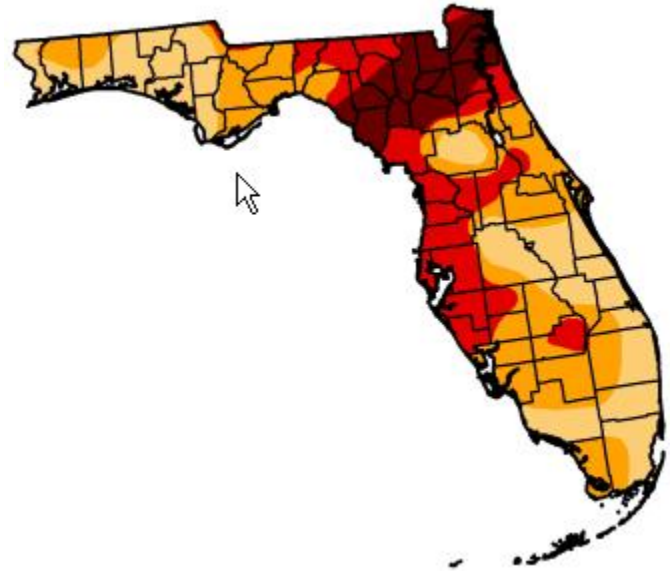
Released: April 17, 2012 (4 PM EST)

Week Ending: April 15, 2012

Producers Busy Planting Crops

Weather Summary: Producers were hoping for inches of rainfall, but had to settle for sprinkles. The Sunshine State was getting progressively drier last week. Twenty-three of Florida's 36 Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN) stations reported no rain. The highest rainfall accumulation recorded was 1.24 inches at the Fort Lauderdale FAWN station. Other stations with over a half inch were Homestead (0.70 inches) and Fort Pierce (0.58 inches). At week's end, the topsoil moisture ratings were 29 percent very short, 50 percent short, 21 percent adequate, and none surplus. The U.S. Drought Monitor continued to show the driest areas of Florida to be in the counties in northeastern Florida and stretching southwest to the Gulf. Other dry areas included counties bordering the gulf and farther inland from Fort Myers north to the Panhandle. Sixty eight percent of Florida's landmass was rated as being in a severe, extreme, or exceptional drought. Water levels at Lake Okeechobee were at 11.81 feet compared to 13.97 feet during the 1965-2007 period of record benchmark. Clear skies allowed producers to progress in planting field and vegetable crops and harvesting vegetables. Some producers waited for additional rain before proceeding with planting. Pastures provided only limited feed as the dry weather continued. Cattle producers were feeding hay to cattle where pastures were inadequate. Some ponds had low water levels. Limited rainfall, prolonged dry weather and occasional breezy winds have kept the fire danger extremely high. Consequently, several counties had burning bans. Active wildfires as of April 16 included 126 fires with 17 fires exceeding 100 acres. Dry conditions caused fire hazards across the State. Temperatures were moderate with lows in the 50s to highs in the mid-80s.

U.S. Drought Monitor: April 10, 2012



Intensity:

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

Field Crops: Peanut planting was making good progress in Dixie, Gadsden, Hamilton, Madison, and Marion counties. Jackson County producers anticipated limited planting of peanuts until rains provide some relief from the dry soil conditions. Much of Florida's corn crop has been planted during the past several weeks, but some plantings continued. Corn planting was finished in Jackson and Madison counties. Producers in Walton and St. Johns counties were still planting corn. Soybean planting started with a few fields of soybeans being planted in Walton County. Producers in Jackson County were preparing fields for planting cotton.

Fruits & Vegetables: Irrigation pumps were frequently pumping water to maintain the fruit and vegetable crops. Blueberry harvesting was underway in Hernando and Sumter counties. In Hillsborough County, there was light picking of cantaloupe and squash. Watermelon harvesting was taking place in Charlotte, Glades, and Hendry counties. Further north in Union County,

Soil Moisture Ratings

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		
	Previous week	Previous year	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short	16	3	29
Short	53	41	50
Adequate	29	43	21
Surplus	2	3	0

watermelon fields were being planted. In St. Johns County, producers were busy planting cantaloupes, cucumbers, sweet corn and watermelons. In Gulf County, cucumber, pea, squash, sweet corn, tomato, and watermelon fields were being planted. In Gadsden County tomatoes were being planted. USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) reported vegetable movement included snap beans, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, bell peppers, radishes, squash, sweet corn, and tomatoes. The USDA-AMS report that the supply was light for peppers other than bell peppers, cabbage, and celery.

Livestock and Pastures: Statewide, the pasture condition was lower due to drought with most pastures in fair condition. Most of the cattle were in fair condition, a slight decrease from the previous week due to the lower forage condition. In the **Panhandle**, the conditions of the pastures ranged from very poor to excellent. In Washington and Jackson counties, pastures were improving with recent rains. The cattle condition ranged from poor to excellent with most in good condition. In the **northern** areas, most pastures and cattle were in poor to good condition. In the **central** areas, most pastures were in fair condition with conditions ranging from very poor to good. Dry conditions continued. In the **southwestern** areas, the pasture condition ranged from very poor to excellent with most in fair condition. Hot, dry and windy conditions dried out soil and forages. Most of the cattle were in fair condition.

Cattle and Pasture Condition

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	Previous week	Current week	Previous week	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very poor.....	1	1	4	5
Poor.....	8	5	25	30
Fair.....	52	62	50	53
Good.....	35	30	19	10
Excellent.....	4	2	2	2

Citrus: Temperatures fell slightly with highs reaching the upper 80s in the citrus region. Rainfall was very light across the region. Fort Pierce received the most with 0.58 inches and was the only station to record more than a half-inch of rain. Eight stations recorded a tenth of an inch or less and 14 recorded no precipitation at all. Drought conditions continue to worsen across the entire citrus region, ranging from moderate on the eastern coast to extreme on much of the west coast. Drought conditions were per the U.S. Drought Monitor, last updated Apr 10, 2012. The Valencia harvest continued to average over 5 million boxes weekly. Abundant pea-sized and larger fruit was visible as the new crop progresses. Harvesting and young tree care, were the primary grove activities.

Citrus Estimated Boxes Harvested

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

Crop	Mar 26-Apr 1, 2012	Apr 2-8, 2012	Apr 9-15, 2012
	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)
Early & mid oranges.....	0	0	0
Valencia.....	5,672	5,331	5,835
Navel oranges.....	2	2	1
Temples.....	4	1	0
Grapefruit.....	585	218	104
Tangerines.....	43	15	6
Total.....	6,306	5,567	5,946

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