

February 26, 2018

FLORIDA: Total rainfall for the month ranged from 0.1 inches in multiple counties to 14.0 inches in Okaloosa County. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, 7 percent of the State was in a moderate drought by month's end, down 15 percentage points from the beginning of February. Average temperatures were as much as 11 degrees above normal for the month. Due to limited rain in numerous counties, pasture condition remained poor to fair throughout the month, and producers fed supplements to cattle. Cattle condition was fair to good. At the end of the month, producers began harvesting small grains and planting field corn. Sugarcane producers continued weeding, fertilizing, and harvesting their crop. Vegetable growers prepared land for and began planting spring crops. Warm days accelerated the maturity of winter produce crops with a wide range coming to market, including avocados, beets, boniatos, cabbage, eggplant, green beans, herbs, leafy greens, malangas, onions, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, sweet corn, and tomatoes. Citrus grove operations were normal for this time of year. Tangerines and tangelos were harvested throughout the month. Grapefruit harvesting continued, with a larger amount going to processing plants than fresh markets. Early and midseason orange harvest concluded. Fieldworkers across the state reported early blossoms beginning to emerge on some varieties of oranges, primarily Valencia.