



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
**Florida Crop Progress
and Condition Report**



Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the UF/IFAS Extension Service
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This report contains data collected each week from respondents across the state whose occupations provide them opportunities to discuss agricultural production with farmers in their counties as well as to make visual observations. We thank all who have contributed to this report.

March 18, 2024

Media Contact: Mark Hudson

General

According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service in Florida, there were 6.5 days suitable for fieldwork for the week ending Sunday, March 17, 2024. Precipitation for the state ranged from no rain to 1.4 inches at Crestview Airport (Okaloosa County). The average mean temperature ranged from 60.0°F in Niceville (Okaloosa County) to 80.2°F at Key West Naval Air Station (Monroe County).

Citrus

Temperatures continued their above average run in the citrus growing region last week, with average highs in the low to mid 80's. The warmest average readings were recorded in Lake Wales (Polk County), hitting 85 degrees, followed by Clermont (Lake County) and Sebring (Highlands County), both reaching 84 degrees. The citrus belt received little to no rain during the reporting period lull between fronts. The most rain fell in Lake Placid (Highlands County), reporting 0.14 inches of precipitation. According to the March 14, 2024, U.S. Drought Monitor, the entrenched area of abnormal dryness generally centered around Tampa Bay remained unchanged. The rest of the citrus growing region continued to be drought free.

Grove operations included spraying pesticides and nutritionals, laying herbicide, fertilizing, mowing, hedging, topping, removal of dead trees, replanting young trees, site pollination, ditch clean-out, and general grove maintenance. Irrigation was being run on an as-needed basis statewide. Regular bloom was present in most groves in all areas of the state, coinciding with the spring flush of vegetative growth.

Harvest of Valencia oranges for the fresh market continued steadily, while red and white grapefruit packing was nearly complete. Harvest of late tangerine varieties remained minimal. Processing plants were accepting Valencia orange packinghouse eliminations while juicing field run fruit in small amounts.

Citrus Estimated Boxes Harvested

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

Crop	For week ending			Previous Year
	Feb 25, 2024 (Preliminary)	Mar 3, 2024 (Preliminary)	Mar 10, 2024 (Preliminary)	Mar 12, 2023 (Actual)
	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)
Early and Mid-oranges.....	46	2	10	5
Valencia oranges	209	179	747	912
Red grapefruit.....	56	79	63	35
White grapefruit...	4	2	7	33
Tangerines and Tangelos.....	7	12	0	6
Total	322	274	827	991

Source: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service Fruit and Vegetable Division

Crops

Most of the state experienced no rain with only light showers in the northern part of the Panhandle. The favorable temperatures and weather allowed for more time in the fields. As a result, some farmers began or continued with spring planting. Rice planting and sugarcane harvest progressed as normal. Blueberry and strawberry picking farms began to harvest last week in South Florida. Other crops planted and harvested include green beans, tomatoes, yellow squash, zucchini, tomatoes, squash, okra, eggplant, boniato, potatoes, broccoli, and cabbage.

Livestock and Pastures

Cattle and pastures were reported in mostly fair to good condition. Cattle herds were reported to supplemented with hay and water in some areas. Pasture and range conditions were reported to be improving with the favorable weather conditions.

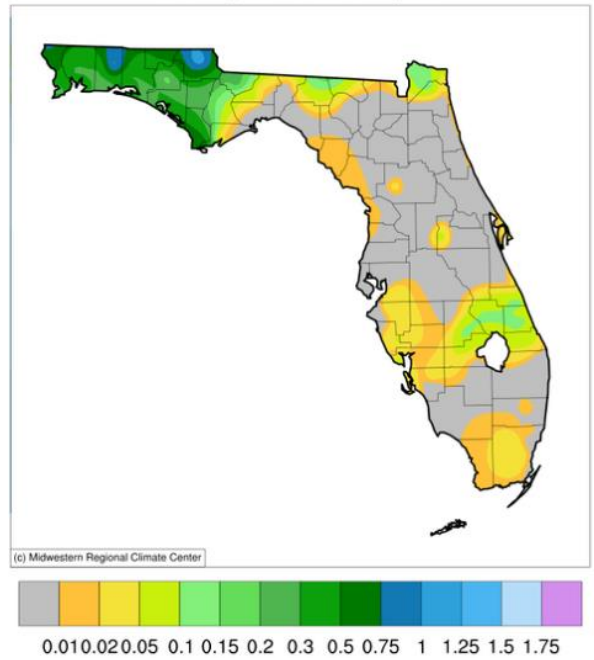
Conditions for Week Ending 3/17/24

Crop	Very poor (percent)	Poor (percent)	Fair (percent)	Good (percent)	Excellent (percent)
Cattle.....	1	2	43	41	13
Pasture & range...	1	16	48	26	9

Soil Moisture for Week Ending 3/17/24

Topsoil	Previous week (percent)	This week (percent)
Very short.....	3	5
Short.....	16	11
Adequate.....	71	80
Surplus.....	10	4

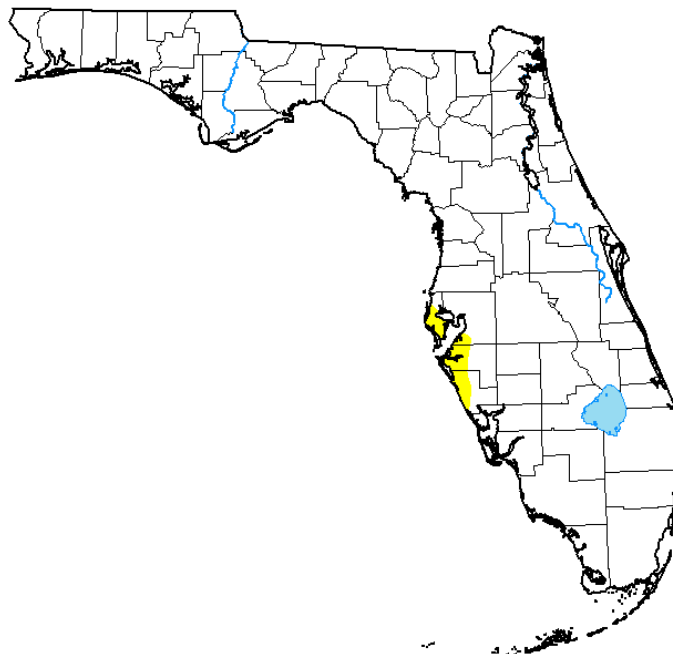
Accumulated Precipitation (in)
March 11, 2024 to March 17, 2024



<https://mrcc.purdue.edu/CLIMATE/>

U.S. Drought Monitor Florida

March 12, 2024
(Released Thursday, Mar. 14, 2024)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

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droughtmonitor.unl.edu