

February 27, 2024

FLORIDA: February temperatures were on par with historical averages, with temperatures fluctuating throughout the month. Total rainfall for the month ranged from 0.6 inches of rain in Marion County to 5.5 inches in Washington County. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, 2.5 percent of the state had abnormally dry conditions by month's end, compared to 2.7 percent at the month's beginning. Most of the state received moderate amounts of rainfall in February with heavier amounts of rainfall received at the end of the month. Pasture conditions remained mostly fair to good and seem to have improved since January with this month's more favorable weather conditions. As pasture conditions improved, availability of grazing also improved. Livestock remained in mostly fair to good condition as well, despite a hay shortage at the beginning of the month. Strawberry producers in central Florida experienced significant fruit damage and drop from mid-month rain and wind events. Sugarcane operations progressed throughout the month but remained slightly behind schedule. Citrus grove activities throughout the month included spraying pesticides and nutritionals, laying herbicide, fertilizing, mowing, hedging, topping, removal of dead trees, replanting young trees, and general grove maintenance. Eleven packinghouses were active in early and late February. Heavy rains delayed rice planting. Other crops that were planted and harvested include tomatoes, green beans, yellow squash, zucchini, sweet corn, eggplant, peppers, boniato, bitter melon, other Asian vegetables, avocado, and other tropical fruits.