

March 26, 2024

FLORIDA: March temperatures were slightly higher than historical averages, with average temperatures ranging from 61.7°F to 79.5°F. Total rainfall for the month ranged from 0.7 inches of rain in Saint Lucia County to 6 inches in Okaloosa County. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, 1.4 percent of the state had abnormally dry conditions by month's end, compared to 3.3 percent at the month's beginning. Most of the state received moderate to heavy amounts of rainfall throughout March. Pasture conditions remained mostly fair to good and seem to have improved since February. Many farmers reported that the rain received, and warmer temperatures have improved pasture and range conditions. As pasture conditions improved, availability of grazing also improved. In areas that did not receive adequate amounts of precipitation, livestock were supplemented with hay and water. Overall, cattle remained in mostly fair to good condition. West central Florida experienced heavy rain, wind, and hail mid-month which resulted in total crop losses for some of strawberry and melon producers. Sugarcane operations progressed throughout March and is neared completion. Citrus grove activities throughout the month included spraying pesticides and nutritionals, spraying herbicide, fertilizing, mowing, hedging, topping, removal of dead trees, replanting young trees, and general grove maintenance. Rice planting progressed normally throughout the month. 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.