



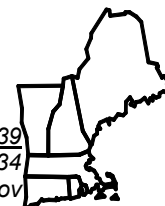
# New England Agricultural Statistics Service

a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

22 Bridge St. Third Floor  
PO Box 1444  
Concord, NH 03302

Aubrey R. Davis, Director  
www.usda.gov/nass

603-224-9639  
Fax: 603-225-1434  
nass-nh@nass.usda.gov



## Crop Weather

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May 19, 2003 - 4 pm

For week ending 5/18/03

### New England Crops Need Heat

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending May 18, 2003, there were 4.7 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated 2% very short, 5% short, 75% adequate, 18% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated 4% very short, 6% short, 81% adequate, 9% surplus. Pasture condition was rated as 0% very poor, 5% poor, 19% fair, 63% good, 13% excellent. A cool, wet start to the week gave way to warm, dry weather by week's end, allowing growers to get back into the fields. In general, temperatures have remained below normal, slowing germination and planting progress. Frost hit many locations last week. Major farm activities included: planting vegetables, sweet corn, field corn, potatoes and small grains; transplanting shade tobacco; spreading manure; applying fertilizer and herbicides; pruning; irrigating, plowing; tilling; discing; turning animals out to pasture.

#### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	2	1	1
Short	5	4	6
Adequate	75	81	70
Surplus	18	14	23
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	4	4	7
Short	6	5	20
Adequate	81	83	67
Surplus	9	8	6

**FRUIT:** Most tree fruit crops were in bloom last week and peaches were nearing petal fall. Orchardists continued to apply fertilizer and fungicides, prune trees and mow orchard floors. Bees were brought into orchards and berry fields for pollination. Maine wild blueberry growers are gearing up for this season, applying fungicides and pre-emergence herbicides. Cranberry growers in Massachusetts irrigated to protect from frost and continued to apply fertilizer. Strawberries were covered or irrigated for frost protection last week.

**FIELD CROPS:** Crop growth was slowed last week due to cool temperatures. The cutting of first crop of hay is just around the corner. Field corn planting progressed to twenty percent last week and remained in fair to good condition. New England potato crops were rated in good condition, and Massachusetts and Rhode Island potatoes began to emerge. Favorable temperatures and conditions allowed potato growers in Maine to begin planting last week. Maine small grain farmers also started planting and had completed ten percent by week's end. Growers began setting shade tobacco in Connecticut.

#### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Stage	Fruit Set	Condition
Apples	Early Bloom	Avg/B.Avg	Good/Fair
Peaches	Full Bloom/PF	B.Avg/Avg	Good/Fair
Pears	Full Bloom	Avg	Good/Fair
Blueberries			
Highbush	Bud/Early Bloom	Avg	Good/Fair
Wild, ME	Bud	--	Good
Cranberries, MA	Bud	--	Fair/Good
Strawberries	Bud/Early Bloom	Avg	Good/Fair

\* PF = Petal Fall

**VEGETABLES:** New England farmers continued with vegetable planting last week when weather permitted. Asparagus and rhubarb were harvested last week. Sweet corn under plastic is emerging, while growth in the open is slow to emerge due to cool temperatures. Many took advantage of the beautiful weekend weather and visited farm stands and garden centers.

#### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2003	2002	5-yr Avg	Percent Emerged	Condition
-- Percent Planted --					
Barley, ME	10	30	55	--	Good
Oats, ME	10	30	50	--	Good
Potatoes					
Maine	5	20	45	--	Good
Mass	75	75	80	10	Good
Rhode Isl	65	95	85	5	Good
Silage Corn	20	25	35	--	Fair/Good
Sweet Corn	30	25	35	10	Good/Fair
Tobacco					
Shade	25	5	15	--	Good/Fair
Dry Hay					
First Cut	0	0	<5	--	Good/Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 18, 2003

The 41 stations shown below are limited by space but are well distributed across the region. All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE -50F		BASE -60F		TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL		DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN				INCHES	DFN		
<b>MAINE</b>															
Augusta_State_A	35	67	49	-6	59	-21	4	+2	0.57	-0.27	4	2.48	-1.08	11	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	31	71	49	-5	59	+4	4	+4	0.63	-0.21	3	2.65	-0.58	10	
Bethel	30	74	49	-5	45	-17	2	+2	0.75	-0.07	3	3.59	+0.28	12	
Caribou_Municip	33	74	46	-5	10	-29	0	+0	0.46	-0.24	4	2.75	+0.13	17	
Dover-Foxcroft	31	69	46	-6	22	-18	0	+0	0.46	-0.31	3	2.07	-1.21	12	
Frenchville	33	74	46	-4	12	-13	1	+1	0.12	-0.58	2	1.00	-1.70	12	
Houlton	29	74	46	-6	18	-21	0	+0	0.32	-0.45	4	3.13	+0.28	14	
Livermore_Falls	30	72	49	-4	41	+1	1	+1	0.63	-0.21	4	2.99	-0.48	12	
Moosehead	27	74	47	-2	14	-4	0	+0	0.57	-0.20	4	2.88	-0.18	13	
Portland_ME	35	61	48	-5	66	+15	10	+10	0.75	-0.08	3	3.22	-0.31	15	
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>															
Benton	28	68	48	-6	56	-25	0	-8	1.05	+0.28	4	2.69	-0.20	13	
Berlin_AG	29	71	50	-4	56	-10	5	+1	0.96	+0.19	2	2.62	-0.54	10	
Concord	30	68	50	-5	122	+29	15	+8	1.02	+0.32	3	4.22	+1.42	14	
Diamond Pond	30	66	45	-4	20	-4	0	+0	1.09	+0.21	5	4.63	+1.37	17	
Keene_AP	28	70	51	-7	127	-8	9	-8	0.85	+0.01	3	2.62	-0.64	10	
North_Conway	29	70	51	-3	67	-10	0	-5	0.85	-0.06	3	3.77	+0.04	13	
Rochester	32	68	49	-8	73	-37	4	-6	1.13	+0.24	3	3.75	+0.00	11	
<b>VERMONT</b>															
Burlington_Intl	38	71	55	-2	158	+36	14	-1	1.83	+1.13	3	4.22	+1.46	13	
Island Pond	30	71	49	-2	47	+2	0	+0	1.21	+0.38	3	4.19	+1.21	14	
Montpelier	30	68	50	-5	77	-1	8	+1	0.30	-0.43	3	1.91	-0.74	10	
Pownal	36	69	51	-3	99	+15	6	-4	2.12	+1.08	4	4.02	-0.12	13	
Rochester	30	70	50	-3	67	-2	5	+1	1.66	+0.68	4	4.59	+0.75	15	
Rutland_AG	32	71	52	-6	90	-58	8	-16	1.67	+0.90	3	4.37	+1.46	12	
Sutton	32	70	50	-1	56	+14	0	+0	1.13	+0.33	3	4.21	+1.22	16	
Townshend_Lake	33	70	50	-6	71	-38	0	-12	1.24	+0.41	4	3.70	+0.49	13	
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>															
Ashburnham	32	68	51	-4	112	+40	5	+5	1.00	+0.23	3	3.40	+0.23	12	
Boston/Logan_In	39	65	51	-8	182	+29	30	+24	0.25	-0.48	3	1.95	-1.19	13	
Greenfield	34	71	54	-5	151	-3	13	-2	0.92	+0.06	3	3.35	-0.12	12	
New_Bedford	31	65	51	-7	122	-34	3	-4	0.16	-0.67	3	2.85	-0.63	12	
Otis_AFB	37	63	51	-4	101	+27	0	+0	0.07	-0.77	1	1.87	-1.63	10	
Plymouth	33	65	50	-5	125	+41	4	+4	0.26	-0.65	4	2.82	-0.97	14	
Walpole	30	69	51	-6	157	+43	16	+10	0.18	-0.59	3	2.48	-0.93	14	
Chicopee/Westov	30	70	53	-8	192	-26	23	-5	0.72	-0.19	3	3.95	+0.31	12	
Worthington	30	66	50	-5	88	+9	3	-2	1.36	+0.31	2	3.34	-0.79	11	
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>															
Providence	36	68	54	-4	183	+52	17	+13	0.35	-0.49	2	2.98	-0.57	12	
Woonsocket	29	67	51	-6	134	+24	6	+3	0.22	-0.69	4	2.41	-1.38	12	
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>															
Bridgeport/Siko	42	65	54	-5	164	-1	10	-9	0.05	-0.86	1	2.67	-0.97	13	
Hartford/Bradle	34	70	55	-5	234	+41	31	+5	0.27	-0.70	2	2.58	-1.12	12	
Norfolk	32	65	51	-4	99	+24	4	+1	0.72	-0.29	3	2.59	-1.55	12	
Thomaston_Dam	32	75	56	-1	175	+48	17	+6	0.30	-0.69	3	3.05	-1.05	15	
Willimantic	31	68	53	-4	177	+52	13	+3	0.08	-0.89	3	2.03	-1.88	13	

**STATE WEATHER SUMMARY**  
For the Week Ending Sunday, May 18, 2003

Summary based on NWS data.  
DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).  
Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.  
Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.  
Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	26	77	47	-5	0.00	1.29
NH	23	72	49	-5	0.20	1.63
VT	26	77	51	-4	0.30	2.20
MA	26	71	51	-5	0.00	1.49
RI	29	68	52	-5	0.00	0.35
CT	30	75	54	-4	0.05	0.72

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**REPORTERS COMMENTS, By County:** Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), or other knowledgeable individuals.

**CONNECTICUT - Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Planting of field and sweet corn continues. Some sweet corn 6" tall under row cover. Tree fruit conditions vary across the area. Spotty frost Sunday morning required irrigation on strawberries. Setting of shade tobacco with some producers reporting 25% complete. Early set of cabbage looks good. Could use a little rain but not a lot. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Preparing the soil and planting field corn and sweet corn. Cold and wet spring have put us at least a week or two behind. Scattered frost, heavy in some areas this weekend. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Moved cows to pasture, fields are fairly dry. Working on equipment. Starting to plant corn. Still on the cold side, not much sunshine. Pruning fruit trees, preparing land for vegetables, harvesting asparagus. Apples are through full bloom. A lot of bees lost this winter. Spraying for scab. Bedstraw is running rampant in places. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Temperatures continue to be unseasonably cool for this time of year. Still getting frost at night. Some producers done planting silage corn. Vegetable growers are not sure what to put in the ground since soils are still cool. Fruit trees had spectacular blossoms. **Joyce Meader (Ext), Windham:** Started chopping first cutting of grass this past weekend. Corn planting put on hold by farms desiring excellent quality forages.

**MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: Growers finally getting into the fields, however there are still some wet spots. Mostly small grains being planted with a few potatoes being planted. Hope we get some good weather so we can get the crops into the ground. Soil temperatures by the weekend had risen to a sufficient level. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Farmers are tilling the ground and spreading manure. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** The warm weather this weekend has done wonders for the forage grasses. Many farmers are turning out their animals on pasture. Fields are being spread with manure, plowed and tilled in preparation for planting. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** A wet and cold week we had, some corn is being planted. Mostly land preparation for a late spring planting. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Warm dry weather at the end of last week got everyone ready to go. Lots of manure spreading, planting and fertilizing. More warm dry weather predicted. We actually could use a little rain! **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** After a rainy start and several damp, dreary days the weather finally cleared for field activities on Friday and throughout the weekend. A small amount of sweet corn has been planted with some emergence reported. To date, no silage corn has been planted although planting preparations are underway. More warm weather is needed to push greenhouse crops along. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Fields are being burned for pruning and pre-emergence herbicides are being applied. Leaves are emerging on cropping field stems. Fungicides are being applied for mummyberry disease control. Bees being brought into the crop fields for pollination. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** The week started wet and cold. Farmers are spreading manure and preparing fields for crops. Some of the producers are planting potatoes and corn. Many want the ground to warm up a little more before they put seed into the ground. Many market gardeners have the cold weather crops in the ground and some are harvesting asparagus. One producer told me that the asparagus is about ten days behind. That won't spoil the taste if you get a chance to have some on your dinner plate. I can't wait for all that fresh produce. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** There are a lot of crops in the ground, but they need heat. Strawberries are way behind, and those crops that have emerged are slow to grow. Sweet corn on plastic is up as much as 1 to 2 inches, while corn planted on bare ground has yet to emerge. We need some heat. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Soil and weather conditions are perfect for planting all early crops. Farmers are straight out busy. We will need rain after this beautiful spell of sunshine. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Ag producers have been busy emptying out the manure pit and getting ready to plant crops. Fields being prepared and planted. Sweet corn, cold crops, and potatoes are all being planted. Greenhouses are selling bedding plants. Weather still a bit cold, but wait until next week - we will be going full bore!

**MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire:** Farmers continue to prepare ground for summer crops. Some corn was planted this week between the three inches of rain that fell. Orchard owners watched for problems, ready to spray if needed, but orchards are in nice bloom stage. Early planted sweet corn up to four inches high. We have hopes it does not have any weather problems. Temperatures have been in the 60's with cool nights near 40 degrees. Brisk pre-Memorial Day business at FAV stands for flowers and nursery items. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Conditions remain unseasonably cool, we have failed to reach 60 degrees. There was no rainfall to speak of and only a hint of frost, but planting is slow as fields are slow to dry out and soil temperatures remain low. Vegetable growers are planting early crops but seed is not germinating. Dairy farmers are spreading manure, preparing fields for field corn planting, some are starting to harvest their first cutting of hay. Cranberry growers are applying fertilizer and watching for frost. Shellfish growers are planting new seed and starting to harvest quahogs and oysters as demand picks up. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** A cool, damp week continues to keep field work and growth of crops at a slow pace. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Cool and dry conditions persist in Franklin County. This has allowed most farms to catch up on early spring work. Potato and corn planting is continuing at a rapid pace. Fruit growers have remarked that it's been too cool for bees to pollinate well, even though the orchards are in bloom. All growers got a scare Saturday night with scattered frost warnings. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Another very cool week with a few rain showers. Farmers continue planting silage corn, sweet corn, potatoes, and cabbage. A few growers started planting winter squash and summer, zucchini squashes on plastic. Early potatoes are emerging from the soil. The seed onion crop looks very good. Harvesting asparagus and rhubarb. With the cool, rainy weather the hay and alfalfa crop look excellent. All fruit trees are in full bloom and strawberry growers were irrigating Sunday morning for frost protection. Strawberries are just starting to blossom. Sweet corn under plastic is up 6-8 inches. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Yet another cold week! But this next week promises to be a winner. Great retail Sunday at farm stands as annuals were rolled out to meet consumers' demand. Super plant sales. All growers now hitting the field with transplants and seed drills as cool weather finally breaks.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:** Bedding plants and vegetable transplant sales were brisk this past weekend. Most cold tolerant crops are planted. Pastures look good. Successive sweet corn plantings continue. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Finally feels like May! Beautiful weather the last few days, let's hope it keeps up. Hay fields growing very well. Apples, pears and blueberries beginning to blossom. Sales of vegetables and bedding plants very brisk. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Generally cool, slightly damp weather most of the week. Grass is growing very well, and a few farmers have just started their first cutting. Corn planting is in full swing. Apple trees starting to blossom. Vegetable operations continuing to plant and set out transplants. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Frost has greenhouses/nurseries covering up this weekend. Good charge of rain, around 1.5 inches, helping some fields that were looking dry. Grass fields and pastures greening up. Still some corn fields yet to be prepared for planting. Manure being disced into soil. About to begin spraying for gall midges and twig aphids on Christmas tree plantations. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Rainfall during the week slowed field progress but replenished soil moisture. Corn planting continued as weather permitted. Hay growing slowly as cool temperatures continue. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruits: Made sure bees were in apple orchards beginning of week. Peaches were in petal fall stage and apples were at full bloom or just started petal fall in the Hollis area on Sunday, May 18. Some orchardists concerned about the cooler weather and that bees did not work the apple blossoms. Planting fruit trees, raspberries, blueberries and strawberries. With all the rain during the week, orchardists making sure to have protective fungicide sprays applied. Vegetables: With the rain during the week, it was very

difficult to do any field work, including making successive plantings of sweet corn and trying to finish potato planting. In fields where soil dried quickly, some growers were plowing, discing, fertilizing and laying down plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Weed spraying sweet corn fields. Harvesting asparagus on weekend of May 17-18. Field Crops: Spreading manure, plowing, discing, fertilizing and planting corn on fields that are not too wet. Grasses and forage crops starting to grow better. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** This week was another cool and wet week ending with a nice, hot and sunny Sunday. Planting mixed vegetables, seeding pasture and renovating hay fields. Protective fungicide sprayed on tree fruits and small fruits. Growers busy covering strawberries or using overhead irrigation on a couple of nights predicted with freezing temperatures. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Due to the mixture of sunshine, cool and rainy days, the grass in pastures and hay fields is growing very well. Some growers started early planting of corn. Fruit growers continued to apply protective sprays against apple scab and scouted for pests. Vegetable growers were busy getting their transplants ready for transplanting. Tomato crops in hoop houses and greenhouses are coming up well for most growers. Greenhouses and garden centers were expecting improvement on sales with expected warm weather over the weekend and next week.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** A full week without rain allowed fieldwork, planting, fertilizing and herbicide control to be brought up to date. Strawberries could use some heat. Sweet corn being planted, potatoes almost complete. Roadside stands still busy even though the temperatures remain below normal. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Spring has been unseasonably cold, fruit trees have heavy blooms. Producers are very busy tilling, planting, pruning and fertilizing. Spring crops are going to be a couple of weeks behind.

**VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoille:** Week started off rather wet but finished with dry, warm weather. Farmers were again very busy with working the fields for corn planting and various seedings. Weed spraying in corn fields has

also begun. Warm temperatures have finally got the grass growing. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Landowners spent the last week putting animals out to pasture and working fields for corn. The first part of the week was cold and wet, however the past 3 days have been warm and dry. Soil temperature is still cool but the last few days have helped this. The larger corn growers have started to seed corn. **Perley Sparrow (FSA), Windham:** We finally got some warmer weather this past weekend. Last week we received about 2.5 inches of rain. Slowed up corn planting, but the hay crop is almost ready to cut. Orchard grass is heading out and some early varieties have started to bud. Sweet corn started under plastic has 5 leaves and is about 15 inches tall. Most vegetable growers have not planted their more sensitive crops because of the cold nights. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Very wet soils. Little land prepared for planting. A very little corn and new seedings planted last weekend between showers. Some fertilizer spreading on grass land. Little manure spread, too wet. **Gary Braman (FSA) Orange/Windsor:** Corn mostly planted along the Connecticut River, slightly behind schedule. Moisture is about right but would like some more sun. In the higher ground, manure spreading, plowing and planting. Very busy at the end of the week after some early week rain showers. Grass is growing and cattle are enjoying the lush pastures. Frost after the full moon, vegetable growers using irrigation to avoid crop damages. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Still plowing and harrowing between showery weather. One more planting of peas to put in. Potatoes all planted. Planting mid-season sweet corn this week also, pop corn and Indian corn. Rain 2.202 inches in showers. In spite of showery weather, most land has planted real well. Great weather for peas. Started cutting asparagus, good for this time of year, sun and warm weather would help. Small garden crops germinating well. Shade trees in full bloom, time to turn out cattle. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** Relatively warm days with cool nights and adequate amounts of moisture gave good growing conditions last week. With the addition of a good warm up this past weekend, we have finally reached bloom-time in Northern New England. Scab infection period was of concern earlier last week. Arthropod development was still relatively slow in the early part of last week, but the weekend warm-up should speed things along.

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**Aubrey R. Davis, Director**  
**Statisticians:** Emily McAllister, Robin Helrich

**Joe Samson, Deputy Director**  
**Stat Assistant:** Wayne Colpitt

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