



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 24, 2004 - 4 pm

For week ending 5/23/04

Planting Progress Continues

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending May 23, 2004, there were 5.3 days available for field work across New England. Topsoil moisture was rated three percent very short, five percent short, 65% adequate, 27% surplus. Subsoil moisture was rated three percent very short, four percent short, 83% adequate, ten percent surplus. Pasture condition was rated as one percent poor, nine percent fair, 66% good, 24% excellent. Temperatures during the week were above normal across New England. Thunderstorms throughout the region helped replenish soil moisture levels in most locations allowing growers to continue planting between the showers. Major farm activities included: planting field corn, early vegetables, sweet corn, tobacco and potatoes; making haylage; harvesting asparagus and rhubarb; spreading manure; applying fertilizer, plowing and discing.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	3	2	2
Short	5	7	3
Adequate	65	84	71
Surplus	27	7	24
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	3	2	3
Short	4	4	4
Adequate	83	89	77
Surplus	10	5	16

FRUIT: Fruit growers were busy spraying protective fungicides and insecticides in orchards after the weekend rains. Apple and peach development ranged from full bloom to petal fall stage. Pear development was in the petal fall stage across the six-State region. Fungicides applications for Mummyberry disease continued in wild blueberry fields. Bees were being moved in fields for pollination. Some winterkill on plants from cold winter. Cranberry growers were keeping an eye on insect populations. Reports of Black-headed fireworm and cranberry weevil were big concerns. Growers have applied insecticides to deal with these problems.

FIELD CROPS: Pasture and hay fields were green and growing very well. Harvest of first cut haylage and dry hay was underway by the end of the week. Silage corn plantings continued although hindered by rainy conditions. Plantings advanced to 55 percent, 15 percent ahead of last year and in line with the five year average. This was a busy week for Maine growers. Favorable weather conditions gave them an opportunity to make good progress on potatoes, oats and barley. Potatoes progressed to 75 percent, ahead of last year and the average. Massachusetts and Rhode Island potato farmers have 85 percent of their potatoes planted.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

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

EB - Early Bloom, FB - Full Bloom, PF - Petal Fall

VEGETABLES: Early season vegetables plantings continued. Growers were spraying for weed control on Sweet corn fields. Green house and high tunnel tomatoes were doing well. Growers were harvesting asparagus, rhubarb and some spinach during the week.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2004	2003	5-yr Avg	Percent Emerged	Condition
-- Percent Planted --					
Barley, ME	85	70	65	35	Excel/Good
Oats, ME	80	70	65	30	Excel/Good
Potatoes					
Maine	75	50	60	--	Good/Excel
Mass	85	85	85	35	Good
Rhode Isl	85	95	95	--	Good
Silage Corn	55	40	50	20	Excel/Good
Sweet Corn	40	45	45	25	Good
Tobacco					
Shade	50	45	40	--	Good/Excel
-- Percent Harvested --					
Dry Hay	5	<5	<5	--	Good/Excel
First Cut					

For the Week Ending Sunday, May 23, 2004

The 41 stations shown below were limited by space but were 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		
MAINE															
Augusta_State_A	45	76	58	+2	208	+88	36	+28	1.01	+0.17	5	3.39	-0.11	13	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	41	76	57	+3	174	+86	26	+23	0.84	+0.04	4	3.43	+0.18	12	
Bethel	40	75	57	+2	207	+110	45	+39	0.88	+0.04	4	3.36	+0.05	13	
Cari bou_Muni cip	33	73	54	+1	120	+56	27	+27	0.46	-0.24	2	1.96	-0.77	11	
Dover-Foxcroft	36	75	55	+2	117	+51	16	+16	0.71	-0.10	3	2.71	-0.55	12	
Frenchvi lle	32	72	53	+3	106	+61	19	+19	0.53	-0.19	2	2.01	-0.77	11	
Houl ton	31	75	55	+3	126	+61	22	+21	0.16	-0.61	3	2.06	-0.91	11	
Li verm ore_Fal ls	37	76	58	+5	209	+143	44	+44	0.67	-0.17	4	3.29	-0.12	13	
Moosehead	34	73	53	+4	103	+69	16	+16	0.41	-0.36	3	1.55	-1.51	12	
Portl and_ME	43	77	58	+4	195	+114	36	+36	0.94	+0.17	4	3.56	+0.19	11	
NEW_HAMPSHI RE															
Benton	38	73	56	+0	223	+105	54	+40	1.40	+0.61	4	4.05	+1.07	11	
Berli n_AG	39	75	57	+3	214	+115	51	+41	0.85	+0.02	2	4.39	+1.23	8	
Concord	40	79	61	+4	361	+224	117	+104	1.46	+0.76	4	4.27	+1.47	10	
Di amond_Pond	37	70	51	+1	122	+82	15	+15	1.70	+0.78	5	4.43	+1.03	17	
Keene_AP	44	77	61	+2	315	+124	88	+59	2.57	+1.71	5	4.65	+1.31	11	
North_Conway	43	78	60	+4	256	+140	77	+66	0.98	+0.08	4	3.30	-0.36	11	
Rochester	43	77	58	-1	259	+99	70	+50	2.78	+1.94	3	5.96	+2.33	8	
VERMONT															
Burl i ngton_Intl	44	76	60	+3	326	+153	117	+90	1.42	+0.72	4	3.17	+0.39	15	
Isl and_Pond	35	71	55	+3	170	+100	35	+33	1.40	+0.53	3	3.35	+0.19	14	
Montpel ier	37	73	57	+3	258	+144	73	+60	1.92	+1.15	5	3.59	+0.78	15	
Pownal	38	77	59	+5	284	+162	74	+58	0.77	-0.28	4	3.75	-0.39	12	
Rochester	37	79	58	+4	242	+140	63	+53	2.09	+1.11	4	4.00	+0.10	12	
Rutl and_AG	39	76	58	-2	250	+45	57	+19	2.63	+1.82	4	5.25	+2.21	12	
Sutton	41	72	55	+3	169	+102	36	+34	1.11	+0.27	3	2.94	-0.17	16	
Townshend_Lake	41	79	59	+2	265	+108	71	+49	1.30	+0.53	4	3.21	+0.00	14	
MASSACHUSETTS															
Ashburnham	43	78	60	+4	283	+175	73	+67	0.65	-0.17	5	3.42	+0.26	14	
Boston/Logan_In	48	77	61	+2	371	+159	119	+103	0.37	-0.33	4	2.64	-0.38	12	
Greenfi el d	43	82	62	+2	320	+105	92	+64	0.91	+0.00	5	4.04	+0.54	14	
New_Bedford	39	77	60	+1	277	+63	57	+40	0.11	-0.69	4	1.57	-1.80	11	
Oti s_AFB	41	73	59	+3	229	+117	47	+44	0.14	-0.70	3	2.26	-1.18	10	
Pl ymouth	40	78	60	+4	277	+151	67	+62	0.23	-0.65	5	1.87	-1.83	14	
Wal pol e	46	78	61	+4	337	+174	87	+74	0.85	+0.08	5	3.78	+0.55	14	
Chi copee/Westov	46	79	63	+2	417	+128	149	+102	0.85	-0.07	5	3.08	-0.57	14	
Worthi ngton	38	78	58	+3	251	+134	56	+45	0.65	-0.40	5	3.04	-1.15	14	
RHODE_I SLAND															
Provi dence	49	75	62	+4	352	+167	93	+81	0.11	-0.73	3	2.29	-1.18	10	
Woonsocket	44	79	62	+4	341	+182	98	+89	0.32	-0.59	3	2.97	-0.76	10	
CONNECTI CUT															
Bri dgeport/Si ko	52	76	64	+4	357	+131	88	+55	0.11	-0.77	6	2.96	-0.65	18	
Hartford/Bradle	49	79	65	+4	419	+157	143	+99	0.34	-0.61	4	2.80	-0.93	12	
Norfol k	43	76	61	+5	292	+179	78	+69	0.69	-0.36	4	2.27	-1.87	14	
Thomaston_Dam	48	82	65	+7	400	+222	129	+108	0.63	-0.35	2	3.20	-0.88	12	
Wi lli manti c	45	78	63	+5	383	+207	118	+98	0.32	-0.59	3	3.11	-0.74	12	

STATE WEATHER SUMMARY
For the Week Ending Sunday, May 23, 2004

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.

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State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	29	86	56	+2	0.03	1.84
NH	30	84	57	+2	0.74	2.86
VT	33	79	57	+2	0.77	2.63
MA	34	83	60	+3	0.04	2.27
RI	44	79	62	+4	0.11	0.32
CT	43	82	63	+4	0.11	0.69

Prepared by AWIS, Inc.

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

CONNECTICUT - Howard Rood (FSA), Fairfield/Litchfield: Many dairy farmers estimate that field corn planting is about two weeks ahead of last year. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Transplanting shade and broadleaf tobacco. Setting tomatoes, peppers, cabbage and collards. Planting sweet corn, beans, potatoes, squash and cukes. Field corn nearing 3/4 done. Chopping hay for silage. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Maturity of grasses & clover about two weeks ahead. Chopping grass, finishing planting corn. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Corn is being planted - some up and green. Chopping grass. Equipment problems and repairs. Harvesting asparagus and planting vegetables. Drying up. Too early to tell scab but spores all around - potential for heavy inoculation due to wet weather. Good pollination weather, good bee activity. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Making haylage and planting corn at the same time is always a challenge. Some farms stop planting until haylage is all in. Others work half days on each. Thunderstorms with 1/2 - 3/4" hail rolled through the state Sunday night. Time will tell what effect the hail had on emerged corn.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Potatoes and small grains: The good weather this past week gave growers the opportunity to get a lot of this crop in the ground. Week was spent planting potatoes, small grains, spreading lime. Soils warming up and are working well. Small grains have emerged and first planted potatoes about to break through the ground. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Farmers are busy planting crops. The warmer weather was welcomed to help farmers progress to get the crops in the ground. If the predicted rain holds off, farmers should be able to finish planting this week. **Steve London, Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes and small grains: This week has been very busy with good weather and planting going full bore. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Farmers are still tilling ground, spreading manure and planting. Some livestock are grazing. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Manure is still being spread in fields. Some planting has started. Hay fields are slow to start growing. Animals have been turned out into pastures but grass has been slow to grow. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Corn is still being planted. Some corn has emerged. Rain is well welcome for the growing season. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Greenhouse tomatoes and cucumbers are ready. Spinach, Swiss chard and radishes too! Cool damp weather may be causing a problem with Mummyberry or Monilinia blight. This week's forecast calls for more rain. **Dr. David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild blueberries: Fungicide applications being applied for mummyberry disease, blight symptoms beginning to appear. Bees being moved into field for pollination. Note a lot of winterkill on plants from cold open winter. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** We have a typical Maine Spring. Hot one day, cold and rainy the next day. Producers are planting potatoes, sweet corn, silage corn and other crops as weather permits. Many have emptied the manure pits and have the fields ready for planting. The pastures and hay fields are "greening up" and will be ready for harvest soon. Everyone is set for another ride with Mother Nature. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Highbush blueberries and cane crops look like they suffered some winter damage. Apple blossoms are beautiful. Field conditions are still very good.

MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire: Corn plantings and some cutting of forage silage. One producer reported planting six times this week. Corn ground being sprayed for weed control. Strawberry planting. Crop losses on peaches, sweet cherry and nectarine - total. The cause might have been the cold freezing weather in January. Tent caterpillars are showing a lot. Corn has been coming up in eight to ten days after planting. Apple crop seems to be OK. Waiting to hear from strawberry growers on their condition, most have been uncovered. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: The biggest concern for growers currently is trying to stay one step ahead of the massive insect populations. Black-headed fireworm is everywhere and cranberry weevil is the second biggest concern. Cutworms, spanworms, and gypsy moth caterpillars have also been noted.

Most growers have sprayed once or twice to deal with these pests. There was one frost night this week. Phenological development is still probably seven days ahead of normal. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** A great week for field work as all types of crops are now being planted. Growth looks good. Flea beetles on cukes, melons and eggplant are being sprayed. Hay crop looks good. Everyone is pretty happy with the season at this point. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Warm and windy weather has allowed farmers to hit high gear on field activities this week. Planters of every variety have been working non-stop all week. These weather conditions have also dried fields to the point where irrigation will be needed soon. Shade tobacco growers have completed planting this week. Potato and corn producers aren't far behind. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** The week was mostly warm and dry with a well needed rain shower at week's end. Everyone was planting. Farmers were planting new strawberry and asparagus beds, silage, grain, sweet corn, cucumbers, winter squash, etc. Harvesting hay, asparagus, rhubarb and spinach. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Ok, who turned off the heat pump? Cold raw week slowed or stopped most field work as rains and/or temperatures delayed transplanting. Good weekend sales of plants and vegetable seedlings. Perennials still sales leader. Looks like yet another bumper crop of strawberries!

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll: Field preparation and planting continues, pastures are green and growing. Hay fields ready for a cut, if weather will cooperate, should be an excellent first cut. Reports of Apple and Blueberry winter damage still coming in. Reports indicate loss of 1/3. Nurseries and garden centers doing brisk business, many people have planted their home gardens early, hoping they won't be surprised by frost. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** A little rain, but plenty of sunny weather for field work. A few farms done planting corn and are now spraying, and others are busy planting the remaining corn acres. A few more farms have begun first cutting, and others are gearing up to start this week. Apple growers are thinning. Despite winter injury, some blueberries look pretty good, with lots of blossoms. Vegetable growers are transplanting tomatoes, etc. Greenhouses have lots of sales activity. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Field corn continues although hampered somewhat by rainy weather at the end of the week. Seem to be a little behind this year. Grasses on meadows and hay land growing very well in this cold wet season. Orchard grass heading out. Dandelions going to seed. Vegetable plantings getting started, plastic mulch being laid. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn planting continuing at rapid pace. First cut started and continues as weather permits. Applying manure after cutting. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruits: Apples and pears are past petal fall stage in to fruit set stage where later blooming areas in county are at petal fall stage. With all the rain during weekend, orchardists made sure to have protective fungicide sprays applied. Moved bees out of orchards. Blueberries and Strawberries are blooming. Green Pug Moth seen in one orchard and seeing plum curculio activity several orchards. Winter injury is still being seen on blueberry bushes, raspberry canes, apple trees, and peach trees. Vegetables: Harvesting asparagus, rhubarb and some spinach. Successive plantings of sweet corn and trying to finish potato planting and other early season vegetable crops. Growers were plowing, discing fertilizing and laying down plastic mulch and drip irrigation tape. Also, growers are transplanting field tomatoes. Weed spraying planted sweet corn fields. Field Crops: Spreading manure, plowing, discing, fertilizing and planting corn on fields. Grasses and forage crops are growing fast with orchard grass starting to head out. **John Porter (Ext), Merrimack:** Early hay crop silage harvesting is underway. Reports of excellent quality and yields. Dry hay not quite ready. Early planted corn is in the third to fourth leaf. Vegetables being seeded and transplanted. A little apprehension about the full moon the first week of June. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Crops growing well. Need some warm sunny days. Too much rain in the last few days. Continue on preparing fields, and planting vegetables and small fruits. Spraying protective fungicides. Slow traffic at garden enters this past week

end. Hoping for a good one for Memorial day. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Very wet weekend. Fruit growers spraying fungicides and insecticides. Apples, blueberries and strawberries looking good. Vegetable growers planting and transplanting vegetable crops. Greenhouse and high tunnel tomatoes looking good. Hay growing nicely but slowly. Cool temperatures slowing crop growth. Greenhouses and garden centers continue to have steady plant sales. However the rainy weekends seem to slightly slow down plant sales.

RHODE ISLAND - Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties: Cool weather and occasional downpours are keeping things moist, but farmers are busy with cultivating and planting.

VERMONT - John St. Onge/Kim Peterson (FSA), Lamoille: Last weeks favorable weather helped with planting progress. Crops are all looking good at this point in the growing season. Weekend rains will slow corn planting down for a few days. Warmer weather would be very helpful for all crops. Some will be starting first cut this week. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** Landowners are in full production planting corn. Most of the large producers have finished. Some of the earlier planted corn has emerged and looks good. The pastures are in real good shape with all of the rain we have had. The early grasses in the hay fields have started to head out so I expect we will see some farmers begin to hay this week. **Perley Sparrow (FSA), Windham:** Blueberries producers are reporting heavy blooming raspberries in bud stage and look excellent. No-til corn is being planted on haylage fields where a

poor crop was harvested. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Newly emerged corn, clover, alfalfa, grass is uniform and vigorous. Grass hay seed heads showing, orchard grass fully emerged heads. Pasture growth excellent, dandelions set seed. Soil conditions excellent for planting most of week. Ended week with excess water in fields from heavy rains. Continued secondary soil tillage, rock removal, leveling, planting corn, soy, alfalfa, grass, cereal grains. Also manure spreading, spraying herbicide for weed control in corn, machinery preparation for hay harvest. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** We reached petal fall as of Monday, with good fruit set. Heavy precipitation last week and a forecast of additional rain this week brings both good fruit growth news, but coupled with the possibility of heavy disease pressure down the road. **Heather Darby (Ext), Franklin:** Scattered showers last week slowed field work tremendously. Farmers were working in between showers. A large amount of field corn planted as well as new forage seedings. Some corn spiked out of ground. Many farmers plowing up alfalfa stands that were hit hard by winter kill. Hundreds of acres of alfalfa lost to winter kill. Reports of reed canary and orchard grass also winter killed. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Peas all planted. Plowing all finished for the season. Spraying for weed control on sweet corn fields. Sprayed pea fields to control Kayl. 2.616 ins. rain this week. Two hard thunder storms built up water supply in good shape. Real heavy cutting on asparagus and rhubarb. First planting of small vegetables all done. Honey bees having a great time with all the early blossoms. Have a nice week.

To receive this report every Monday evening, send an e-mail message to listserv@newsbox.usda.gov and in the body, type **subscribe usda-new-eng-crop-weather**

Aubrey R. Davis, Director
Statisticians: Dianne Johnson

Joe Samson, Deputy Director
Stat Assistant: Wayne Colpitt

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