

# Crop Weather



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For week ending 9/28/08

## Wet Weekend Halts Harvest

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending September 28, 2008, there were 5.3 days available for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated 1% very poor, 15% poor, 26% fair, 52% good, and 6% excellent. The past week began with partly cloudy skies across New England. High temperatures were below average to average in the upper 50s to mid-60s with nighttime lows ranging from the low 30s to the low 50s. Low temperatures dipped down into the mid-20s Tuesday in some of the northernmost areas, setting new record lows for the day. Light frosts continued to be experienced in the North, while the many areas of the South still have not seen their first. Temperatures warmed up during the course of the week, but skies remained cloudy. Heavy rains moved into New England overnight on Thursday. The storm also brought above average temperatures in the mid-60s to mid-70s and above average lows in the upper 50s to mid-60s. Hurricane Kyle moved close to Maine's coast on Sunday. The storm did not bring the strong winds that were predicted, but a significant amount of rain did fall in areas of Maine. Rainfall for the weekend totaled anywhere from 0.38 inches in Vermont to 6.82 inches in Maine and coastal areas. Crop specialists reported minimal flooding as a result of the weekend rains. In parts of Vermont however, the rains weren't enough. Areas of the state were drying out last week which forced some vegetable growers to irrigate.

**FRUIT:** Apple harvest reached the half-way mark this past week, ahead of last year. Pick-your-own operations suffered later in the week as a result of the wet weather. Maine's apple crop dodged a potential disaster, due to Hurricane Kyle staying far enough out to sea so that the strong winds never made it to land. The peach harvest was complete at week's end with the crop rated in good to fair condition. Pear harvest continued during the week and at week's end harvest was ahead of last year and normal. The Massachusetts cranberry harvest also continued last week and dry harvesting began for many farmers.

**VEGETABLES:** Fall crops such as pumpkins and winter squash now dominate roadside stands and farmers markets. Sweet corn was still available last week however the demand for the crop is falling. Other summer vegetables were done for the most part but there were still some onions, cabbage, peppers, broccoli and tomatoes available. Most vegetable growers were busy last week cleaning up their fields and planting cover crops.

**FIELD CROPS:** Dry weather during the week provided excellent conditions for farmers to harvest as much of their crop as they could before the rains came. Corn silage harvest made significant progress during the week and at week's end harvest was ahead of last year and normal. Oats and barley harvests in Maine neared completion during the week. Cool temperatures and shorter days made it increasingly difficult to harvest dry hay. Farmers harvested what they could, but some second and third cuts will remain in the fields. Potatoes continued to be harvested in Maine and Massachusetts last week while the Rhode Island potato harvest neared completion. The weekend rains caused a tobacco damp. As a result, growers began to take down tobacco to be bunched.

### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
	Percent		
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	0	1	4
Short	8	16	23
Adequate	59	77	73
Surplus	33	6	0
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	1	2	3
Short	6	7	21
Adequate	60	86	76
Surplus	33	5	0

### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	Percent Harvested			Fruit Size	Condition
	2008	2007	5-yr Avg		
Apples	55	50	60	Average	Good/Excellent
Peaches	100	100	99	Average	Good/Fair
Pears	75	60	70	Average	Good/Fair
Cranberries, Ma	10	15	15	Average/Above	Good

### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	2008	2007	5-yr Avg	Condition
	Percent Harvested			
Barley, ME	99	95	95	Fair/Good
Oats, ME	95	95	90	Good/Fair
Potatoes				
Maine	45	60	45	Good/Fair
Mass	65	70	65	Good
Rhode Island	95	95	90	Good/Excellent
Silage Corn	60	50	45	Good/Excellent
Sweet Corn	95	95	95	Good/Excellent
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	99	99	95	Good/Fair
Third Cut	70	80	75	Good/Fair

Weather Summary For New England Agricultural Statistics  
Prepared By AWIS.com

For the Period: Monday September 22, 2008  
To: Sunday September 28, 2008

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP		
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F TOT	BASE-60F DFN	BASE-50F TOT	BASE-60F DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
<b>MAINE</b>														
Augusta State A	38	70	57	+2	2182	+154	871	+125	2.67	+1.90	2	7.07	+4.17	7
Bangor Intl Arp	31	69	55	+0	2045	+196	784	+162	2.29	+1.52	2	6.22	+3.02	7
Bethel	35	69	55	+1	1805	-15	619	+23	2.87	+2.10	2	6.32	+3.19	6
Caribou Municip	27	77	53	+4	1624	+190	513	+135	1.89	+1.13	2	3.58	+0.36	8
Dover-Foxcroft	28	72	51	-2	1675	+101	551	+99	2.02	+1.11	2	4.09	+0.45	6
Frenchville	27	75	53	+4	1455	+122	418	+95	1.32	+0.51	2	3.45	+0.01	10
Houlton	24	73	53	+3	1587	+89	493	+69	2.65	+1.88	2	3.98	+0.61	9
Livermore Falls	34	70	55	+4	1874	+331	678	+249	2.41	+1.63	2	5.99	+2.65	6
Moosehead	28	74	50	-1	1371	+69	377	+67	1.69	+0.85	2	3.83	+0.43	8
Portland_ME	41	74	58	+3	2151	+272	855	+218	3.80	+3.03	2	10.03	+7.15	7
<b>NEW HAMPSHIRE</b>														
Benton	30	71	53	+0	1699	+36	530	+54	1.22	+0.52	2	3.61	+0.65	7
Berlin AG	31	72	54	+2	1762	+95	559	+62	1.83	+1.12	2	3.90	+0.84	9
Concord	40	77	59	+4	2311	+282	978	+239	2.09	+1.46	4	8.38	+5.77	10
Diamond Pond	30	70	50	+2	1242	+136	277	+72	0.57	-0.28	2	2.60	-1.15	10
Keene AP	39	75	58	+5	2219	+373	912	+310	1.01	+0.38	4	5.81	+3.09	10
North Conway	37	69	55	+2	1894	+22	643	+10	2.31	+1.51	2	5.90	+2.70	7
Rochester	41	77	57	+0	2335	+148	1000	+150	2.48	+1.71	3	8.30	+5.31	9
<b>VERMONT</b>														
Burlington Intl	35	76	57	+3	2408	+251	1021	+180	0.37	-0.33	1	1.17	-1.91	7
Island Pond	29	73	53	+3	1670	+302	529	+204	0.59	-0.11	2	1.55	-1.59	9
Montpelier	35	73	56	+4	1983	+291	716	+204	0.48	-0.15	2	1.55	-1.13	13
Pownal	39	73	57	+4	2217	+441	886	+334	1.36	+0.52	4	5.81	+2.28	12
Rochester	36	76	56	+3	1833	+152	620	+116	0.77	-0.07	2	2.72	-0.82	7
Rutland AG	36	73	55	-2	1957	-296	702	-189	0.24	-0.52	1	1.88	-1.45	6
Springfield_VT	37	74	58	+5	2198	+363	869	+273	1.05	+0.28	3	4.76	+1.51	10
Sutton	32	72	53	+3	1619	+243	488	+151	0.38	-0.34	2	1.09	-2.10	10
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>														
Boston/Logan_In	50	75	61	-1	2838	+171	1410	+203	3.07	+2.37	4	6.01	+3.16	10
Fitchburg	41	80	59	+6	2655	+818	1239	+641	2.28	+1.61	4	7.26	+4.54	10
Greenfield	37	75	57	-3	2237	-225	877	-162	2.31	+1.54	3	7.20	+4.01	11
New Bedford	35	77	60	-3	2495	-213	1162	-81	4.63	+3.90	3	8.29	+5.13	9
Otis_AFB	41	73	60	+2	2364	+174	1071	+215	3.40	+2.56	3	7.05	+3.90	9
Plymouth	39	77	60	+2	2532	+291	1198	+303	4.82	+3.91	3	9.89	+6.06	9
Walpole	39	79	57	+0	2560	+318	1193	+307	3.19	+2.35	3	7.78	+4.32	10
Chicopee/Westov	40	79	60	-2	2542	-289	1140	-187	1.60	+0.83	3	8.56	+5.27	10
Worthington	38	75	55	+0	1939	+120	684	+109	1.71	+0.87	3	7.57	+4.15	10
<b>RHODE ISLAND</b>														
Providence	45	77	62	+2	2954	+412	1478	+362	4.30	+3.53	3	10.05	+6.80	9
Woonsocket	40	80	59	+2	2573	+365	1180	+336	3.40	+2.56	3	8.30	+4.76	9
<b>CONNECTICUT</b>														
Bridgeport/Siko	52	75	63	+2	3089	+337	1596	+299	1.76	+1.06	3	6.40	+3.53	10
Hartford/Bradle	44	80	62	+3	2926	+226	1442	+212	2.37	+1.53	3	8.93	+5.39	10
Norfolk	42	73	56	+3	2118	+304	825	+252	1.58	+0.67	4	8.29	+4.44	12
Thomaston Dam	44	77	59	+2	2563	+367	1149	+315	1.58	+0.67	3	8.19	+4.44	10
Willimantic	41	80	61	+4	2684	+441	1238	+371	2.02	+1.11	3	7.66	+4.00	9

State Weather Summary

For the Week Ending Sunday, September 28, 2008

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	24	79	53	+1	0.08	5.05
NH	27	78	56	+3	0.57	2.83
VT	29	76	55	+2	0.19	1.36
MA	33	80	59	+1	0.06	5.56
RI	40	80	61	+2	3.40	4.30
CT	39	80	60	+1	1.58	4.48

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

**CONNECTICUT - CONNECTICUT - Howard Rood (FSA), Fairfield/Litchfield:** Rain near the end of the week, slowed field work. Most field corn looks good. We have not yet had a frost. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Very, very wet. Rain Thursday thru Saturday totaled 2 inches and then a cold front on Sunday brought another 1.5 to 2 inches of rain in Hartford County. Corn silage harvest has come to a stop for the time being. Sweet corn and other veggie harvest will also be a challenge. **Marsha Jette (FSA), New London:** Corn chopping was progressing nicely until heavy rain arrived. Corn is reported as excellent this year. Many producers reporting heavier yields than usual. Sweet corn is still available. Vegetables are still plentiful - no frost yet. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Chopping corn, picking apples, and haying. Farmers markets all did well early and mid week. End of week three days of rain with over 6 inches, brought chopping to a standstill. **Jude Boucher (Ext), Tolland:** Three more days of heavy rains, just what we needed! Phytophthora is finishing off fields of cucurbits and solonaceous crops. Plectosporium is also causing pumpkins to rot in the field. Sales at the farm stands this weekend were poor. Think Snow! **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Corn silage harvest came to an abrupt halt this week due to three days of rain. Three inches per hour reported falling in some areas during the height of the onslaught. Pumpkins and corn stalks are popular items this week as homeowners decorate for fall.

**MAINE - Pam Hickey (Ext), Aroostook:** Crops are continuing to be harvested. Most grains are harvested; just a few more days to complete. Broccoli continues to be harvested! We are approximately 30 percent for potatoes being harvested. Recent rain this weekend slowed harvest for a couple of days. **Steve London, Aroostook:** We have had some great weather for harvest and the quality has been good so far. **Sandy Truslow (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Farmers were busy trying to cut silage and make hay before the rains came over the weekend. Now we need dry weather to help finish the harvest. Rain over the weekend also hurt pick your own apples. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** We dodged a bullet this past weekend with Hurricane Kyle, although we received 3 to 4 inches of rain. There have been no reports of crop damage, but all field work came to a halt and the harvest of remaining crops such as pumpkins, winter squash and silage corn is going to be much more difficult for the next few days. U-Pick orchards suffered this past weekend with wet weather keeping people home. Although some apples were knocked to the ground (minimal) with the heavy rain, orchardist are feeling very fortunate this morning that we did not receive the high winds as originally forecasted for Sunday. Dairy farmers are concerned that the spreading of manure on crop fields, could be difficult this fall with the recent rainfall. Hopefully a dryer and sunnier week will follow this extremely wet weekend. **Kathy Hopkins (Ext), Somerset:** Silage harvest has begun. Summer crops are done and fall vegetable harvest is ending. Apples look good. **Rick Kersbergen (Ext), Waldo:** Lots of crops harvested before the big storm this past weekend. Everyone was rushing to harvest corn silage off of wet fields.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Aimee Thayer (FSA), Berkshire:** This was a good week for harvesting until a rainy weekend. More corn chopped. A couple of threats of frost again but no substantial hits. Farm stands are full of summer produce and fall veggies. Apple crop is abundant. Fall raspberries are being picked. Foliage is turning rapidly. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Weekend heavy rains halted the fall harvest. Growers were harvesting apples, field corn, pumpkins, potatoes, onions, winter squash, cabbage and parsnips. The weekend rains caused a tobacco damp so growers started taking down tobacco to be banded. **Tom Monahan (NRCS), Hampden/Worcester:** Apple harvest is going good, late rain this week could hurt late varieties with fly speck and sooty blotch. Market has been real strong with

good prices. Rain could hurt some pick your own farms. Most veggies are winding down with this last rain being the final hit. Sweet corn is good but demand is real soft. Last applications of fertilizer on strawberry were made this week fields look real good, concerned for root rot this fall and winter due to all the rain this growing season. Grape harvest is under way and the sugars and acids are real good. The grape crop could be as good as 2007 and that would be fantastic. Growers putting cover crops on land had a big surprise when they learned that cover crop seeds (wheat and rye) has almost doubled since last year due to the strong small grains market. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: More harvesting occurred last week, with dry harvesting beginning for many growers. Crops are very good so far. Harvesting will increase significantly this week, although things don't look good for the dry harvested beds. The vines/berries need to dry out because the area received between 5-8 inches of rain from Friday into Monday.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap:** Now beginning to harvest mid-season varieties of apple and pear. Farmers are cleaning up fields and getting cover crops established. Rainy weather has made field work a bit difficult. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Cool and pleasant most of the week. Good regrowth on pastures and hay fields, weather too cool for any significant hay drying, some second and third cutting will be left in the field. Light frost has touched most of the county and fall crops dominant at the farm stand. Southern parts of the county received 4 inches of rain over the week-end. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Sunny weather for most of the week, with a couple days of substantial rain towards the end. Lots of progress made harvesting field corn; a number of farms are all done. More hay/haylage/baleage harvested, though shorter days and cooler temps are making drying somewhat difficult. Great weather for picking apples, vegetable operations featuring fall crops and continuing to clean up fields for the year. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Corn chopping continued at a good pace; weather milder, generally dry. Rains and strong winds at end of the week. Haying continues as conditions permit. Seeing some nice regrowth of grass/alfalfa fields. Sweet corn about done for the year, pumpkins, winter squash, mums at markets. Apple harvest and cider making. Some field corn frost damaged. Most fairly matured although some just beginning to dent. About peak color northern part of the county, lots of reds this year. **Steve Schmidt (FSA), Grafton:** For the week ending September 27th, we had a nice stretch of weather up until the end of the week. Farmers made what hay and haylage that they could, and chopped corn. The corn harvest is generally good. The exception would be a few poorer drained soils. Good quality hay is still in short supply. There is plenty of late cut and or poorer quality hay. Prices on the poor quality hay are suppressed. Good quality hay is at a premium. The weekend brought plenty of rain, some areas as little as 0.6 inches, and almost two inches in other areas. There were no real problems with flooding, just wet soils on some fields. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Vegetables: Harvesting wide array of vegetables, including warm season vegetables like tomatoes and peppers but many farmers have the ended their harvest of these crops. Harvesting cabbage, kale, brussels sprouts, winter squash and pumpkins. Farmers kept busy disking, cleaning up and planting cover crops on harvested fields. Fruit: Apple harvest is in full swing with most growers concentrating on second picking McIntosh and Gala apples, and working on Cortland and Macoun. Fall raspberries and pear harvest continued with peach and plum harvest winding down. Field Crops: Silage corn harvest in full swing along with second and third cuts of hay and hayage continues but came to stop at the week's end due to rain. Some manure spreading on fields taking place. Cover crops were being planted in harvested fields. New seeding made first of September are growing well. **Nada Haddad (Ext), Rockingham:** Picking apples, peaches, pumpkins, sweet corn, potatoes, beets, spinach, tomatoes, and whole array of

vegetables. Corn silage and hay being done. Farm activities and pick-your-own activities were slow this weekend because of rain and some of it was heavy at times. Planting cover crops and cleaning fields. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Great weather in the first part of the week. However we had a lot of rain the last part of the week. Hay producers were busy cutting and trying to bring in the hay before the weekend rains. Fruit growers were busy harvesting apples and mowing the orchard floors. Harvesting of peaches and fall raspberries was winding down. Vegetable growers continued to harvest and sell sweet corn, pumpkins and different other vegetable crops. Garden centers and farmers were busy with pumpkins, fall mums and other fall decorations. The poinsettia crop is right on schedule in most greenhouses that are still growing the crop.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** Apple harvesting still going strong. Trees in great condition as is the fruit. Did some haying in the first part of the week, along with chopping field corn, harvesting sweet corn, summer squash, tomatoes, peppers, winter squash and potatoes. Heavy rain at the end of the week provided some good moisture to pastures and without the expected winds.

**VERMONT - Jeffrey Carter (Ext), Addison:** Corn silage harvest continues strong. Dry soil conditions and nice weather so most of the crops harvested in the past two weeks. Yields low across the board, much corn poor yields. Hay harvest may continue if rain passes, some third cut and fourth cut haylage available to harvest. Feed stocks short on most farms. New seeded hay crop looking

better with regrowth after struggling through weedy seeding establishment. Soybeans looking like a good yield with plants starting to dry down. Some harvest expected in two to three weeks. **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Dry. Weather forecast was for rain on Friday/Saturday. We did not get as much as needed. Topsoil still dry. Frosts for several nights early in the week. Corn chopping in full swing, most has been frosted. Some late season haying. Foliage looking very good. **Paul Stanley (CCA), Franklin:** Yet another great weather week in Franklin County with very mild and warm temperatures. Most of the hay and haylage has been harvested with some fourth cut that might be cut after the corn harvest. If producers have enough grass forage it would be wise to leave the fourth cut. This is the status quo that "if you don't need it leave it". Your increased yields in the next year will show the difference. Corn harvest has got off to a great start out of the gate. Some moistures maybe a little high, however, the ear kernels are well dented except for some of the later planted corn. Apples are in the mid term harvest stages and looks like some nice weather to get pickers out to the pick your own orchards. Farmers markets will be out with their last harvests available for people to stalk up for the winter months ahead. **John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Most areas have still not experienced a killing frost. Last week saw a large amount of corn silage harvested under ideal conditions. Persistent lack of rain has slowed grass growth and even caused some veggie growers to have to irrigate. **Julie Jacque (FSA), Windham:** Corn and hay continue to be harvested with good weather beginning of the week. Apple sales continue to be strong. Late week heavy rains dampen soil conditions with standing water in some fields.

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