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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending January 20, 2002

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Widespread, soaking rains fell in nearly all areas except for a few southern Peninsula localities during the first part of the week of January 13 through 19. A cold front crossing the State at the end of the week brought more showers mainly to some western Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas. Homestead and Miami recorded no rainfall; Alachua recorded almost three inches. Dover received about a third inch; Immokalee, about one and a third inches; and Ft. Pierce, nearly an inch. Ft. Lauderdale and West Palm Beach recorded only traces of rain for the week. Temperatures at the major stations averaged from one degree below normal at Tallahassee to five degrees above at Miami. Most lows were in the 40s, 50s and 60s with Tallahassee daily lows averaging in the 30s. Tallahassee recorded at least one low in the 20s. Daytime highs were mostly in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: The soaking rains early in the week eased dry soil conditions in most areas except for a few southern Peninsula localities. Topsoil and subsoil moisture conditions are rated short to mostly adequate. Sugarcane harvesting in the Everglades is active.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very short	4	0	3	0
Short	47	24	54	34
Adequate	49	76	43	66
Surplus	0	0	0	0

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: The pasture and range condition improved slightly throughout the State. In the Panhandle and northern counties, light rain and warmer temperatures improved growing conditions of small grain winter forage. Permanent pasture grass (Bahia) in most locations was killed by recent frost. In the southwest, range and cattle conditions improved from the previous week. Statewide, the cattle condition is fair to good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	30	30	10	0
Fair	65	40	60	50
Good	5	30	30	50
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: Daylong rains and a few thunderstorms covered most of the citrus belt Monday thru early Tuesday. Some southern counties received more rain the first two weeks of the new year than they did for many months. This additional moisture has greatly helped the trees get ready for the upcoming bloom season. New growth is starting to show in some of the younger tree groves. Early and midseason orange harvest is very active in all areas with most of this fruit going to the processors. Fresh fruit packers and shippers are also busy moving all types of early and mid oranges, grapefruit, tangerines, Temples and tangelos.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops for fire protection. Some pre-bloom sprays are being applied in the warmer locations. Dead trees are being pushed out and burned. A few resets are being planted in the southern counties.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Jan 6	Jan 13	Jan 20
Navel oranges	109,000	130,000	112,000
Early & Mid oranges including Ambersweet	8,138,000	8,361,000	7,314,000
All grapefruit	875,000	1,005,000	1,126,000
Early Tangerines	208,000	140,000	90,000
Honey Tangerines	26,000	73,000	145,000
Temples	10,000	38,000	79,000
Tangelos	90,000	148,000	160,000

VEGETABLES: Soggy fields delayed the picking of some crops around Immokalee early in the week. Potatoes and cabbage around Hastings suffered no significant damage from the recent cold weather. Vegetables available include tomatoes, peppers, cabbage, Chinese cabbage, celery, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, parsley, radishes, snap beans, squash, sweet corn and strawberries.

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In cooperation with the Florida Cooperative Extension Service whose county directors participate in supplying field information.