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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending January 18, 2004

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January 20, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: Cool temperatures continued during the week of January 11 through 17. Temperatures averaged normal to four degrees below in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 60s and 70s with Palmdale recording at least one high in the 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 30s, 40s and 50s. Several Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities recorded at least one low in the 20s. No rain fell in most areas. Some central Peninsula and a few western Panhandle localities recorded traces to slightly over an inch of rain for the week. Storms on Sunday and Monday, January 18 and 19 brought traces to over an inch to most Panhandle and Big Bend areas, and to some central and southern Peninsula localities.

FIELD CROPS: Sugarcane harvesting is active in the Everglades region. Topsoil and subsoil moisture is rated adequate in most areas of the Panhandle with recent rains replenishing supplies. Elsewhere, soil moisture is short to adequate with very short moisture in scattered spots of Union, Volusia, Hillsborough, Highlands and Broward counties.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	10	3	1	8	2	1
Short	25	32	17	22	28	8
Adequate	65	64	76	70	69	85
Surplus	0	1	6	0	1	6

VEGETABLES: Mostly dry conditions allowed planting and harvesting to proceed at a normal pace. Planting of table type potatoes around Hastings is active, but a lack of contracts for chipping type potatoes is limiting processing type acreage. Vegetables and noncitrus fruits available include snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries and tomatoes.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Pasture condition Statewide is mostly fair. In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition is fair. Short soil moisture and cold temperatures are slowing cool season forage growth. In the central area, small grain forage growth is not normal this season because of warm weather before Christmas coupled with lack of rainfall. In the south, small grain pastures are not producing as expected due to lack of moisture. Statewide, most cattle are in fair to good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	10	5	1	0
Poor	20	10	9	0
Fair	50	50	45	30
Good	20	35	45	69
Excellent	0	0	0	1

CITRUS: Typical winter weather prevailed during the week with cool nights and moderately cool days early in the week. On the weekend, a cold front passed slowly through the State bringing varying amounts of rainfall to almost all citrus areas. Temperatures were in the mid to high 30s in some locations on several mornings with daytime highs in the 60s and 70s. Rainfall through the weekend totaled up to 1.80 inches in some locations with most receiving over one-half inch. Some growers have returned to irrigation to maintain tree condition and encourage continued fruit growth. With the colder weather, trees are hardy and should withstand any later cold weather. Some growers are starting to fertilize groves in anticipation of springtime new growth emerging. Growers and packers report good natural color and excellent external appearance on tangerines, early oranges, and grapefruit. Most fresh fruit packinghouses are packing all available varieties with emphasis on export of grapefruit increasing. Varieties being packed include early and midseason oranges (Navels, Hamlins, and Pineapple), white and colored grapefruit, Sunburst and Honey tangerines, tangelos, and Temples. Processing plants are open to receive and process fruit on a continuous basis with volumes reaching peak levels.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Jan 4	Jan 11	Jan 18
Navel oranges	84,000	47,000	43,000
Early and Mid oranges	9,147,000	9,533,000	7,651,000
Valencia oranges	1,000	3,000	15,000
Grapefruit	944,000	996,000	1,360,000
Early tangerines	98,000	59,000	27,000
Honey tangerines	92,000	149,000	152,000
Tangelos	33,000	46,000	46,000
Temples	24,000	51,000	54,000

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