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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 15, 2004

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Tropical Storm Bonnie and Hurricane Charley both hit the State during the week of August 9 through 15. Bonnie formed in the Gulf of Mexico and brought major precipitation to the Panhandle on August 11. Hurricane Charley plowed a destructive swath across the Peninsula from Port Charlotte to Daytona Beach causing very extensive damage due to hurricane force winds and heavy rains. Heavy rainfall was reported in stations all across the Panhandle and the Central Peninsula, with over six inches reported in Apopka, Avalon, Daytona Beach, Madison, Jefferson, and Santa Rosa. Temperatures were normal in Miami as well as West Palm Beach, whereas other major cities were one to three degrees below normal. Pensacola reported five degrees below normal. Daytime highs were in the upper 80s and lower 90s. Nighttime lows were in the high 60s and low 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Wet conditions in Jefferson County may delay the first digging of peanuts, expected by the end of the week to early next week. Tobacco yield, as well as the quality, is poor due to diseases. Heavy rainfall in Santa Rosa should help alleviate moisture stress in cotton and peanuts. Chinch bugs and armyworms have been observed in Madison. Hay fields were starting to get dry but are looking much better after the rain. Tomato spotted wilt virus is showing up in Jackson County. Peanut condition is rated 13 percent fair, 56 percent good, and 31 percent excellent. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are mostly adequate to surplus with only a few scattered areas of short supplies in drier localities.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	1	1	1	1	0	0
Short	13	10	1	4	9	1
Adequate	44	74	39	48	75	42
Surplus	42	15	59	47	16	57

VEGETABLES: Rains from the tropical storms delayed some fall field preparations in the southern Peninsula. Okra harvesting remains active in Dade County.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: The pasture condition varies from fair to excellent. Pasture in the north, Big Bend and central areas received ample moisture from Tropical Storm Bonnie early in the week. Pasture in the southwest, central and northeast areas received significant moisture from Hurricane Charley at weeks end. Statewide, the condition of the cattle is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	0	0	0
Fair	15	15	10	10
Good	75	75	75	75
Excellent	10	10	15	15

CITRUS: Hurricane Charley passed directly through three major citrus producing counties on Friday causing extensive damage and loss to trees and green fruit on either side of the hurricane's path. The storm, with winds measuring up to 100 mph in a tight pattern around the eye, passed directly through DeSoto, Hardee, Polk, Orange, and Seminole counties. Reports indicate pushed over trees, broken limbs, and green fruit on the ground in many areas. Assessments of loss cannot be made at this time. Rainfall amounts ranged up to four inches during and after the storm with some areas receiving more. Growers are not able to enter some groves at this time because of blocked roads and standing water.

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