



# WEATHER CROP

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Week ending April 22, 2007

## COOL TEMPERATURES SLOWED PLANT GROWTH

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Cool temperatures slowed plant germination and growth during the week of April 16 through 23. Temperatures averaged two to five degrees below normal in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s while nighttime lows were in the 40s, 50s and 60s. Alachua, Bronson, Santa Rosa and Quincy reported at least one low in the upper 30s. Strong winds also buffeted most crops, statewide. During mid to late week, Atlantic sea breezes brought some rain to a few inland areas of the central Peninsula. However, most Peninsula localities remain dry and the threat of wild fire remains high in most areas. Smoke from a large fire in the Big Cypress National Preserve, eight miles east of Ochopee, affected air quality as far south as southern Miami-Dade County. Atlantic sea breezes also brought smoke from a fire in southern Georgia, to coastal areas of the central Peninsula, especially Daytona Beach. The tail end of a storm system crossing the nation also dropped nearly a half inch of rain over some Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas around mid-week. Rainfall for the week ranged from none in some southern Peninsula localities to nearly an inch in Orlando. Most central and southern Peninsula areas reported only traces of rain for the week, while some northern Peninsula and Panhandle areas recorded a quarter to over a half inch for the week.

**FIELD CROPS:** Cool temperatures slowed the growth of corn in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. The potential yield of small grains was reduced by earlier dry weather over the Panhandle and northern Peninsula during the stage of head development and fill. However, the recent rains increased soil moisture with field preparations for peanut and cotton planting steady. Soil moisture was rated mostly very short in the Panhandle, mostly short in the Big Bend and northern Peninsula, and very short to short over the central and southern Peninsula.

| Moisture Rating | Topsoil        |           |           | Subsoil   |           |           |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                 | This week      | Last week | Last year | This week | Last week | Last Year |
|                 | <i>Percent</i> |           |           |           |           |           |
| Very short      | 40             | 40        | 51        | 35        | 46        | 38        |
| Short           | 49             | 45        | 25        | 55        | 42        | 41        |
| Adequate        | 11             | 15        | 24        | 10        | 12        | 6         |
| Surplus         | 0              | 0         | 0         | 0         | 0         | 15        |

**VEGETABLES:** Cool temperatures continued to slow plant growth and fruit development. Strong winds continued to whip vegetables and blow sand across fields, statewide. Processing potato digging slowly increased around Hastings with virtually all current sales satisfying previous contracts. Other vegetables and non citrus fruit marketed during the week included snap beans, blueberries, cabbage, cantaloupes, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, greens, lettuce, okra, parsley, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, tomatoes, and watermelons.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition ranges from very poor to good with most in poor condition. Lack of forage growth for cattle is of concern to cattlemen; most are feeding supplemental hay to their herds. Hay supplies are scarce. In the central and southwest areas, pasture condition is very poor to fair with most in fair condition due to drought. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from poor to good with most in fair condition.

| Condition      | Cattle    |           | Pasture   |           |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                | This week | Last week | This week | Last week |
| <i>Percent</i> |           |           |           |           |
| Very poor      | 0         | 3         | 15        | 10        |
| Poor           | 25        | 15        | 35        | 30        |
| Fair           | 40        | 60        | 49        | 55        |
| Good           | 35        | 20        | 1         | 5         |
| Excellent      | 0         | 2         | 0         | 0         |

**CITRUS:** Florida's citrus region was relatively dry this past week. Four of seven monitored citrus areas recorded small amounts of precipitation, each of them receiving one tenth of an inch or less. Daytime high temperatures reached the low to mid-80s on several days. The bloom period appears to be over in most areas. This season the bloom was substantial and uniform for quite a few weeks. Valencia harvest is at approximately five million boxes a week. Grapefruit harvest is at approximately one million boxes a week, with nearly three-fourths going to processing. One packinghouse has closed for the season, with more planning on closing at the end of this month and in early May. Honey tangerine harvest continues to run in the one hundred thousand boxes per week range, being harvested primarily for the fresh market. Caretakers are hedging, topping, and applying post bloom nutritional sprays. In addition to the normal maintenance programs, growers continue to scout for greening and are removing diseased trees.

| ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED    |        |        |        |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Crop                                      | Apr 08 | Apr 15 | Apr 22 |
| <i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i> |        |        |        |
| Navel oranges                             | 3      | 2      | 1      |
| Early and Mid oranges                     | 6      | 8      | 8      |
| Valencia                                  | 4,610  | 4,862  | 5,088  |
| Grapefruit                                | 1,026  | 999    | 1,071  |
| Honey Tangerines                          | 93     | 98     | 90     |
| Temples                                   | 4      | 1      | 0      |

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