



# New England Agricultural Statistics Service

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## Crop Weather

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For week ending 10/6/02

### Optimum Harvest Conditions

**GENERAL CONDITIONS:** For the week ending October 6, 2002, there were 5.9 days suitable for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated as 10% very poor, 23% poor, 44% fair, 21% good, 2% excellent. Frost hit many areas of New England last week, coloring up apples remaining to be picked. Though nights were chilly, daytime temperatures averaged well above normal. Minimal rainfall along with the warm temperatures provided optimum conditions for harvest. Major farm activities included: harvesting silage corn, hay, potatoes, apples, pears, cranberries, and late season vegetables; completing peach and small grain harvests; disking; cleaning up and planting cover crops on harvested fields; and spreading manure.

**FRUIT:** Apple and pear harvest was active during last week's nice picking conditions, though harvest progress is behind normal for both crops. Frost in many locations across New England added color to apples still on the tree; yield could be off this year due to poor spring conditions. Peach harvest was complete by week's end. Massachusetts' cranberry growers continued with harvest, finding small berry size and more cases of fruit rot than normal. Last week's above average temperatures did not help berry quality.

#### FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Apples	70	75	75	Good/Fair
Peaches	100	100	100	Good/Fair
Pears	60	90	80	Very Poor/Poor
Cranberries, MA	30	45	35	Good/Fair

**VEGETABLES:** Vegetables such as beans, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cucumbers, eggplant, gourds, kale, lettuce, onions, peppers, pumpkins, squash, spinach, tomatoes, and other fall vegetables continued to be picked last week. Sweet corn harvest is nearly complete, on schedule with normal. In most areas, farm stands, farmers' markets and pick-your-own operations had a busy weekend.

#### SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
-- Percent --			
<b>Topsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	8	6	6
Short	26	33	45
Adequate	64	57	48
Surplus	2	4	1
<b>Subsoil Moisture</b>			
Very Short	16	28	27
Short	39	32	28
Adequate	44	37	44
Surplus	1	3	1

**FIELD CROPS:** Silage corn harvest progressed rapidly due to the lightness of this year's crop, advancing from 50 to 75 percent harvested in one week. Second crop hay harvest continues to dwell on the edge of completion, while harvest of the third crop jumped ahead ten percent compared with a week ago. Maine's oat and barley harvests are complete, with this year's crops rated as good to excellent. Potato farmers in Maine took advantage of the good weather last week and moved harvest into high gear. Crop specialists reported fall potatoes 80 percent dug by week's end, pulling ahead of normal schedules. Crop quality remains good to excellent, however yields expected to be off due to small tuber size. Massachusetts potato harvest is behind normal, while Rhode Island farmers are in line with normal schedules. Tobacco growers in the Connecticut River Valley continued to take advantage of damp conditions to take down tobacco and bundle it for sale.

#### FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	100	99	95	Good/Excellent
Oats, ME	100	99	95	Good/Excellent
Potatoes				
Maine	80	85	75	Good/Excellent
Mass	70	80	85	Good
Rhode Isl	90	95	90	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	75	85	70	Good/Fair
Sweet Corn	99	99	99	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
Second Cut	99	95	95	Good/Fair
Third Cut	90	80	80	Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, October 6, 2002

The 42 stations shown below are limited by space but are well distributed across the region. All 86 stations appear on the Internet and in e-mail subscriptions.

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				CUM SINCE MAR 1 GROWING DEGREE DAYS				1-WEEK PRECIP			4-WEEK CUM PRECIP			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F		BASE-60F		TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL		DFN	DAYS
					TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN				INCHES	DFN		
<b>MAINE</b>															
Augusta_State_A	35	80	59	+7	2336	+277	1015	+269	0.28	-0.49	3	3.31	+0.34	10	
Bangor_Intl_Arp	29	80	58	+7	2185	+311	902	+280	0.43	-0.31	4	3.86	+0.72	11	
Bethel	34	80	55	+4	2042	+199	794	+198	0.80	+0.03	2	3.12	+0.04	8	
Cari bou_Muni ci p	25	77	52	+5	1674	+231	600	+222	0.46	-0.24	5	3.05	-0.03	17	
Dover-Foxcroft	27	79	52	+3	1621	+33	530	+78	0.64	-0.21	3	2.87	-0.71	11	
Frenchvi lle	25	76	52	+6	1544	+204	549	+226	0.33	-0.44	3	3.18	-0.12	15	
Houl ton	24	79	53	+6	1720	+212	612	+188	0.37	-0.37	5	4.97	+1.77	13	
Li verm ore_Fal ls	29	83	55	+6	2094	+538	863	+434	0.56	-0.24	4	3.73	+0.47	10	
Moosehead	23	80	51	+4	1534	+222	489	+179	0.18	-0.59	4	4.68	+1.37	13	
Portl and_ME	41	81	62	+10	2317	+410	977	+340	0.48	-0.29	4	3.53	+0.58	12	
<b>NEW_HAMPSHI RE</b>															
Benton	35	77	56	+6	1985	+302	757	+281	0.42	-0.28	4	4.19	+1.33	11	
Berli n_AG	33	78	54	+5	1901	+217	692	+195	0.50	-0.26	3	4.14	+1.16	9	
Concord	38	83	62	+10	2605	+547	1201	+462	0.23	-0.45	4	3.60	+1.01	11	
Di amond_Pond	32	74	51	+5	1342	+229	390	+185	0.28	-0.56	6	4.97	+1.41	17	
Keene_AP	37	82	60	+7	2508	+189	1104	+188	0.14	-0.55	1	3.63	+0.91	7	
North_Conway	36	78	57	+7	2348	+454	1031	+398	0.42	-0.42	2	3.31	+0.11	8	
Rochester	40	82	59	+6	2521	+298	1136	+284	0.47	-0.36	2	2.76	-0.30	8	
<b>VERMONT</b>															
Burl i ngton_Intl	38	80	61	+9	2618	+431	1212	+371	0.29	-0.37	4	6.64	+3.74	12	
Isl and_Pond	33	78	54	+6	1758	+376	611	+286	0.43	-0.27	4	7.17	+4.22	14	
Montpel ier	36	79	57	+8	2055	+341	786	+274	0.28	-0.35	3	4.22	+1.65	14	
Pownal	37	79	60	+9	2132	+331	813	+261	0.43	-0.40	3	5.96	+2.51	10	
Rochester	36	79	58	+8	2069	+364	800	+296	0.47	-0.37	3	6.84	+3.41	10	
Rutl and_AG	37	77	56	+2	2169	-122	867	-31	0.48	-0.22	5	4.72	+1.60	11	
Sutton	36	78	54	+7	1828	+440	650	+313	0.41	-0.29	4	5.62	+2.62	13	
Townshend_Lake	39	80	59	+7	2378	+208	1000	+177	0.33	-0.37	5	3.75	+0.82	10	
<b>MASSACHUSETTS</b>															
Ashburnham	41	82	61	+10	2487	+626	1073	+475	0.27	-0.43	2	3.24	+0.52	9	
Boston/Logan_In	52	85	67	+9	3206	+476	1663	+443	0.05	-0.65	2	2.18	-0.62	8	
Greenfi eld	41	85	62	+6	2718	+207	1244	+198	0.29	-0.48	3	3.01	-0.11	9	
New_Bedford	42	83	65	+6	2891	+113	1362	+103	0.02	-0.68	1	3.07	+0.07	9	
Oti s_AFB	46	79	64	+8	2760	+522	1274	+411	0.04	-0.79	1	4.94	+1.73	8	
Pl ymouth	42	83	64	+9	2746	+460	1278	+376	0.03	-0.88	3	2.23	-1.53	11	
Wal pol e	43	84	63	+9	2839	+558	1355	+462	0.20	-0.64	3	3.79	+0.40	9	
Chi copee/Westov	41	86	64	+7	2995	+103	1479	+139	0.32	-0.46	3	3.20	-0.03	9	
Worthi ngton	34	81	59	+7	2202	+353	884	+309	0.57	-0.24	3	3.58	+0.25	11	
<b>RHODE_I SLAND</b>															
Provi dence	49	85	68	+10	3213	+614	1665	+538	0.07	-0.70	2	4.06	+0.88	8	
Woonsocket	44	85	64	+11	2830	+585	1337	+491	0.03	-0.81	2	3.32	-0.15	8	
<b>CONNECTI CUT</b>															
Bri dgeport/Si ko	50	83	68	+9	3269	+447	1697	+383	0.06	-0.64	2	3.45	+0.59	8	
Hartford/Bradl e	43	87	66	+10	3208	+457	1648	+411	0.13	-0.71	1	2.50	-0.97	6	
Norfol k	40	79	61	+10	2495	+655	1067	+494	0.21	-0.68	3	3.56	-0.18	9	
Thomast on_Dam	41	82	62	+8	2758	+519	1257	+416	0.27	-0.63	2	2.46	-1.21	8	
Wi lli manti c	42	84	64	+10	2866	+579	1360	+486	0.11	-0.80	2	3.74	+0.08	7	

**STATE WEATHER SUMMARY**

For the Week Ending Sunday, October 6, 2002

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.

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	18	83	54	+5	0.00	0.80
NH	25	88	57	+7	0.09	1.80
VT	29	82	57	+7	0.11	0.92
MA	34	86	63	+8	0.00	0.65
RI	44	85	66	+9	0.00	0.07
CT	40	87	64	+8	0.00	1.21

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

**CONNECTICUT - Howard Rood (FSA), Fairfield/Litchfield:** Field corn harvest is going very well. We have had some rain, but not enough to slow the harvest. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Heavy rain overnight settled dust and brightened apples in the orchard. Lots of picking activity. Chrysanthemums nearly sold out. People are enjoying a day at the orchard with hay rides, festive fall decorations to bring home. Field corn chopping was intense and looks to begin winding down, while rye cover crop is rapidly carpeting the working landscape. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Weather has fluctuated from warm and very humid with heavy rains to cool and windy. Producers tried to get in last of produce before heavy rains came. Good weekend for farm stands - they were crowded. **Richard Meinert (Ext), CT Cooperative:** Corn silage harvest is over, only a few late planted fields left standing. Pastures are finally making some recovery with cooler, wetter weather - but not nearly normal for this time of year.

**MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook:** Potatoes: Some growers finished harvesting potatoes, others should be completed if fair weather continues. Weather has been very cooperative during this harvest. Growers who have finished harvest have begun ruck picking, fall tillage, etc. Crop quality is very good. Weather has been good for cooling potato storages with low nighttime temperatures. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Potato farmers are continuing to get their crop out of the ground. If the weather cooperates, most farmers should be done harvesting by Friday or Saturday (10/11-12). The weather has been great for harvest so far. We have had a few frosty mornings for a late start, but harvest is going great. Crop looks excellent. Yield is down somewhat. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** The heavy rain was welcomed for the ground water and for growing plants, but has made a challenge for potato harvesters with the mud coming up with the potatoes. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Finishing up harvesting silage corn, pumpkins and squash. Fall preparations underway. Reports are winter squash crop is off by about 50 - 60 percent due to wet June and dry August. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Apple producers are looking for some cool nights to enhance their crop. Other crop growers want the frost to stay away and stretch out the season. Many silage corn producers are reporting a poor crop with little or no ears. A few have been in and have stated that the crop couldn't be much better. We all made it through another season. We are still concerned about drought and the effect on wells, irrigation and livestock water supplies. Every drop of rain helps. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** The first scattered frost was reported last week. Still harvesting silage corn, sweet corn is about done. There was decent weather last weekend for U-pick apples, squash and pumpkins and a little third crop hay being harvested. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** Silage corn yields were down on excessively well and very well drained soils. Grain corn harvest is getting underway. Ground water is still short. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Had some real, wet rain during the first part of the week. The grass is beginning to turn green again and fields and pastures are being restored in time for winter! Frost was received in most parts of the county and the leaves are beginning to show fall colors. Silage harvest and potato harvest still underway, while others are spreading manure to make sure the pit is empty before winter.

**MASSACHUSETTS - Arthur Williams (FSA), Berkshire:** Chopping is nearly done, a few looking for a place to pile it. Finishing the hay crop harvest. Fruits are smaller than normal, very poor crop. Nearly 0.5 inches rain. Lawn starting to grow like in early summer, mowing every 5 to 7 days. Very heavy dews. **Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts:** Cranberry harvest continues, fruit is small and yields continue to be below expectations. Shellfish growers continue to harvest quahogs and oysters with excellent growth, however the market continues to be soft. Vegetable growers are cleaning up fields, planting cover crops. Corn growers are opening up fields, however they are waiting for a frost. Growers continue to make third cutting of alfalfa with low yields but excellent quality. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Harvesting vegetables coming to a close. Farmers out there are trying to beat the frost and cold snaps. Corn still in full swing being chopped. The haying season is just about over. However, there are still some fields waiting to be hayed. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Harvest continues with disappointing

yields and rot levels more than expected, although poor keeping quality was predicted earlier this year. The nights and days have been warmer than usual, something that hasn't helped quality. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** The season is just about over. Farmers are finishing up fall crops. Silage chopping is progressing, some of it is very good but most of it poor. A good weekend for corn maize and hay ride activity. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Harvesting is about to conclude for most fall crops. Dairy farmers are reporting better-than-average yields on silage corn. The same is true on most potato acreage, especially on irrigated fields. Near perfect weather conditions allowed the harvest to go at a record pace. Many farms have started to "take down" tobacco for the final stripping process. Farmers are reporting that this year's crop appears to be very high quality. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** No killing frost yet! A few rainy days caused tobacco to dampen, so growers could take down to bundle for sale. Winter squash harvest is complete and growers are still harvesting potatoes, cabbage, spinach, apples and other fall crops. All yields are down slightly due to summer drought. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Chopping corn and seeding down are major farm activities in this area. Still picking tomatoes, eggplant and peppers. Not much second cut of hay around these parts as hay is still short. Good retail week at farm stands as weather was perfect for pumpkin and fall decoration sales. Next weekend traditionally for "big" pumpkin sales. Still no water in well.

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Mild temperatures and a little moisture have extended the growing season. Pastures are greener than they've been since June. Corn silage harvest continues, some fourth cutting alfalfa. Fall foliage finally coming on. Good-bye summer 2002! **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Generally decent cropping weather for most of the week. Hay, haylage, and silage corn harvest continued. Farmers spreading winter rye on harvested land. Apple harvest & PYO still going strong. Most vegetable crops are done producing for this season. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Silage corn harvest continues at a good pace, most farms with smaller acreage about done. Harder frost this week - some unharvested corn affected, especially in northern part of county. Pastures quite green and providing some grazing. A little haying being done, but is hard to dry. Sweet corn, pumpkins, winter squash and some other veggies still available. Quite a run of warm, sunny weather so far this fall. Nice foliage color through much of the county. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Corn harvest continues at a rapid pace. Showers on and off, but still dry. Regrowth on alfalfa grass mixes looks good. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Pick-your-own apple and farm stand operations had a wonderful weekend. Apple harvest is in full swing with most growers concentrating on last picking McIntosh and Cortland. Continue harvesting varieties like Red Delicious, Macoun, Empire, etc. Fruit size is excellent, but bruising can be a problem. Vegetables: Good demand for all vegetable continues. Although most warm season vegetables have been harvested, some warm season vegetables like tomatoes and peppers continues. Harvesting cabbage, kale, brussel sprouts, lettuce, winter squash and pumpkins. Farmers kept busy disking, cleaning up and planting cover crops on harvested fields. Field Crops: Field corn harvest in full swing. Cover crops were being planted in harvested fields. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Silage corn harvest moving at full speed. Tomatoes, cukes, summer and winter squash and other vegetables harvested under fall conditions of no frost. Some fields were seeded to winter rye. Field clean up continues. Ear size of silage corn is very small or nonexistent due to drought conditions at tassel time! Apple yield is down due to early cold spring temperatures and summer drought conditions. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** Winter rye starting to come up with the timing of the rain showers. A full day of rain again last Friday further helped the water supplies and greened up pastures. The pumpkin crop yield looks very good this year with various sizes and great color. Most of the silage corn crop has been harvested with scattered fields yet to be done. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Rain showers continued last week. This helped the drought situation, but more is needed. Farmers continued with fall clean up and planting of cover crops. Many late vegetable harvests are coming to an end. Fruit growers continued with harvesting of late apple varieties. Harvesting of pumpkins is all over but harvesting of sweet corn continued through the week. Farm stands and garden centers were busy with fall sales. Mum sales, however, have been slow probably due the warm weather

we have been experiencing.

**RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport:** Harvesting of field corn continues, most are whipping through the fields due to light crop. Some rain has helped the farm ponds fill up, but the soil still needs some rejuvenation. Still harvesting tomatoes and sweet corn along with peppers and some beans. Pumpkins, gourds, winter squashes and cabbage are in. Cover cropping fields. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Hay rides are as popular as ever. It was unseasonably warm on Saturday decreasing tourist activities at the farms. Last week orchards were harvesting apples. Winter squash was coming in. Corn was being chopped for silage. Pick your own pumpkins were out in abundance. Chrysanthemum sales were fantastic! School field trips were also very popular this week.

**VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille:** Harvest conditions remained very favorable last week. Still no widespread killing frost in our area. Corn silage harvest winding down for most farmers. Some third or fourth cut grass left to be cut. **Bill Snow (Ext), Orange:** Slow harvest of corn silage due to slow dry down of corn in this area. Ears are fully dented but stalks are still very high in moisture. One report of silage cut early was only 22% dry matter. Another farm reported 28% dry matter last week. **Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Orleans:** The majority of corn silage has been cut. Reports in say the yield is below average but the grain content is high. Most producers seem to be pleased with the crop. Many producers are spreading manure to empty their storages for winter. We still haven't had a killing frost in the county. Some of the cold spots have had a couple of light frosts but most of the county is still frost free. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** Corn silage

harvest is just about finished with some picking corn left. Manure spreading and seeding down with rye is just about complete. Most all apples have been picked along with all winter squash. Foliage this year is about two weeks late, color is still green and no frost. **Richard Noel, Franklin/Grand Isle:** Only some weak showers and high winds this week. Moisture level in soil isn't all that great. Crops still sucking up some of the moisture. Alfalfa is almost a foot tall after third cutting in some areas. The early July planted 76 day corn is in the dough stage and ready to chop. The heat we had last week was greatly appreciated. Field work is going very well and a lot of ground is being covered with manure and being tilled. Fall looks good so far, geese are starting to move south. Is cold weather not too far away? **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** One of the 'finishing up' weeks, trying to finish up haying, trying to finish up chopping corn. About 0.2 inch of rain south of St. Johnsbury, one touch of frost during the week, very extended growing season. **Chris Benedict (Ext), Chittenden:** This past week we had practically prime weather. Good temperatures with adequate moisture for the apples. A bit windy, which did cause some drops, but overall a good picking week. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** All fields except squash and pumpkins have been seeded to winter rye. First fields seeded have become a real lush growth. Weather has been warm and enough moisture for good germination. This week's 1.564 inches of rain has helped a lot to finish crops. Potatoes all dug, good average crop. Two more days of sweet corn, on the market 75 days. Cutting and putting squash and pumpkins in storage. Lots of nice winter cabbage and fall decorations from the garden. Have a good week.

**September 2002 Crop Weather Summary:** Above normal temperatures prevailed in September throughout New England. Parched soils received much needed moisture, but unfortunately the rain arrived too late to help most crops already affected by the drought-like conditions. Second crop hay harvest was nearly complete by month's end; growers cutting a third crop had 20 percent left to harvest. Silage corn remained in good to fair condition throughout September with harvest at the half-way mark by the end of the month. Potato harvest in both Maine and Massachusetts was slightly behind normal as October approached. Maine potato growers reported below average tuber size due to lack of rain, and some farmers delayed topkill to allow rain to improve size before harvest. Maine oat and barley harvest was ahead of normal as of the 29th and was rated in good to excellent condition by crop specialists. Broadleaf tobacco harvest was complete by mid-month and shade tobacco harvest had wrapped up by month's end. Peach harvest was nearly complete the last week in September, on schedule with last year and normal. Apple harvest was also on schedule, with 60 percent harvested as of the 29th. Pear condition remained very poor throughout the month, and half of the crop remained to be harvested. Growers completed the harvest of highbush blueberries by mid-month. Fifteen percent of Massachusetts cranberries were harvested by the end of the month. Berry size was reported as small, and some losses are expected due to damage from fruit rot.

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