



New England Agricultural Statistics Service

a field office of the National Agricultural Statistics Service
United States Department of Agriculture



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Crop Weather

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September 3, 2002 - 4 pm

For week ending 9/1/02

Scattered Showers Arrive

GENERAL CONDITIONS: For the week ending September 1, 2002, there were 6.2 days suitable for field work across New England. Pasture condition was rated as 15% very poor, 37% poor, 34% fair, 14% good, 0% excellent. More showers arrived in New England, some areas receiving over two inches, others not a single drop. Cool temperatures were prevalent for the week, dipping low at night. Frost hit some northern regions. Major farm activities included: harvesting tobacco, potatoes, oats, barley, highbush blueberries, apples, peaches, pears and vegetables; completing Maine wild blueberry harvest; applying vine desiccants to potatoes; cutting dry hay and chopping haylage; irrigating; applying manure; monitoring for pests and disease and spraying where necessary.

FRUIT: Apples, highbush blueberries, peaches, plums and raspberries were harvested last week. Late apple varieties are expected to improve in size from recent showers. Fruit crops in most areas need more rain; irrigation continued last week. Maine growers completed wild blueberry harvest after berries had time to gain color and size from recent cool weather and scattered showers. Rain last week brought some relief to tight water supplies in the Massachusetts cranberry region. Growers are hopeful there will be sufficient water for frost protection. White cranberry harvest is expected to begin this week.

FRUIT CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Apples	20	15	15	Good/Fair
Peaches	85	70	70	Good/Fair
Pears	10	30	20	Very Poor/Poor
Blueberries				
Highbush	95	95	95	Good
Wild, ME	100	99	95	Good
Cranberries, MA	--	--	--	Fair/Good

VEGETABLES: Roadside stands did good business over Labor Day weekend, selling a variety of fresh vegetables. Growers welcomed last week's rain, but for some vegetable crops the moisture came too late to help. Sweet corn harvest continued and completed fields were cut and plowed under. Last week growers harvested many vegetables including cucumbers, eggplant, greens, onions, peppers, pumpkins, squash, sweet corn and tomatoes.

SOIL MOISTURE ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Soil Rating	This Week	Last Week	Last Year
Topsoil Moisture			
Very Short	32	35	27
Short	35	42	42
Adequate	33	23	31
Surplus	0	0	0
Subsoil Moisture			
Very Short	37	32	28
Short	34	41	42
Adequate	29	27	30
Surplus	0	0	0

FIELD CROPS: Hay fields experienced some relief from showers last week. First cut hay is complete, with second not far behind at 90 percent. Corn also benefitted a little from last week's rain; harvest has barely begun. Farmers jumped ahead with grain harvest last week during the dry days. Drought conditions in Maine have had a negative impact on this year's potato crop; size has been reported below normal and yields off, due to lack of moisture. Massachusetts and Rhode Island potato harvests continued, both rated in good to fair condition. Massachusetts tobacco growers have completed this year's harvest, while Connecticut has five to ten percent remaining to be harvested.

FIELD CROP DEVELOPMENT ACROSS NEW ENGLAND

Crop	-- Percent Harvested --			Condition
	2002	2001	5-yr Avg	
Barley, ME	55	70	50	Good/Excellent
Oats, ME	30	45	40	Good/Excellent
Potatoes				
Maine	5	5	5	Good/Fair
Mass	40	30	45	Good/Fair
Rhode Isl	55	55	40	Good/Fair
Silage Corn	<5	5	5	Fair/Good
Sweet Corn	75	75	70	Fair/Good
Tobacco				
Shade	95	85	95	Good/Fair
Broadleaf	95	90	95	Good/Fair
Dry Hay				
First Cut	100	100	99	Good
Second Cut	90	90	80	Good/Fair
Third Cut	50	45	35	Fair

For the Week Ending Sunday, September 1, 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		
	-----				BASE-50F		BASE-60F		-----			-----		
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL INCHES	DFN	DAYS
MAINE														
Augusta_State_A	40	83	65	+0	1852	+85	840	+150	0.43	-0.28	1	0.91	-2.10	5
Bangor_Intl_Arp	37	82	64	+0	1743	+129	757	+178	0.25	-0.52	3	0.73	-2.33	9
Bethel	36	88	63	+0	1632	+31	654	+95	0.26	-0.63	1	0.76	-2.86	8
Cari bou_Muni ci p	34	79	58	-3	1338	+31	487	+120	0.01	-0.89	1	0.48	-3.16	4
Dover-Foxcroft	38	79	60	-2	1317	-88	449	+16	0.00	-0.88	0	0.64	-2.73	5
Frenchville	34	77	57	-3	1234	+20	447	+133	0.13	-0.78	2	2.27	-1.45	7
Houlton	35	79	59	-2	1378	+13	501	+91	0.12	-0.79	2	1.09	-2.60	8
Livermore_Falls	30	87	63	+3	1700	+317	728	+316	0.18	-0.73	1	0.58	-3.15	7
Moosehead	36	84	58	-2	1229	+59	390	+91	0.00	-0.84	0	0.58	-2.78	4
Portland_ME	39	83	64	-2	1819	+194	800	+206	0.94	+0.24	1	1.24	-1.37	5
NEW_HAMPSHIRE														
Benton	40	79	60	-2	1614	+137	641	+188	0.46	-0.42	1	1.35	-2.26	6
Berlin_AG	38	81	61	-1	1546	+58	579	+103	0.10	-0.83	1	0.67	-3.21	6
Concord	39	84	64	+0	2085	+306	997	+306	1.20	+0.50	1	1.91	-1.07	8
Di amond_Pond	42	75	57	-2	1081	+75	317	+119	0.04	-1.06	1	1.10	-3.51	5
Keene_AP	41	82	64	-3	2025	+43	925	+84	1.28	+0.47	2	3.42	-0.07	7
North_Conway	38	84	64	+2	1914	+254	881	+280	0.56	-0.32	2	1.00	-2.61	11
Rochester	40	87	64	-2	2019	+122	936	+154	0.95	+0.18	1	1.95	-1.26	6
VERMONT														
Burlington_Intl	47	85	65	+1	2104	+200	1006	+220	0.28	-0.62	1	1.16	-2.50	9
Island_Pond	39	78	59	-1	1434	+212	512	+204	0.07	-0.94	1	1.60	-2.74	7
Montpelier	44	78	60	-2	1657	+156	651	+171	0.19	-0.63	2	1.70	-1.77	9
Pownal	47	76	61	-3	1729	+170	695	+181	1.40	+0.43	2	2.39	-1.52	8
Rochester	46	82	63	+1	1659	+185	664	+198	0.35	-0.66	1	1.82	-2.34	7
Rutland_AG	46	79	61	-5	1767	-196	730	-88	0.39	-0.52	1	1.27	-2.53	6
Sutton	43	79	60	+1	1488	+250	541	+219	0.08	-0.91	1	1.29	-2.97	9
Townshend_Lake	47	82	62	-3	1923	+62	851	+95	1.43	+0.56	1	3.31	-0.29	8
MASSACHUSETTS														
Ashburnham	48	80	64	+1	2000	+383	908	+342	1.23	+0.49	2	2.99	-0.14	9
Boston/Logan_In	54	85	68	-3	2539	+287	1344	+281	0.89	+0.13	2	2.01	-0.94	7
Greenfield	47	84	65	-3	2197	+80	1057	+115	1.82	+1.03	3	2.73	-0.58	9
New_Bedford	49	82	67	-5	2278	+9	1092	+13	0.18	-0.76	2	0.84	-2.99	8
Otis_AFB	55	81	67	-1	2167	+319	1025	+258	0.80	+0.01	2	1.25	-1.85	6
Plymouth	49	83	65	-3	2178	+269	1045	+233	0.40	-0.58	3	1.31	-2.36	9
Walpole	46	84	64	-3	2280	+340	1136	+322	0.95	+0.04	2	2.59	-0.99	6
Chicopee/Westov	46	84	66	-5	2434	+14	1250	+67	1.14	+0.30	2	1.80	-1.41	8
Worthington	44	83	62	-2	1795	+213	763	+232	2.06	+1.15	2	2.75	-0.98	7
RHODE_ISLAND														
Providence	53	85	68	-1	2547	+400	1347	+359	0.56	-0.28	2	1.39	-1.92	6
Woonsocket	47	82	65	-2	2267	+359	1117	+341	1.22	+0.31	2	2.64	-1.00	7
CONNECTICUT														
Bridgeport/Siko	57	83	68	-4	2607	+301	1384	+261	2.07	+1.37	2	2.65	-0.25	6
Hartford/Bradle	50	86	67	-3	2584	+257	1367	+252	1.11	+0.22	2	1.95	-1.39	6
Norfolk	50	79	64	+1	2030	+444	921	+386	1.66	+0.61	2	3.02	-1.12	9
Thomaston_Dam	50	84	64	-2	2266	+379	1099	+345	1.27	+0.29	4	2.59	-1.28	9
Willimantic	50	83	65	-2	2303	+380	1134	+348	1.14	+0.23	2	2.00	-1.57	6

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.

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STATE WEATHER SUMMARY
 For the Week Ending Sunday, September 1, 2002

State	Air Temperatures				Precipitation	
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	LO	HI
ME	29	88	61	-2	0.00	1.44
NH	34	87	61	-2	0.04	1.58
VT	37	85	61	-2	0.05	1.46
MA	41	87	65	-2	0.15	2.06
RI	47	85	67	-2	0.26	1.50
CT	47	87	66	-3	0.49	2.50

Prepared by AWIS, Inc.

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: Rain toward the end of the week helped some crops - was too late for others. Field corn looks better. Third cutting of hay is good. **Ross Eddy (FSA), Hartford/Tolland:** Harvesting sweet corn, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, summer squash and cukes. Some getting ready to harvest silage corn. Showers Thursday and Monday were welcome. Most completed tobacco harvest. **Dawn Pindell (FSA), Windham:** Alas, rain, glorious rain arrived with 2 plus inches in most parts of the county. Crop field events well attended with corn seed type postings lending an Iowa cornbelt feel to local silage areas. Dairy meeting, large crowd concerned with Milk Income Loss Contract and sharing information about good production. Peaches are sweet and range from small to fist size. Sweet corn over mature due to hot weather - still selling well. **Nancy Welsh/Karen Lockman (FSA), New Haven:** Three days of rain helped crops. We received varying amounts of rain around the two counties. Producers are chopping corn. Peaches are big and juicy.

MAINE - Marvin Hedstrom, Northern Aroostook: Growers harvesting a few potatoes primarily for processing. Also, harvesting grain. Working on harvesting equipment. Starting to apply vine desiccants. Drought conditions continue. This will definitely have an adverse effect on potato yields. Grain yields are about average. Rain at this time will do little to improve yields with the exception of some late maturing varieties. **Pam Hickey (Ext), Central Aroostook:** Grain harvest still in progress. Vine desiccants are being applied, some potatoes being harvested. **Steve London (Ext), Southern Aroostook:** Potatoes on normal spray schedule. Some early varieties being harvested. Grain harvesting going on. No rain this week, potatoes showing stress from drought. **Albert Dow (NRCS), Piscataquis:** Very dry. Little growth. Frost in places September 1. Temperature dropped about 10 degrees the last hour or so before sunrise. **Donna Lamb (Ext), Piscataquis:** Fields are very dry. Corn on well drained soils is showing a lot of drought stress. Had a few isolated showers in the county, but nothing of significance. **Janet King (FSA), Somerset:** Everything is very dry. **Trudy Soucy (FSA), Knox/Lincoln:** Sales of fresh produce at roadside stands starting to slow down. Blueberries are done. Fall work to begin soon. Another week without rain. Fire danger is high. Silage corn is wilted, with poor ear development. **David Yarborough (Ext), Washington:** Wild Blueberries: Crop harvest finished this week. Cool evening temperatures improved crop quality. Fruit size very large. Mid-coast fields are very dry with patches of dead plants. **Michael Tardy (FSA), Androscoggin:** Another dry week with one day giving us a little sip. Many of the silage corn folks are chopping. The crops are brown and will get no more growth. Others are hanging in there and hoping that the crop matures a little more and gains more feed value. The other crops seem to be ok. Some market garden producers have told us that squash and pumpkins aren't doing well. The wet spring stunted or destroyed their growth. The season is coming to an end. One farmer today mentioned that soon he'll be watching for the frost. Brrr! Not yet. **Parker Rand (FSA), Cumberland/York:** Irrigated summer vegetables and apples are being harvested, most other crops are drying up and turning brown. Rain would be welcomed, but it will come too late for most crops. **Gary Raymond (FSA), Franklin:** FIRST FROST!!! This was not good news for pumpkin and squash growers in lower elevations. Apple harvest is under way. Silage corn should be harvested early because of drought. Some ears are smaller than usual. **Laura Rand (FSA), Oxford:** Cooler weather has set in and the nights have dropped down as low as the 30's in the valleys. Soil is very dry and the dust is flying in the fields. Oats are harvested and a light crop has been reported. Second crop hay reported to be light also. Rain received overnight, however not enough to get the soil damp.

MASSACHUSETTS - Paul Russell (FSA), Southeast Massachusetts: Much needed rain arrived over the weekend. Too little too late for the crops, but it will provide cranberry growers some badly needed water for frost protection and harvest. Vegetable growers are winding down a very disappointing season. All crops were poor due to drought and heat and consumers did not shop farm stands during the extended hot spell. Shellfish growers continue to enjoy solid growth in both quahogs and oysters, however the market continues to be soft. **Kip Graham (FSA), Worcester:** Fall crops are looking better after this rain, but if we get any more rain, the pumpkins may begin to rot. The rain was a welcomed sight. There was a late set for some fruit... lost some pumpkins in the previous heat. Bugs are beginning to invade the sweet corn. Using insecticide to keep them in control. The fall crops are looking better at this time. **Frank Caruso (Ext), Plymouth:** Cranberries: Much welcomed rain fell on Thursday and Monday, totaling 2-3 inches in most places. This will help the later

varieties size up. It will help water supplies, but we need much more water. White berry harvest will begin this week. **David Rose (FSA), Bristol:** Rain fell all day yesterday, for the first time since the beginning of June. Some farmers starting to chop silage. Quality varies greatly. Still harvesting all crops at this time. Pumpkins and winter squash will be short this year. **John Devine (FSA), Franklin:** Scattered showers and cooler temperatures allowed for a nice week for harvesting late-summer and fall crops. Most dairy farms are cutting hay and getting ready to harvest corn silage. The majority of these farms are reporting that grain and forage yields should be good in spite of the drought. The apple harvest is also starting now. This year's crop is lighter than normal with growers reporting frost rings on some acreage. **Ted Smiarowski, Jr. (FSA), Hampshire/Hampden:** Three days of excellent soaking rains will help all fall crops and newly established fall cover crops. Producers started harvesting corn silage, winter squash, pumpkins, onions, and Indian corn. Vegetable growers continue scouting for insects and diseases, especially with the cool, damp weather arriving. Tobacco harvest concluded. **Gary Guida, Worcester:** Did it have to rain on Labor Day? Busy weekend at farm stand with corn, tomatoes, and mum sales. Rain has definitely helped pumpkins and remaining sweet corn, but was too late for other crops in the field. Army worms starting to appear in corn. Renovated strawberry field starting to show signs of life and growth. The big surprise this weekend - perennial plant sales continue!

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Amy Ouellette (Ext), Belknap: Some sweet corn unable to be harvested due to drought damage. Vegetable crops being irrigated. Pumpkin and early apple harvests have begun. Sale of fall mums underway. Pastures very dry in most places. **Tina Savage (Ext), Carroll:** Much cooler weather and a little moisture, feels like fall! Pumpkins and winter squash suffering from heavy deer damage. Mums are moving out of garden centers due to loss of flowers to drought. Cinch bugs and Tomato Horn worms are rampant. **Carl Majewski (Ext), Cheshire:** Pleasant weather most of the week - finally a good soaking rain all day Thursday. Third cut haylage is just about finished. Still working on third cut or remaining second cut for dry hay. Field corn looks good, early dough stage, and farmers are starting to get corn choppers ready for harvesting in a week or two. Late planted field corn still in blister or early milk stage. Sweet corn, tomatoes, melons, and a wide variety of other produce still available at farmers' markets and stands. Harvest of early apple varieties continues; the recent rain is expected to help later varieties achieve better size. **Steve Turaj (Ext), Coos:** Generally a warm, dry week for the Lancaster Fair. Cool nights, one night approaching possible frost. A little rain, about typical for this time of year. Corn ears beginning to fill out. Some nice second cut hay being put up. Sweet corn fairly abundant as well as other summer veggies. Blueberries about done. Late summer variety raspberries ripening. **Tom Buob (Ext), Grafton:** Gearing up for corn harvest and finishing up third cut. Some fourth cut being harvested. Still quite dry despite showers. **George Hamilton (Ext), Hillsborough:** Fruit: Peach, plum, and fall raspberry harvest continued. Highbush blueberry harvest is winding down. Starting to finishing up Paula red apple harvest. Apple growers continue to move bins into orchards, getting ready for McIntosh apple harvest. Vegetables: Harvesting wide array of summer vegetables, and starting to harvest some fall vegetables like winter squash and pumpkins. Farmers kept busy monitoring pest pressures and spraying pesticides for insects and diseases if needed. Discing down crop residue on harvested fields. Field Crops: Continued cutting hayfields for dry hay and haylage. Farmers making new forage seedings. Some farmers starting to gear up for corn silage harvest and some farmers have already started. Weather: Drought conditions continued throughout the county until we had nice all-day showers occurring on Thursday - gave some relief along with cooler weather. **David Seavey (Ext), Merrimack:** Apple harvest underway. Early spring freeze has reduced the size of the apple crop. Warm season vegetables being harvested. Orchards finished mowing. Dry conditions prevail. A few spot showers were helpful. Regrowth of hay crop is poor. Some sweet corn and field corn on sandy river bottom soils were lost to drought. **Pam Marvin (FSA), Sullivan:** A nice week with cool temperatures and a few days of rain. Certainly helped all crops, especially silage corn and hayfields. Corn harvesting in some spots will be starting soon. Fourth cutting of haylage is looking good. Harvested sweet corn fields being cut and plowed under. Late summer fruits and vegetables can still be found at some roadside stands. The start of the pumpkin season is just around the corner. **Geoffrey Njue (Ext), Strafford:** Last week was cool and we had much needed rain showers by the weekend. The showers are a great help for the pastures and third cut hay. Corn, field vegetables and field cut flowers will also benefit from the showers. Vegetable growers continued to harvest different vegetables. The fruit growers continued to harvest peaches and also continued to monitor for apple

maggots and to do the final spraying if necessary. Garden centers and nurseries hope that the rain showers will improve their businesses for the fall planting.

RHODE ISLAND - Karen Menezes (Ext), Newport: Harvesting sweet corn, tomatoes, potatoes, and some third cut hay. Cabbage doing well considering the tough start. Pumpkins, winter squash and gourds doing well, starting to harvest some. Roadside stands looking great. **Marilu Soileau (FSA), All Counties:** Dusty fields made for dirty work up until early Saturday morning when showers began to fall. Thankfully, the afternoon cleared in time to keep sales brisk at roadside farm stands. Apples are coming in now. The price of retail sweet corn fell dramatically this week. Freshly dug potatoes are selling well. The rain continued Saturday night and into Sunday with periods of rainless cloud conditions. Predictions of more rain are in the forecast. Let's hope it comes soon in the form of overnight showers so as not to impede the many chores that await our producers!

VERMONT - John St. Onge (FSA), Lamoille: Dry conditions still persist with no soaking rains in sight for the northern part of the state. Cooler, partly cloudy weather and morning fog has helped to mitigate the dry conditions. A few farmers have started opening up their cornfields by chopping around the edges. Looks like harvest for corn silage may start a little early this year. **Bill Snow (Ext), Orange:** Only a little rain during the week, which was better than none at all. Some hay and haylage harvest, but otherwise a slow week. Corn in this area is in milk stage, but different stages in different areas. **Lynette Hamilton (FSA), Windham:** We had rain all day Thursday and into Friday we received 2 inches in Vernon VT. Apple growers are

reporting that they are having a good season on trees that were not hit by frost last spring. Some field corn is being harvested because of the dry weather. Alfalfa is being cut for the third time with good production. **George Cook (Ext), Lamoille:** One day of rainy weather, although not enough to do any good. Fields showing signs of drought stress, corn leaves curling. Early color showing up in some trees; another indicator of drought stress. Hay, silage going in, some early corn chopping beginning. **Jeff Carter (Ext), Addison:** Some hay harvest, some manure on hay stubble. Getting ready to start corn harvest this week, is still mostly immature corn. Grass growth still stopped, very dry soil. Alfalfa came through ok, summer seedings of hay coming up with uniform stands. **Richard Noel, Franklin/Grand Isle:** Getting very dry up here! Corn starting to roll and some on light soils has turned brown. Grass not growing at all at this point. Only where there is some stored up moisture. Legumes doing well. All sorts of field work going on. Farmers can travel anywhere, even over the ruts they made in June! **Dennis Kauppila (Ext), Caledonia:** Another dry week. This was driest August on record in St. Johnsbury. Working on second and third cut hay. Starting to think about chopping corn. **Sherwin Williams, Rutland:** Sprayed potatoes last time for blight. Seeding fields to rye soon after picking. Enough moisture so rye germinating is good. Tomatoes finally gave up their green and we are starting to pick best crops of peppers in a long time. A real nice gentle 3/8 inches of rain. Rained all day, so did a good job. Picked produce for commercial exhibit at Rutland Fair, a tradition with us for many years. Most vegetables in good shape, but vine crops still not mature. Feels like Fall and Fair in the air. Have a happy week.

August 2002 Crop Weather Summary: Dry weather and high heat prevailed in New England for the majority of August, similar to conditions during August 2001. Where irrigation was not available, the lack of rain had a negative impact on many different field crops, fruits and vegetables. Condition of the second and third crops of hay slowly declined as the dry month wore on. Silage corn leaves were curling and growth was stunted as growers geared up for harvest. Potato harvest was active in Rhode Island and Massachusetts during August, at or ahead of normal. No major problems from disease had surfaced as Maine potato growers prepared for harvest, but the crop was expected to produce low yields due to the lack of moisture during growth. Maine oat and barley harvest was behind normal as of the 25th, but the crops were rated in excellent to good condition. The harvest of shade and broadleaf tobacco was close to being wrapped up by the end of the month. Both crops were rated in good to fair condition; acreage and yield losses were anticipated from an outbreak of blue mold disease. Peach harvest was active during August, and apple and pear harvests were gaining momentum at month's end. Pear condition remained very poor throughout the month, damaged by unfavorable conditions during the spring. Maine's wild blueberry harvest was complete by month's end, with a smaller than average crop expected; bushes were damaged during last year's dry weather, and cool, wet conditions during pollination this year did not improve matters. Cranberries in Massachusetts were also struggling from the dry conditions. The berries were smaller than average in most locations; farmers held back from irrigating as much as they dared, in order to reserve water to protect berries during the upcoming frost season.

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