

Favorable Weather for Small Grain Harvest

Days suitable for field work, for the week ending Sunday, June 27, 2004, were 6.8. There were measurable amounts of rainfall during the week across most of the state, but the majority of the reporting weather stations received under a half inch of rain. Temperatures across the state were below normal the beginning and end of the week, and near normal midweek. Soil moisture was rated 60% short and 40% adequate. Farmers were busy cultivating, planting, harvesting, spraying, irrigating, and cutting hay. The barley and wheat harvest pace accelerated in southern localities with harvest 25 percent complete in some areas. The second cutting of alfalfa hay harvest began in the southern district. There was a report of some disease blotches in timothy fields in the central district. Vegetables were rated in mostly good condition. Irrigation of vegetable fields increased in response to warm and dry weather conditions. Producers reported their overall vegetable crops development a week to eight days ahead of normal. Harvest of cabbage, zucchini, and yellow squash continued across the state. In central and southern localities, cucumber and snap bean harvest continued with tomato harvest beginning in some localities. Leaf blight was found on some tomato plants, but treatments provided effective control. Sweet corn harvest started in some central fields, and pumpkin plants were vining out well in the central district. Harvest of leaf lettuces, leeks, cilantro, spinach, parsley, beets, carrots, and processing peas continued in southern fields. There was a report of phytophthora blight on some pepper plants in the south. Harvest of early variety peaches began in some southern orchards. Cranberry plants appeared to have good pollination, and fruit was sizing well. Blueberries were in the second week of harvest with good size and yield reported. Livestock producers were encouraged to clip and fertilize pastures to insure continued summer growth.

JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR JUNE 28, 2004

Arugula & Dill & Spinach - Harvesting fair to good quality in decreasing volume with the increased temperatures. Arugula and Dill finishing up but light volume of Spinach still available.

Baby Arugula & Baby Spinach – Harvesting in good quality and volume. Not as affected by the heat.

Basil – Harvesting good quality and volume.

Beets – Harvesting good quality and fair volume.

Blueberries –The early Weymouth variety is finishing up. Duke variety being harvested in good volume for several more weeks. Bluecrop variety starting to be picked this week in light quantities. Fruit quality and size for all varieties is excellent.

Cabbage – Good quality Red, Savoy, and Green being harvested in major quantities.

Cantaloupes – Will begin harvesting by the end of the week in minimal volume with good volume available by the end of next week.

Cilantro – Harvesting good quality and volume.

Collards – Harvesting good quality and volume.

Cucumbers – Harvesting good quality and volume.

Dandelions - Spring planted Pasquale variety available in good volume.

Eggplant – Planted a bit later this year due to wet and cool spring conditions, they've ripened early. The harvest of very good quality product has begun in light volume with volume increasing each week.

Escarole/Endive – Harvesting a fair to decreasing volume of good quality Endive and Escarole.

Green Onions – Good quality and fair to good volume.

Leeks – Good quality spring planted being harvested in good volume.

Lettuces – Harvesting Romaine in fair quality and decreasing volume. Finishing up this week as warm temperatures have hastened their schedule.

Parsley – Good quality and quantity of Spring planted available.

Peppers – Planted a bit later this year due to wet and cool spring conditions, they've ripened early. The harvest of very good quality product has begun in light to fair volume with volume increasing each week.

Pickles (Kirby cucumbers) – Good quality and quantity available.

Squashes – Good quality Yellow and Zucchini are being harvested in good quantities.

Sweet Corn – Harvesting very good quality and fair to good volume this week with good volume expected for the 4th of July. Peak of season should be around July 20th. Good wholesale availability until at least the week after Labor Day. Quantity and quality varies after that due to fall insect pressures.

Tomatoes – Tomatoes were planted a week or two later this year due to cool and wet spring planting conditions yet field grown harvest began eleven days ago in Swedesboro and last week in Cedarville, both places were a week earlier than usual. The lack of early frost exposure and favorable growing conditions have produced an excellent looking crop this year. We'll have a fair to good quantity of excellent quality product this week with good volume expected by next week.

JERSEY FRESH FORECAST

Butternut Squash – Normally planted for early fall harvest, growers planted them even earlier this year for mid July harvest when there's less supply and better prices to farmers.

Nectarines – The early variety Eastern Glo is expected around the third week of July with volume by the end of the month.

Peaches – All varieties are tracking for earlier than normal harvesting and excellent quality is expected due to the nice mix of sun and occasional rain that we've been receiving. The early yellow variety Sentry will start just after the 4th of July with volume expected a week later. The early white variety White Lady is expected around the third week of July with volume by the end of the month.