

Farmers Busy with Field Work

Days suitable for field work were 5.6. There were measurable amounts of rainfall during the week across most of the state. Temperatures ranged from 10 degrees below normal to 10 degrees above normal across the state for the week. Soil moisture was rated 92% adequate and 8% surplus. Irrigation water supplies were rated 96% adequate and 4% surplus. Farmers were busy fertilizing, cultivating, plowing, and planting where field conditions allowed. Small grain crops were rated in good condition. In some southern localities barley was mostly percent headed out. Some wheat fields began to form heads. Soybean planting began in some areas where conditions allowed. Field corn began to emerge in the southern district. Alfalfa and other hay fields were rated in good condition. Sweet corn planting under plastic cover continued in the northern and central districts. Growers in southern locations began to cut plastic covering off of sweet corn seedlings. Transplanting of cucumbers and peppers began across the state; and tomato transplanting commenced in the northern and central districts. Snap bean planting began across the state. Cantaloupe transplanting started in some southern localities. Cabbage transplanting neared completion in the south. Lettuce planting continued in the north; while harvest of Boston and leaf lettuce began in southern areas. Transplanting of eggplant started in some localities in the north and south. Escarole planting neared completion across the state. Pea planting was winding up in the north, while pea plants in southern areas were in bloom. Asparagus and spinach harvest was active across the state. There was a report that some new plantings of spinach in the central region were off color due to excessive rain. In some central localities, zucchini planting was nearing the end. Transplanting of leeks, lettuces, green onions, arugula, summer squash, parsley, and zucchini continued in southern areas of the state. Vegetables were reported as being in mostly good condition. Planting of Irish potatoes was nearing a close across the state with vines reported in good condition. Peaches and apples were rated in good to excellent condition. Apple blossom drop began in the north. Peaches were in shuck stage in the north. Strawberry plants reached full bloom in the north. Irrigation was used on cranberry plants to combat frost. Blueberries were rated in good condition. Pasture condition was rated in fair to good condition.

JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR MAY 10, 2004

Arugula & Baby Arugula - Being harvested in good volume.

Asparagus - With the warming temperatures, it's being harvested in good volume. We are at the peak of the season.

Beets - Just started harvesting in fair volume.

Cilantro - Spring planted is now available in fair to good volume.

Collards - Now being harvested in light volume.

Dandelions - Spring planted available in light volume.

Dill - Just started harvesting but already in fair to good volume.

Escarole/Endive - Harvesting Endive in light volume. Escarole should be ready next week.

Green Onions & Leeks - A small volume of over-wintered product is still available. Transplanted leeks should be available by mid-June. Spring planted varieties due in July.

Lettuces - Harvesting Boston, Red and Green Leaf, and Romaine lettuces in heavy volume.

Parsley - A little bit of over-wintered product is still available but finishing up. Spring planted should be available next week in light quantity.

Radishes - Being harvested in good volume now.

Spinach & Baby Spinach - Spring planted available in good volume.

JERSEY FRESH FORECAST

Basil - Should be available by the end of the month or first week of June.

Blueberries - Early varieties like Weymouth beginning in mid June. Volume available 7-10 days later. Duke variety starting around June 21 with volume a week later. Bluecrop variety after that.

Cabbage - Should be available by the end of the month or first week of June.

Iceberg Lettuce - Should be available by the third week in May.

Strawberries - Sweet Charlie berries are available in light quantities. The Chandler variety berries began this past weekend. Our berries are picked ripe, have more red interior color, and a larger berry size since they're physically more mature. They're a better quality and better tasting berry.

The bulk of our berries will be harvested towards the end of May, with lower volumes to continue through the first week of June. Unfortunately, Winter was very hard on the plugs that were planted last Summer. It seems that we have lost a significant amount of our expected '04 production.

Turnips - Should begin harvesting around the third week of May.