



## Warm Weather Speeds Plant Growth

Days suitable for field work were 5.7. There were measurable amounts of rainfall during the week across most of the state. Temperatures were above normal across the state for the week. Soil moisture was rated 6% short, 87% adequate, and 7% surplus. Irrigation water supplies were rated 95% adequate and 5% surplus. Farmers were busy fertilizing, cultivating, plowing, and planting where field conditions allowed. Barley fields were mostly headed out in the southern and central counties. Wheat fields were over seventy percent headed out in the central and southern counties with a report of some powdery mildew in some central district fields. Soybean planting accelerated in central and northern districts. Field corn began to emerge in the central district. Some hay fields were sprayed for cereal rust mite in the portions of the state. Vegetables were reported as being in mostly good condition, with some irrigation of vegetables in the south. Sweet corn planting continued in the south where conditions allowed. Pea planting activities continued in the northern counties. Transplanting of cucumbers, eggplant and, peppers continued across the state. Cucumbers, directly seeded into fields, emerged in some southern fields. Early transplanted tomato plants began to flower, while early planted snap beans began to emerge in southern localities. Cantaloupe transplanting continued in southern areas; while in most central localities cantaloupe plants were still in greenhouses. Cabbage transplanting finished in central and southern areas. Harvest of green and red lettuces, cilantro, leeks, and endive continued in the south. Escarole harvest began in some southern fields. Asparagus and spinach harvest was active across the state. Basil and arugula planting continued in southern areas of the state. Irish potato vines were reported in good condition. Apple and peach bloom set was good in the central district. In the southern district, peaches are sizing well and the crop is heavy. Strawberries were rated as being in fair to excellent condition across the state. Harvest of strawberries, planted under plastic, began in some fields in the south; while picking of Chandler strawberries began in the central district. Blueberries continued to bloom in southern localities with crop condition ratings of mostly good. There was a report of spraying for fire blight due to hot weather during the past week. Livestock producers were aggressively rotating pastures to maximize growth of grasses this season.

### JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR MAY 17, 2004

**Arugula & Baby Arugula** - Being harvested in good quality and volume.

**Asparagus** - Good quality is being harvested in good volume. The season should run until mid-June. We're just past the peak of the season.

**Beets** - Harvesting good quality and light volume.

**Cilantro** - Good quality spring planted is available in good volume.

**Collards** - Should be harvested in minimal volume later this week.

**Dandelions** - Spring planted available in good volume.

**Dill** - Harvesting good quality and volume.

**Escarole/Endive** - Harvesting good quality Endive in fair volume. Escarole is just starting to be harvested in good quality though minimal volume.

**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 good quality lettuces in heavy volume.

**Parsley** - Good quality spring planted available in light quantity.

**Radishes** - Good quality and volume being harvested.

**Spinach & Baby Spinach** - Good quality and volume of spring planted available.

### JERSEY FRESH FORECAST

**Basil** - Should be available by the end of the month or 1st 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 end of the month.

**Strawberries** - Good quality Sweet Charlie and Chandler berries are available in good quantity. 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 some time next week.