

Vegetable Harvest Activities Continue

Days suitable for field work, for the week ending Sunday, May 30, 2004, were 5.5. There were measurable amounts of rainfall during the week across most of the state. Temperatures were above normal the beginning of the week across the state, but then fell to below normal during the course of the week. Soil moisture was rated 95% adequate and 5% surplus. Irrigation water supplies were also rated 95% adequate and 5% surplus. Farmers were busy fertilizing, cultivating, plowing, planting, spraying, and cutting hay. Barley and wheat were completely headed out in most localities. There was a report of powdery mildew in some central district wheat fields. Soybean planting continued across the state. Corn and soybean seedlings begun to emerge in southern localities. The first hay cutting began in parts of the central district; but in most localities hay fields were too wet to begin cutting. Vegetables were rated in mostly good condition. Sweet corn planting continued in some areas. Transplanting of tomatoes continued in the central district, and some early planted tomatoes were flowering under hoop houses. Harvest of cucumbers began in some southern fields. Cantaloupe transplanting continued in the northern district. Spinach harvest continued across the state. Harvest of green and red lettuces, asparagus, peas, cilantro, leeks, basil, baby arugula, squash, and pickles continued in the south. Sweet potato planting continued in central localities. Peaches and apples had small fruit on the trees in the north, and apples were in flower in central localities. Cranberry plants were reported as being in good condition. Strawberry harvest continued in the northern district, and was near completion in central and southern fields. There was a report of some mildew problems on strawberry plants in the central district. Blueberry plants in the central district were in the past bloom stage, and the fruit set looked good. Grape vines were in bloom in the south, and some blooms were sprayed. Livestock producers were aggressively rotating pastures to maintain nutrient value.

JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR JUNE 1, 2004

Arugula & Baby Arugula – Being harvested in good quality and volume.

Asparagus – Good quality is being harvested in fair though decreasing volume. With prices down due to imports, and temperatures up, the harvest decreases each week for the last several weeks of the season.

Basil – Harvesting good quality and light volume, with increasing volume each week.

Beets – Harvesting good quality and fair volume, with increasing volume each week.

Cabbage – Good quality Red and Savoy being harvested in fair quantities. Green available in good quantity. Will increase in volume each week.

Cilantro – Harvesting good quality and volume with good prices to growers.

Collards – Harvesting good quality and light volume, with volume increasing each week.

Cucumbers - Harvesting good quality and fair volume, with volume increasing each week.

Dandelions - Spring planted Pasquale variety available in good volume.

Dill - Harvesting good quality and volume.

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

Green Onions & Leeks – Good quality and fair volume available. Spring planted leeks due in July.

Lettuces – Harvesting fair to good quality lettuces in good volume. Should be around until the end of the month though warm temperatures could hasten that schedule a bit.

Parsley – Good quality of spring planted available in fair quantity.

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

Radishes – Good quality and minimal volume being harvested. Finishing up.

Spinach & Baby Spinach – Fair to good quality and minimal volume available. Finishing up spring season.

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

Strawberries – Fair quality Chandler berries are available in minimal volume as the season finishes up.

Turnips – Harvesting good quality and fair volume.

JERSEY FRESH FORECAST

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.

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

Cantaloupes – Become available in late June. Volume available at beginning of July.

Eggplant – Planted a little bit later this year due to wet and cool Spring conditions, harvest will begin in second or third week of July. Volume increasing each week thereafter.

Peppers – Planted a little bit later this year due to wet and cool spring conditions, harvest will begin the first or second week of July. Volume increasing each week thereafter.

Sweet Corn – Harvest should begin the last week of June. Good quality and fair quantity 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 – Field grown begins third week of June with limited quantities and higher prices. Volume available around mid-July.