

AGRICULTURE

Temperatures averaged much above normal, with highs in the mid 90's most of the week. Dry conditions persisted across the state last week, although a few isolated showers were reported. Activities included irrigating vegetable and fruit crops, harvesting silage and greenchop, and harvesting dry hay. Days suitable for field work averaged 6.6. Top soil moisture was rated 55% very short, 40% short, and 5% adequate. Persistent dry conditions and warm weather have caused heat stress in row crops, hay fields, and pastures across the state. Producers reported that yield losses to corn and soybeans could be significant if drought conditions persist. Producers continued to make progress on their third hay cutting, but slow regrowth was reported in most fields due to dry weather. Livestock producers reported heat stress in some herds. Supplemental feeding of hay and silage was prevalent in most livestock operations. Some producers expressed concern over elevated nitrogen levels in new crop greenchop and silage. Vegetable producers continued harvesting summer potatoes, sweet corn, tomatoes, peppers and green onions. Fields under irrigation were reported in mostly good condition.

SOIL MOISTURE TABLE

	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR
VERY SHORT	55%	35%	9%
SHORT	40%	55%	17%
ADEQUATE	5%	10%	73%
SURPLUS	0%	0%	1%

RANGE AND PASTURE

	CURRENT	PREVIOUS WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR
VERY POOR	20%	0%	10%
POOR	50%	0%	14%
FAIR	30%	40%	13%
GOOD	0%	51%	63%
EXCELLENT	0%	9%	0%

*JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR AUGUST 19, 2002

Cabbage – Green, Red, and Savoy available in quality, though quantity is off until the end of August or beginning of September. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather. Will pick up next month.

Cantaloupes – The hot weather is hastening ripening with decreasing quantity available. Sizes are also a little smaller.

Collards & Escarole/Endive – Good quality and decreasing quantity available now due to the hot weather. Will be available throughout the summer.

Cucumbers - Good quality and lessening quantity available due to the heat.

Eggplant – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Italian Eggplant – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Sicilian Eggplant – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Green Beans – Good quality but hot weather causing decreased volume and size variability.

Green Onions – Good quality and quantity available.

Herbs – Lighter quantities available now for Cilantro, Dill, Parsley, Arugula, and Baby Arugula with hot weather stretches causing some heat related light availability of these and other herbs. Some herbs though, like Basil, Mint, and Mustard like the hot weather and thrive in this kind of heat. Expect most herbs other than Arugula to be available all summer.

Leeks - Good quality and decreasing quantity of spring planted varieties being dug now. Early June planted varieties will be available in a week or two.

Napa Cabbage – Good quantity. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Nectarines - Flavor Top, Red Gold and Fantasia varieties being harvested now during the heaviest volume week of the season. Will be available through the end of August.

Peppers – Quality and quantity are available now.

Pickles (Kirby cucumbers) – Good quality. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Plum Tomatoes – Harvest at the peak of the season with ripening due to the hot weather. Good size.

Shanghai Bok Choi – Good quantity. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Sweet Corn – The other side of the peak of season. Quantity available for supermarket buyers (8" size) with Argent, Silver King, and Super Sweet varieties. Good wholesale availability until at least the week after Labor Day. Quantity and quality varies after that due to fall insect pressures.

Tomatoes – Harvest at the peak of the season. The recent heat wave has continued to cause a lot of field ripening with this week's heat expected to continue this pattern. Watch for small supply gaps as the heat has caused the ripening of various sequential plantings to run together.

White Potatoes – Good quantity and quality.

White Peaches - Blushing Star and Sugar Giant varieties are available in decreasing volume now. Lady Nancy and Snow Giant varieties available in quantity.

Yellow Peaches – All fruit being harvested now is of excellent quality. Loring variety has been excellent and is finishing up. Bounty variety being harvested now in decreasing quantities with great color and size. Blake and Crest Haven varieties are being harvested in volume now.

Yellow Squash – Good quality and large quantity available. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

Zucchini - Good quality and large quantity available. Volume and size has been less with the hotter weather.

**Provided by the New Jersey State Department of Agriculture.*