

AGRICULTURE

A low pressure system moved through the region over the weekend, triggering showers and thunderstorms across the state. Although recent rains are helping rebuild water supplies, the drought emergency remains in effect throughout the state. Activities included equipment repair, harvesting summer vegetables, combining corn, and field preparation for fall planting. Days suitable for field work averaged 6.5. Top soil moisture was rated 83% short and 17% adequate. Producers reported slight improvement in some late planted soybean fields due to recent showers. Field corn harvest was underway in some areas, with many producers reporting low test weights due to the drought. Producers have begun planting winter wheat in some localities. Recent rains improved pasture condition in some areas, although slow regrowth caused producers to continue supplemental feeding. Some producers expressed concern over the potential for increased nitrate levels in forage and silage due to drought conditions. Vegetable producers reported insect damage in some pepper and sweet corn fields. Problems with cracking were also reported in some tomato and pepper fields due to recent rains. Cantaloupe, cucumber, and sweet corn harvest was winding down in some areas. Pumpkin harvest continued, with producers reporting fruit of smaller size than expected. Producers indicated portions of some pumpkin fields may be abandoned due to problems with pollination, disease, and drought. Apple harvest continued, with crop condition rated mostly fair. White cranberry harvest began in some areas. Crop condition was rated as mostly good.

SOIL MOISTURE TABLE

	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR
VERY SHORT	0%	7%	17%
SHORT	83%	49%	63%
ADEQUATE	17%	44%	20%
SURPLUS	0%	0%	0%

RANGE AND PASTURE

	CURRENT	PREVIOUS WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR
VERY POOR	0%	0%	17%
POOR	56%	47%	63%
FAIR	44%	53%	20%
GOOD	0%	0%	0%
EXCELLENT	0%	0%	0%

*JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR SEPTEMBER 16, 2002

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