

AGRICULTURE

Tropical storm Isidore brought much needed moisture to the area last Thursday. Rains were heavy at times, with many areas receiving over an inch of rain before the storm moved off the coast early Saturday morning. Outdoor activities included plowing, harvesting vegetables, and combining corn. Days suitable for field work averaged 4.9. Top soil moisture was rated 28% short and 72% adequate. Soybean harvest was underway in some areas, with producers reporting low yields attributed to drought conditions. Field corn harvest continued, with some producers reporting low ear to stalk ratios. Extensive wildlife and insect damage to field corn stands was also reported in some areas. Recent rains have improved pasture condition in many areas. Some producers began re-seeding pastures and hay fields as weather permitted. Vegetable producers harvested broccoli, lettuce, cabbage, pumpkins, and sweet potatoes as weather permitted. Sweet corn, tomato, cucumber, and pepper harvest was nearing completion in most areas. Apple harvest continued, with crop condition rated mostly fair.

SOIL MOISTURE TABLE

	THIS WEEK	LAST WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR
VERY SHORT	0%	25%	0%
SHORT	28%	70%	15%
ADEQUATE	72%	5%	85%
SURPLUS	0%	0%	0%

RANGE AND PASTURE

	CURRENT	PREVIOUS WEEK	PREVIOUS YEAR
VERY POOR	0%	0%	0%
POOR	20%	86%	15%
FAIR	52%	14%	30%
GOOD	28%	0%	55%
EXCELLENT	0%	0%	0%

*JERSEY FRESH AVAILABILITY FOR SEPTEMBER 30, 2002

Acorn Squash – Slightly increasing quantities being harvested with smaller sizes being seen due to the prolonged heat. Varieties planted for fall harvest are found in less quantity this year as some growers scaled back their planting due to the prolonged high heat and low rainfall.

Butternut Squash – Increasing quantities are being harvested each week with smaller sizes being seen due to the prolonged heat. Varieties planted for fall harvest are found in less quantity this year as some growers scaled back their planting due to the summer growing conditions.

Cabbage – Green, Red, and Savoy available in increasing quantities. The cooler fall temperatures are great for quality. All varieties peaking.

Cauliflower – Being harvested this week with quantity expected next week.

Collards & Escarole/Endive – Increasing quantities available each week. The cooler fall temperatures are great for quality. All varieties peaking.

Cucumbers – Good quality and decreasing quantities than usual due to the hot and dry growing conditions. Varieties planted for fall harvest found in less quantity this year as some growers scaled back their planting plans due to those growing conditions.

Eggplant – Good quality and decreasing quantities. Size has been less due to hot and dry growing conditions.

Italian Eggplant – Good quality and decreasing quantities. Size has been less due to hot and dry growing conditions.

Sicilian Eggplant – Good quality and decreasing quantities. Size has been less due to hot and dry growing conditions.

Greens – The prolonged drought and high heat has caused some growers to scale back on their fall planting plans. Expect a decreased quantity overall of fall greens. Spinach and Boston lettuce are being harvested in quantity now. An increasing quantity of Romaine is also being harvested with good quantity expected next week. Fall greens will be harvested until frost next month.

Green Beans – Good quality but hot and dry weather growing conditions have caused decreased volume and size variability. This trend reversing with the cooler weather.

Green Onions – Good quality and quantity available.

Herbs – Increasing quantities available now for Basil, Mint, Mustard, Cilantro, Dill, Parsley, Arugula, and Baby Arugula as the cooler fall temperatures will increase quality, and quantity. All varieties peaking. Fall quantities of herbs seem to be less as some growers seem to have scaled back on their planting plans.

Leeks – Good quality and increasing quantity of June planted varieties available.

Napa Cabbage – Though quantity and size had been less with the hot and dry summer weather, this trend is now reversing as the cooler fall temperatures are increasing quality and quantity.

Nectarines – Commercial volume not really being harvested any longer.

Peppers – Good quality and decreasing quantity are available.

Pickles (Kirby cucumbers) – Good quality and decreasing quantity available each week and finishing soon. Size has been less due to the hot and dry growing conditions.

Plum Tomatoes – Good quality and decreasing quantities available. Finishing up soon.

Pumpkins – Available in increasing quantities each week. Long term heat and lack of rain created tough growing conditions that will mean slightly less quantity and size than last year. Quality should be excellent though as there has been a lack of disease pressure.

Shanghai Bok Choi – Though quantity and size had been less with the hot and dry summer weather, this trend is now reversing as the cooler fall temperatures are increasing quality and quantity.

Sweet Corn – Quantity availability decreasing for supermarket buyers. Quality varies widely now due to fall insect pressures.

Sweet Potatoes – Quality and increasing quantities each week.

Tomatoes – Good quality and decreasing quantities available. Tail end of the season.

White Potatoes – Good quantity and quality.

White Peaches – Commercial volume not really being harvested any longer.

Yellow Peaches – Commercial volume not really being harvested any longer.

Yellow Squash – Good quality and decreasing quantity available. Size has been less due to the hot and dry weather.

Zucchini – Good quality and decreasing quantity available. Size has been less due to the hot and dry weather.

**PROVIDED BY THE NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.*

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