

Weather Crop Report

Week ending September 24, 2006

COLD FRONT BROUGHT COOLER TEMPERATURES

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WEATHER SUMMARY: An earlier-than-normal cold front, crossing the State during the week of September 18 through 24, brought cooler temperatures as fall arrived at the end of the week. Low temperatures fell into the 50s in many Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities, and in some central areas during the week. Elsewhere, lows were in the 60s and 70s. Daytime highs were in the 70s, 80s and 90s. Temperatures averaged near normal for the week in the major cities. Rains fell mostly in scattered areas of the Panhandle and in some Gulf coast localities along the west side of the Peninsula and in the Big Bend area. Rainfall ranged from about a quarter inch in Monticello to over three inches in Tampa.

FIELD CROPS: Peanut digging and cotton picking started in Santa Rosa County with progress very slow. Elsewhere in the Panhandle, cotton already harvested averaged very low yields and low quality. Peanut condition was rated 10 percent very poor, 20 percent poor, 45 percent fair, 20 percent good and 5 percent excellent. Ten percent of peanuts have been harvested compared with 23 percent last year and the five year average progress of 29 percent. The recent rain delayed some hay baling in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula, as well as in scattered parts of the central and southern Peninsula. Recent rainfall over the Panhandle improved soil moisture with most supplies rated short to adequate. However, some very short soil moisture still exists in some Panhandle and northern Peninsula counties where the danger of wild fire is high. Elsewhere, soil moisture is mostly adequate with Dade and Lee counties reporting areas of surplus soil moisture.

Percentage of peanuts harvested to date:		
This year	Last year	5-year average.
10	23	29

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	5	16	5	10	18	3
Short	17	18	26	29	40	27
Adequate	74	60	66	60	38	59
Surplus	4	6	3	1	4	11

VEGETABLES: Tomato picking is getting underway around Quincy with most activity expected to start the first week of October. Okra harvesting remained active in Dade County. Field preparations and planting of fall crops continued over the central and southern Peninsula.



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LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern areas, grass growth is limited by shortage of moisture. The pasture condition is poor to fair and the cattle are in fair to excellent condition. Stock ponds water levels are very low. In the central areas, pasture condition is poor to good and cattle condition is mostly good. In the southwest, most pasture is in good condition with some locations needing sunny weather. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from fair to excellent with most in good condition.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	10	5	15
Fair	15	30	20	20
Good	75	55	75	60
Excellent	5	5	0	5

CITRUS: Showers and thunderstorms fell early in the week in all areas, gradually clearing by Wednesday and Thursday. The west coast received the most rainfall at over an inch and a half followed by the northern areas at just over an inch. A few cool nights during the week brought temperatures down to the mid to low 60s, before warming up towards the weekend. With most citrus producing areas still below average rainfall, in conjunction with recently dry, warm days, growers are beginning to run irrigation more regularly. Fruit sizes are being reported as variable, but fruit quality is overall good. Some splitting is evident due to dry weather early in the season, which was followed by a couple good weeks of rain late last month and earlier this month. A couple packing houses are opening and are beginning to receive Ambersweet oranges and grapefruit. Grove maintenance includes mowing, cleaning ditches, spraying and removing of dead trees. Scouting for canker and greening by growers and caretakers continues. Grove owners are resetting to the extent they can find new trees to purchase and put in the ground.

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