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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 27, 2000

Released 4:00 P.M.

August 28, 2000

FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE



WEATHER SUMMARY: Growers delayed some field work early in the week of August 20 through 26 as Hurricane Debby neared but found relief when the storm broke up before hitting the State. The remains of the storm brought showers to the southern Peninsula during the last part of the week. Rainfall ranged from traces at a few localities to about three and a third inches at Avalon and Bradenton with most localities recording from a half inch to two inches or more for the week. Northern Peninsula and western Panhandle localities remain drier than normal with many hoping for soaking rains. Temperatures at the major stations ranged from one degree below normal to two degrees above. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil moisture throughout the State is mostly short to adequate with scattered areas of very short or surplus moisture. Rainfall has been scattered. Tobacco harvest is winding down. Tobacco marketing is active. Crops are stressed by heat and drought in some areas. Cotton is in fair to good condition. The sugarcane crop is in good condition. Soybeans are mostly in good condition. Corn for grain harvest is active. Armyworms and loopers are showing up in some areas. Haying is active weather permitting. Peanut condition is reported at 1% very poor, 8% poor, 48% fair, and 43% good. Growers are starting to harvest peanuts.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	2	7	11	9
Short	34	42	35	48
Adequate	59	47	49	39
Surplus	5	4	5	4

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide, the condition of pasture and cattle is mostly fair to good, slightly improved from the previous week. In the Panhandle, cattle and pasture are in fair condition. Some ponds and lakes are dried up, and there are still some wells reported dry. In the north, cattle and pasture are in fair condition. Haying is active. In the central counties, cattle and range are in good condition and soil moisture is adequate. Some haying is being done. Ponds and streams are still very low. Armyworms and loopers are active. In the west central area, cows and calves are in fair to good condition. The pasture condition is improving and grass is growing. The hay season started. In the southeast counties, pasture grass is dying from drought. In the southwest, pasture is in fair condition. Cattle and calves are in fair to good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	5	5	5
Fair	45	55	45	55
Good	50	40	50	40
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: Rainfall was variable throughout the citrus belt this week. Again, both coasts and the lower interior got the most moisture with several afternoon and evening thunderstorms. The ridge and upper interior citrus counties received only scattered rains. Some of the drier areas had only one or two days with limited showers. A few growers on the high sand hills are irrigating. More rain is needed in all groves to replenish sub-surface moisture levels. The hot and humid weather has provided near ideal conditions for most trees to produce an abundance of new foliage. New crop fruit continues to make good progress. Several fresh fruit packing houses are testing early bloom grapefruit, Navels and Ambersweet oranges for the first harvest of the season. There are still a few fresh squeeze juice operations receiving late bloom Valencia oranges and a small quantity of grapefruit.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops that have made excellent growth with the help of the tropical summer rains. Growers in some areas are using hand labor to remove vines that have covered the tops of their trees. Summer sprays and fertilizations are slowing down. Dead tree removal and burning of grove debris have been reported in virtually all areas.

VEGETABLES: Some planting of fall acreage was delayed early in the week due to Hurricane Debby with rain from the remains of the storm boosting growth of earlier plantings. Land preparation is very active with planting increasing slowly. Hot temperatures are causing stress to some plants.

Palmetto-Ruskin--Pepper planting is increasing while the planting of tomatoes, pickles, and eggplant is mostly steady. Squash and watermelon planting is mostly steady but starting to slow. Most crops are rated in good condition.

East Coast--Producers began to plant eggplant with tomato and pepper planting increasing. Workers are drenching young transplants with water to ensure proper soil moisture.

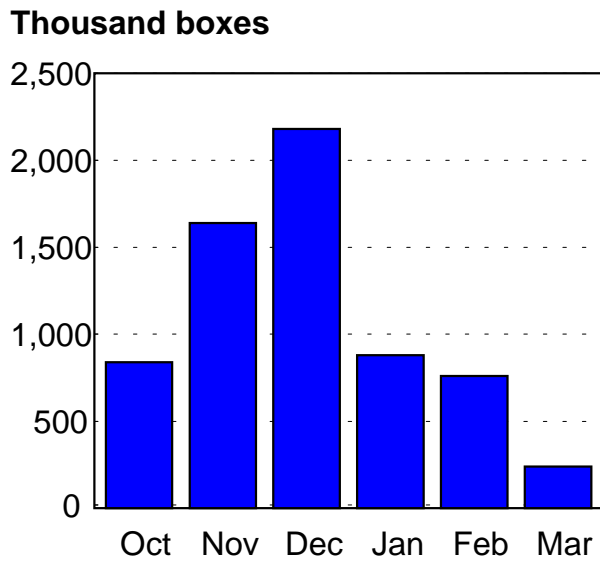
Southwest--Hot weather is causing stress to some plants with condition rated poor to fair. Tomato and pepper planting is gaining momentum. Growers are starting to plant eggplant and a limited acreage of watermelons.

Dade--Producers are preparing land for the planting of snap beans, cabbage, sweet corn, pickles, potatoes, and squash. Growers hope to start planting snap beans and squash in September but will delay planting of the other crops until October. Okra harvesting remains active with recent rains aiding growth and development.

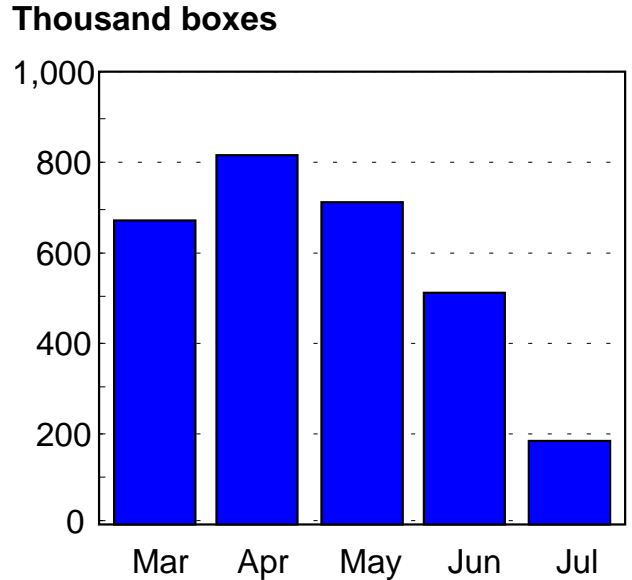
In cooperation with the Florida Cooperative Extension Service whose county directors participate in supplying field information.

MONTHLY UTILIZATION OF FRESH ORANGES 1999-2000 SEASON

Early-mid-Navel Oranges

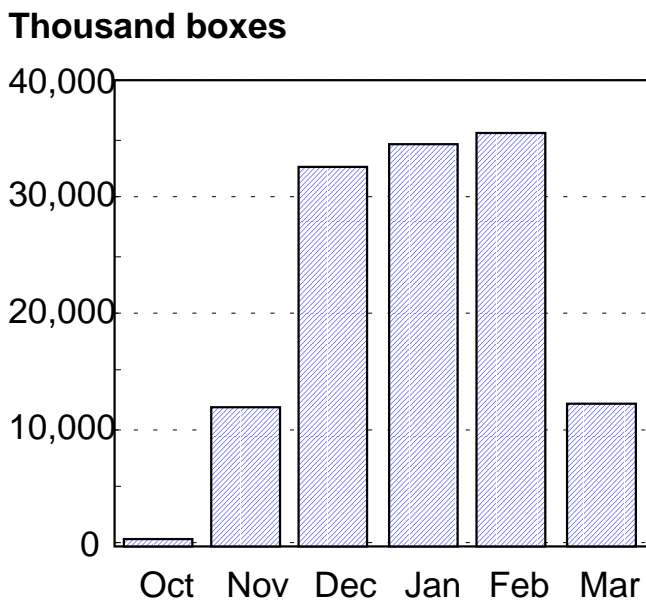


Valencia Oranges

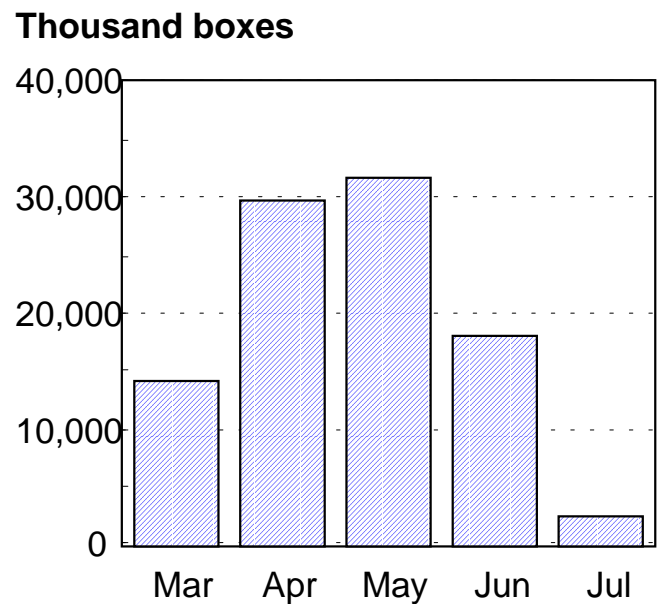


MONTHLY UTILIZATION OF FRESH ORANGES 1999-2000 SEASON

Early-mid-Navel Oranges



Valencia Oranges



SOURCE: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

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