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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending July 8, 2001

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July 9, 2001

FLORIDA AGRICULTURE



WEATHER SUMMARY: Overcast skies continued to keep most temperatures below normal during the week of July 1 through 7. Temperatures at the major stations averaged normal to four degrees below. Daytime highs were mostly in the 80s with nearly all stations recording at least one high in the 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s. Scattered showers dropped from about one-third to over four inches of rain with several localities recording no measurable rain for the week. Wild fires continue to be a danger with several recent fires caused by lightning from storms.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil and subsoil moisture continues to improve with supplies rated mostly adequate to short. Some drier areas are reporting very short supplies of soil moisture and a few wetter localities are reporting surplus supplies. Tobacco harvesting and hay making are active. Irrigated cotton, corn, tobacco and sugarcane remain in good condition. Peanut condition is reported at eight percent fair and ninety-two percent good with 70 percent of the acreage pegged.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	3	13	10	1
Short	25	18	45	53
Adequate	59	68	32	46
Surplus	13	1	13	0

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: The condition of pasture and range improved notably Statewide. In the Panhandle, pasture condition is good. In the northern counties, pasture is doing well. Haying is active when the weather permits. In the central area, pasture condition is improving following normal rainfall. Cattle are looking better. In the southwest, range condition is good. Statewide, cattle condition is mostly fair to good.

RANGE AND CATTLE CONDITIONS, JUNE 2000 - MAY 2001

Summer started with pasture condition very poor to poor in **June**. Hay supplies were short and some cattle producers bought hay to feed. Brush fires were active in the central and southwestern areas and most stock ponds were dry. At mid-month some rain fell and grass started growing but stock ponds stayed very low or dry. Cattle were in poor to fair condition. In **July**, pasture and hayfields slowly improved as rain fell. But water holes were still dry and cattle were in fair to good condition. Marginal rain and extreme heat held down the condition of pasture and cattle at month's end. In **August**, pasture condition improved to mostly fair to good. Stock ponds were still very low. Armyworms and loopers were active and the hay season started.

Pasture condition in **September** in the northern counties was poor to fair while in the southwest pasture was in 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	65	45	65	40
Good	30	50	30	55
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: Most areas of Florida's citrus belt received a lot of rain this week in the form of normal summer thunderstorms. Very few groves were passed over by the abundant rains. Only those growers planning to make the early fresh markets are continuing to irrigate. New crop fruit looks good with better sizes than the past few years due to the more normal bloom this spring. Also, there was widespread and continuous use of irrigation all winter and spring in virtually all well-cared-for groves. Harvest of Valencia oranges is just about complete for this season. Only one or two processors are still open on a limited basis. Most fresh fruit packers have closed for the season. Very few grapefruit were picked this week.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops that are making rapid growth with the help of the recent rains. Summer sprays and fertilizations continue in all areas. Hedging and topping have been reported in most areas along with bush hogging and burning of dead trees.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Jun 24	Jul 1	Jul 8
Valencia oranges	2,812,000	959,000	NA
All grapefruit	90,000	13,000	NA

VEGETABLES: Tomato picking is nearing the end in the Quincy area with light supplies available. Okra harvesting remains mostly steady in Dade County. Watermelon harvesting is almost finished with mostly good quality available.

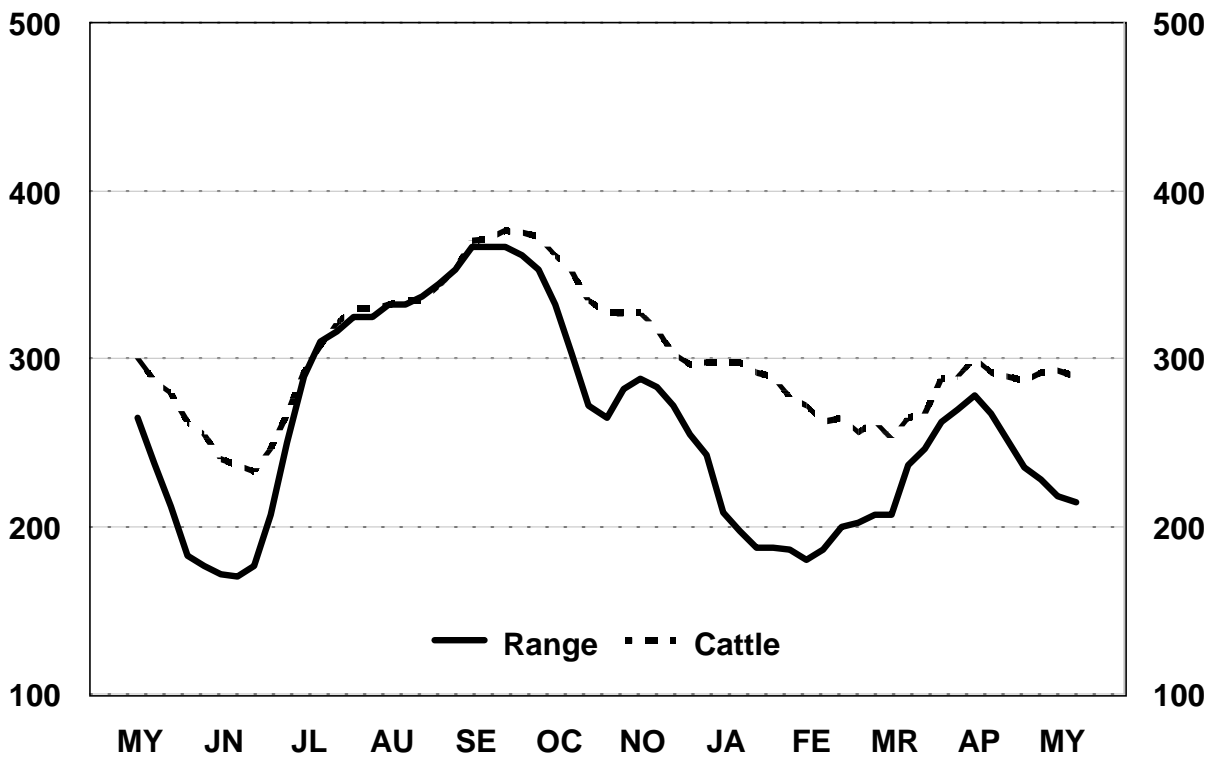
In cooperation with the Florida Cooperative Extension Service whose county directors participate in supplying field information.

In **December**, pastures were mostly in poor to fair condition due to drought and freezing temperatures. Low temperatures also stressed livestock. Supplemental hay was fed. Armyworms damaged pasture grass in the west central counties. Cattle were mostly in poor to fair condition. In **January 2001**, cold temperatures severely hindered grass growth and hay supplies were short in some locations. Stock ponds were low. Cattle condition was poor to good. Drought and cool temperatures kept pasture condition low through early **February**.

Warmer temperatures at mid-month boosted small grass forage growth in the north. Ranchers were feeding hay and the overall condition of cattle was poor to fair. In early **March**, light showers helped forage growth in the northern counties while drought plagued the rest of the State. At mid-month light showers helped grass growth

in much of the State. Cattle looked better but range condition stayed very poor to fair. At month's end, the northern counties received rain and warm temperatures. Stock ponds again had standing water after two years of being dry. Supplemental hay feeding continued; however, mole cricket damage showed in the central counties. In **April**, cool temperatures and light frost held back northern grass growth. Stock ponds filled from rain runoff. Pasture grass began to grow in the southwest. Statewide, cattle condition was poor to good. In **May**, pastures were stressed by drought and the condition of cattle was poor to fair. Supplemental hay feeding was active in the northern counties and hay supplies were running out. By month's end, cattlemen were moving cattle due to the lack of grass. Fire danger was high and wildfires burned over 45,000 acres.

Florida Range and Cattle Conditions, May 2000 - May 2001



100 = very poor, 500 = excellent

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