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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 5, 2001

Released 4:00 P.M.

August 6, 2001

**FLORIDA
 AGRICULTURE**



WEATHER SUMMARY: Tropical waves crossing from the Atlantic to the Gulf and the formation of Tropical Storm Barry off the southwestern coast helped bring abundant rains to most Peninsula localities during the week of July 29 through August 4. Preliminary rain amounts for the week ranged from a little over three quarters inch at Umatilla to over five inches at Immokalee and West Palm Beach. Pensacola recorded almost five inches of rain for the week while Tallahassee showed about an inch and a half accumulation. Cloud cover kept most daily average temperatures one to three degrees below normal. Daytime highs were mostly in the 80s with most stations recording at least one high in the 90s. Lows were mostly in the 70s with several localities reporting at least one low in the 60s. Tropical Storm Barry brought at least one to over two inches more rain to the Panhandle and northern Peninsula through Sunday evening, August 4. Early Monday morning, August 6, just after midnight, the northern eye wall of the storm moved onshore between Laguna Beach and Destin, driving wind-driven rain into the Panhandle from Panama City to Pensacola, and bringing six inches or more rain to some Panhandle areas on Monday.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil and subsoil moisture are rated mostly adequate to surplus although a few pockets of short subsoil supplies still exist in some central Peninsula localities. Most lake and pond levels remain below normal despite the recent rains. Over the Panhandle and northern Peninsula, recent rains boosted development of corn, cotton, peanuts and soybeans with condition rated mostly good to excellent. Peanut crop condition is rated 62 percent good and 38 percent excellent with 95 percent of the crop pegged. Some cotton acreage shows uneven development caused by erratic germination due to dry conditions at planting. Oldest cotton fields are reaching maximum plant height for mechanical pickers which points to an early harvest. The wet conditions are delaying some hay making. Tobacco harvesting is active as weather permits.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	1	0	1	0
Short	5	2	19	12
Adequate	66	63	59	54
Surplus	28	35	21	34

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide, pasture condition improved over the previous week. In the northern counties of the

Peninsula, recent rains are enhancing growth of forages. In the central areas, pasture is in good condition. However, lakes and ponds are still below normal with some lakes at a critically low levels. In the southeast, some pastures have water standing after recent heavy rains. In the southwest, the condition of cattle is fair to good and pasture condition is good. Statewide, cattle condition is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	0	5	0
Fair	30	10	20	5
Good	65	85	70	90
Excellent	0	5	5	5

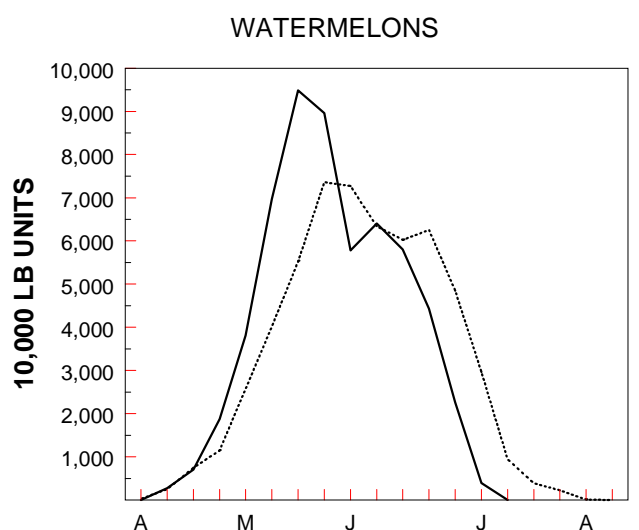
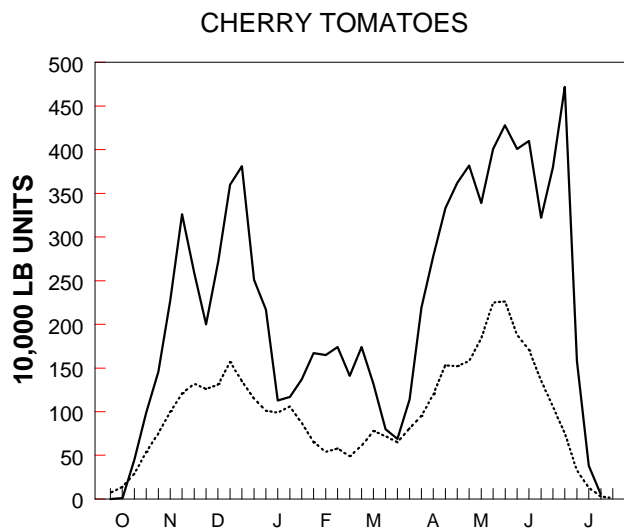
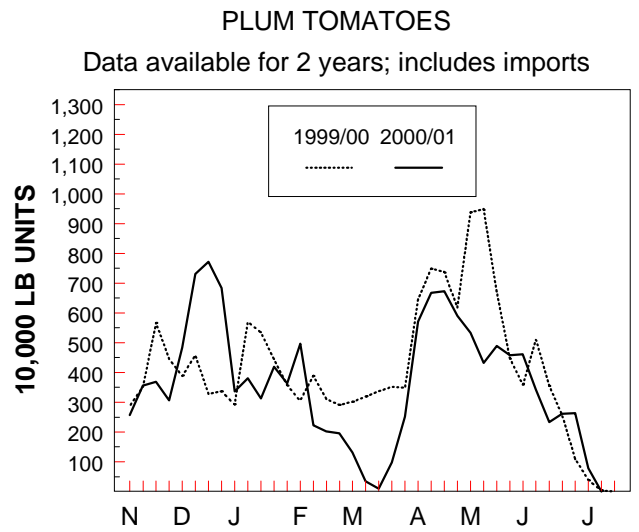
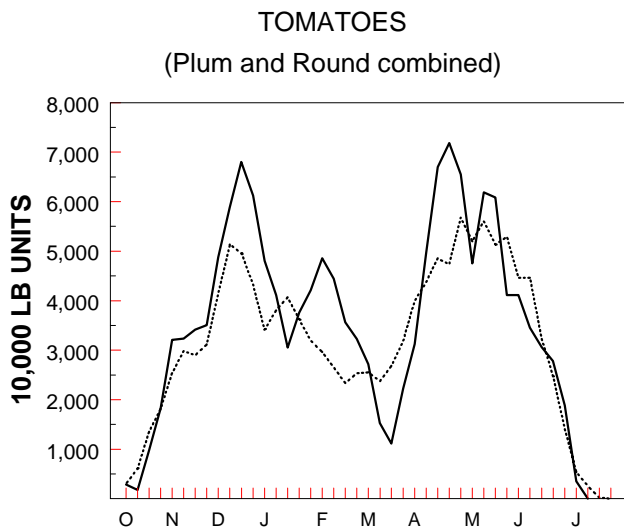
CITRUS: Tropical Storm Barry dumped several inches of rain in many water logged citrus producing counties during the last part of the week. Rainfall amounts for the week generally ranged from 2 to more than 6 inches depending on location. Caretakers are pumping water out of their groves where conditions permit. In groves that are not bedded, some growers are deep plowing middles to drain excessive water away from the tree roots. A lot of main ditches and canals are full and are being drained into lakes and streams. All of the excessive moisture is contributing to an abundant flush of new foliage on trees of all ages. The recent rains are helping the new crops of fruit gain size. However, in the wetter areas there is some droppage from fruit splitting.

Caretakers are very active mowing, chopping and discing cover crops that are growing rapidly. Growers are having a difficult time fertilizing and spraying due to constant rains in some areas. Vines are covering the tops of many trees and blocking the sunlight causing the leaves and fruit to drop prematurely. Hedging and topping continues. Dead trees are being removed and burned along with other grove debris. Resets are being planted in several of the larger groves.

VEGETABLES: Okra harvesting remains active in Dade County. Quincy tomato growers delayed some field work due to the threat of Tropical Storm Barry. Wet fields continued to delay some ground preparations in the Palmetto-Ruskin and Immokalee areas. East Coast producers prepared land for fall crop planting with heavy showers during the last part of the week slowing some field activities.

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

Weekly shipments of selected vegetables



2000-2001 —————

five year average (1995-96 through 1999-2000) ······

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