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WEATHER & CROP NEWS



Week ending August 12, 2001

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WEATHER SUMMARY: The passage of Tropical Storm Barry over the Panhandle brought significant rainfall to some Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities at the beginning of the week of August 5 through 11. Drier weather in some areas during the latter part of the week helped growers keep field work on schedule. Tallahassee reported almost ten and a half inches of rain for the week. Other rain amounts ranged from about a tenth inch at Immokalee to over five and a third inches at Ona with most localities receiving from one to two and a half inches. Temperatures averaged three degrees below to one degree above normal for the week. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were mostly in the 70s with several localities recording at least one low in the 60s.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil moisture conditions are rated adequate to surplus. Subsoil supplies dried out somewhat in areas missed by the daily rains but remain mostly adequate to surplus with some scattered localities reporting short supplies. Rains from Tropical Storm Barry delayed some corn silage and hay harvesting. About 98 percent of peanuts have pegged. Peanut condition is rated 15 percent fair, 50 percent good and 35 percent excellent. Corn, cotton, soybeans and sugarcane remain in good condition.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	0	0	0	0
Short	2	0	12	11
Adequate	63	79	54	70
Surplus	35	21	34	19

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide the condition of pastures is lower than the previous week due to heavy rains from Tropical Storm Barry resulting in standing water in some pastures. In the Panhandle, pasture condition is good to excellent following the rain. However, haymaking was hampered by Tropical Storm Barry. In the north and central counties, the condition of pasture is fair to good. In the west central area, pasture condition is fair to excellent while in the southwest range 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	0	0	0	0
Fair	15	30	15	25
Good	80	55	80	60
Excellent	5	15	5	15

CITRUS: Scattered rains and occasional thunderstorms provided sufficient moisture for most trees to continue producing an abundance of new growth. Virtually all new crops of citrus are responding very well to the almost daily rains. Fruit sizes are very good for the middle of August. Some Navels are nearly baseball size and a lot of 8 to 12 year old grapefruit trees have some fruit that are almost packing sizes, but they have too much acid and too little juice to pass maturity testing. Fallglo, Sunburst tangerines and Ambersweet oranges are also progressing quite well for this time of the summer.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and disking cover crops that have grown tall and out of control. Vines are still covering many trees and could limit the productivity of those trees. Herbiciding, fertilizing and spraying continue to be active between the rains. Hedging, topping and burning of dead trees has been reported in all areas. Growers in the southern and coastal counties are still pumping excessive water out of their groves.

VEGETABLES: Wet ground continues to slow field preparations for the planting of fall crops in some southern and central Peninsula localities. Planting of round varieties of tomatoes began around Immokalee and in the Palmetto-Ruskin and East Coast regions. Producers in west central localities started grape tomato planting in July with acreage rated in good condition. Palmetto-Ruskin growers started planting a small acreage of fall crop watermelons. East Coast producers are beginning to plant peppers. Okra harvesting continues in Dade County.

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

Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey

Data from the 1999 Agricultural Economics and Land Ownership Survey (AELOS) reveal that of the 2,133,909 farms operating in the United States in 1999, just over 81 percent of the operators lived on the farm. Total net cash income was comprised of 77% off-farm income, 17% farm related income (11% government payments and 6% other), and 6% net cash income from agricultural sales. Government payments totaling \$16.7 billion were paid to 43% of the farms.

The study, conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), surveyed farmers and ranchers to collect data describing the current economic health of farms and ranches in the United States. The data showed farming trends in prices, costs of production, land values and ownership, management, and government payments.

Land ownership and management trends revealed there were over 17 million acres acquired in 1999 by farm operators and landlords. Nearly 11 million acres were sold, of which 8.9 million were sold for farming and ranching. Nearly 76.7 million acres of farm land were operated by hired managers in 1999. The estimated market value of land and buildings per acre was \$1,371 showing an increase from \$679 in 1988.

Data from this survey will be used by farm and ranch operators, farm organizations, agribusinesses such as farm suppliers and credit providers, university researchers, the media, local USDA agencies, and others. Data will be used to compute prices paid, measure farm financial health, and assess the ability for producers to maintain sustainable operations.

The entire report of results from AELOS is available at www.usda.gov/nass/.

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