



Florida Agricultural Statistics Service
 1222 Woodward Street
 Orlando, Florida 32803
 407 / 648-6013

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>

WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending September 23, 2001

Released 4:00 P.M.

September 24, 2001

**FLORIDA
 AGRICULTURE**



WEATHER SUMMARY: Drier weather followed Tropical Storm Gabrielle during the week of September 16 through 22. Many stations recorded no measurable rain for the week. Others reported from traces to almost two inches. Temperatures at the major stations averaged normal to four degrees below. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were mostly in the 60s and 70s with Jacksonville and Tallahassee each recording at least one low in the 50s.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are mostly adequate to surplus with some scattered localities reporting short to very short supplies. Peanut condition is rated 5 percent poor, 18 percent fair, 67 percent good, and 10 percent excellent. Peanut digging is 30 percent finished with flooding caused by the recent storm lowering some yields. Cotton picking is gaining momentum. Haymaking continues with some localities baling good quality. Field corn picking is active.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very short	0	3	1	5
Short	10	11	15	9
Adequate	39	48	45	49
Surplus	51	38	39	37

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern counties; pastures and forages could use some rain. Haying is active, and hay quality varies from poor to good depending on the time since the most recent rain. Grass in some locations is not growing due to dry soil conditions. In the central area, the pastures are drying out. In the southwest, water is standing in some pastures from rains of last two weeks. Statewide, the condition of cattle is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
Percent				
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	10	0	0
Fair	10	15	15	10
Good	90	75	85	90
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: Most areas of Florida's citrus belt received very little rain this week compared with a week ago when Tropical Storm Gabrielle drenched virtually all of this State's groves. Rainfall accumulations during this week were generally in the one-half to two inch range with only isolated thunderstorms. Many growers are still pumping excessive water out of their groves from the rains of two weeks ago. Most citrus trees are still producing new growth due to the ideal growing conditions. Some of the early fruit have started splitting in those areas where there was excessive moisture. Harvest of Navels, Ambersweet oranges, white and colored grapefruit, Robinson and Fallglo tangerines continues to increase and many crops are now passing minimum maturity tests.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing to remove excessive cover crop growth and to help dry out the wet and soggy grove soils. Fall clean up sprays and the final fertilizations of the year are all

active. Dead tree removal and burning of general grove debris and limbs is going on in most areas.

VEGETABLES: Drier conditions following Tropical Storm Gabrielle allowed field work to get back on schedule with planting increasing.

SNAP BEANS: Dade--Oldest plants are in good condition. Planting is increasing with larger acreage being planted. Southwest--Oldest plants are beginning to break through the ground. Planting is gaining momentum. East Coast--Producers are preparing acreage for fall crop planting.

SWEET CORN: Everglades, Zellwood--The crop remains in good condition. East Coast--Land preparations became more active as soils dried with discing and ditch cleaning active.

CUCUMBERS: Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting continues to increase. East Coast--Planting started with activity expected to increase in about seven to ten days. West Central--Planting is active.

EGGPLANT: Southwest--Crop condition is good. Planting is increasing. East Coast--The crop is in mostly good condition. Transplanting of a small acreage is active. Dade--Crop condition is rated good. Transplanting continues.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE: Everglades--Planting is active.

LETTUCE: Everglades--Planting is increasing.

OKRA: Dade--The crop is in good condition. Harvesting continues with younger acreage nearly ready to cut.

PEPPERS: Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is steady. East Coast--Plant growth and development are mostly good. Oldest plants are blooming and setting fruit. Recent strong winds caused some bloom drop with only minimal damage expected. Land preparation and transplanting became more active as acreage dried out. Workers staked, tied and sprayed as needed. West Central--Planting is steady.

HOT PEPPERS: Southwest--Condition is rated fair to good. Planting is steady. East Coast--Planting is active.

SQUASH: Southwest--Condition is fair to good. Planting is gaining momentum. East Coast--Oldest plants show improved growth. Planting of zucchini and yellow types is light. West Central--Planting is increasing seasonally.

STRAWBERRIES: Plant City, Dover, Floral City, Palmetto-Ruskin--Producers are preparing land and laying plastic with planting to start by early October.

TOMATOES: Quincy--Crop development is good. Harvesting is expected to begin in seven to ten days. Southwest--The crop remains in fair to good condition. Cooler temperatures are aiding plant growth and development. Recent strong winds and heavy rain caused no significant damage with only some leaves broken and a little bloom drop. Very few blooms were open when the adverse weather occurred. Workers are preparing land, transplanting, pruning, staking, tying and spraying as needed. West Central--Transplanting is nearing the end. East Coast--Plant growth and development are improving. Oldest plants are setting fruit with oldest fruit gaining size. Workers are discing acreage, cleaning ditches, leveling land, laying plastic, transplanting, staking, tying, pruning and spraying. Dade--Planting

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

of a small acreage is underway. Most producers plan to start transplanting in October. Workers continue to make beds and lay plastic.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Southwest--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Transplanting is steady. Palmetto-Ruskin--Planting is virtually finished.

PLUM TOMATOES: Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is steady. Palmetto-Ruskin--Planting is slowing seasonally.

WATERMELONS: Southwest--Crop condition is good. Planting is finished. Palmetto-Ruskin--Planting is virtually finished.

To receive this report via e-mail, send an e-mail message to listserv@newsbox.usda.gov with the following message: **add usda-fl-crop-weather your-email-address your.name (optional) An example: add usda-fl-crop-weather jsmith@qtm.com john smith.** The report will be e-mailed automatically to your e-mail address each week.