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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending October 14, 2001

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FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE



WEATHER SUMMARY: Spotty storms brought traces of rain to over an inch to a few southeast coast and southern localities during the week of October 7 through 13, but left most areas dry. Temperatures for the week at the major stations averaged mostly normal to three degrees above. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s while nighttime lows were mostly in the 60s and 70s. Jacksonville, Pensacola, Tallahassee and Alachua recorded at least one low in the 50s. A cold front crossing the State on October 14 caused significant rains to fall over the Panhandle, northern areas, and some central localities with amounts ranging from a third of an inch to over two inches.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are mostly short to adequate with a few areas reporting very short supplies, and some reporting surplus supplies. Peanut digging is eighty percent complete with some localities finished. Cotton picking continues to gain momentum with some areas just starting to defoliate plants. Haying is nearing the end in some northern and western Panhandle areas. Some sugarcane planting was delayed by recent rainfall with growers continuing to plant as weather permits.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil		Subsoil	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very short	3	8	1	4
Short	15	20	16	20
Adequate	65	63	70	61
Surplus	17	9	13	15

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Pasture in the Panhandle and northern counties is mostly in fair condition due to the seasonal slowdown in permanent pasture growth and to generally dry soil conditions. The dryness also slowed the planting of small grains for winter pasture. Pasture in the central area of the Peninsula is in generally good condition. Some areas on the east coast are in poor condition due to standing water from recent rains. Pasture in the southwest is in good condition. Statewide, cattle and calves are mostly in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	Last week	This week	Last week	This week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	10	0	0
Fair	25	15	20	15
Good	70	75	75	85
Excellent	0	0	5	0

CITRUS: There were only a few scattered rains and thunderstorms in isolated areas this week. Most groves are drying out from the heavy rains during September. New growth is slowing down with the assistance of shorter days and drier weather. There is still some fruit splitting showing up as a result of the excessive moisture associated with Tropical Storm Danielle which arrived around the middle of September. Navels and most early oranges and tangerines are showing good on-tree color break. Fresh fruit shippers are very active testing, packing and shipping early oranges, white and colored grapefruit, tangerines and K-Early tangelos. There are a few processors open to receive packing house eliminations.

Caretakers are busy mowing, chopping and discing cover crops, and removing vines from the tree tops. Most fall fertilizations and sprays are winding down. Dead tree removal and burning continue in all areas. Resets are being planted in the coastal and southern groves.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	Oct 1	Oct 8	Oct 15
Navel oranges	12,000	27,000	85,000
Early & Mid oranges including Ambersweet	17,000	53,000	88,000
All grapefruit	127,000	226,000	323,000
Tangerines	66,000	106,000	133,000

VEGETABLES: Gusty winds caused some leaf burn in a few southern Peninsula localities with plants expected to recover. Strawberry planting is increasing around Plant City and Dover. Tomato harvesting is slowly increasing in the Quincy and Palmetto-Ruskin regions. Squash harvest started in the East Coast region.

SNAP BEANS: Dade--Crop condition is good. Gusty winds caused some leaf burn with plants expected to recover. Planting is active. Southwest--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Planting continues at a steady pace. East Coast--The crop is in mostly good condition. Oldest plants are forming blooms while germination of recent seeding is good.

SWEET CORN: Zellwood--Harvesting started with supplies available through early December. Quality is very good. Yields are below normal but expected to improve. Everglades--Crop growth is good. Harvesting is expected to start in late November. East Coast--Plant growth and germination are mostly good. Growers continue to prepare land for future planting. Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition. Planting is finished.

CUCUMBERS, fresh market: Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting continues to gain momentum. East Coast--Germination and plant growth are good. Planting continues to increase.

CUCUMBERS, pickles: Zellwood--The crop is in mostly good condition. Picking is active. Dade--Planting of a small acreage started.

EGGPLANT: Southwest--The crop is in good condition. Planting is increasing. East Coast--The crop is in mostly good condition. Oldest plants are beginning to set fruit. Workers are staking and tying as needed. Dade--Crop condition remains very good. Oldest plants are starting to show fruit. Planting is active.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE: Everglades--Planting continues.

LETTUCE: Everglades--Crop condition is mostly good. Planting remains active with earlier rains delaying some progress.

OKRA: Dade--The crop is in good condition. Scattered rains helped plant development. Harvesting continues with good supplies available through November.

BELL PEPPERS: Southwest--Crop condition is rated fair to good. Planting continues at a steady pace. East Coast--The crop is in mostly good condition. Recent strong winds caused some bud and bloom drop with plants expected to recover. Fruit is gaining size on oldest plants with picking expected to begin over the next two weeks. Land

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

leveling, making of beds, laying of plastic, transplanting, staking and tying are active. Dade--Transplanting of a very small acreage is active.

HOT PEPPERS: Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting is increasing. Harvesting is gaining momentum. Quality is good. East Coast--Transplanting continues.

POTATOES: Southwest--Planting is active. Dade--Producers are preparing land for planting which is expected to begin in one to two weeks.

SQUASH: Southwest--Condition is good. Planting and harvesting are increasing. Quality is good. East Coast--Crop condition is mostly good. Strong winds broke some stems with plants expected to recover. Harvesting of medium and fancy grades is underway with mostly good quality available. Dade--Oldest plants are making a good stand. Planting is slowly increasing.

STRAWBERRIES: Plant City, Dover, Floral City, Palmetto-Ruskin--Transplanting remains active.

TOMATOES: Quincy--Picking is increasing as more growers start

harvesting. Quality is mostly good. Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Transplanting remains steady. Cooler temperatures are helping fruit to set. Fruit sizing is good. Pruning, staking, tying and spraying are active. West Central--Harvesting is starting. East Coast--Crop condition is good. Strong winds caused some young plants to break off but damage was only slight to plants not yet tied. Most plants are expected to recover. Transplanting remains active. Workers are discing, leveling land, making plant beds, laying plastic, staking, tying, pruning, spraying and irrigating as needed. Dade--Crop condition is rated good. Planting is increasing. Strong winds caused some leaf burn with plants expected to recover. Workers are making beds, laying plastic, spraying, and irrigating as needed.

CHERRY TOMATOES: Southwest--Condition is rated fair to good. Planting continues at a steady pace.

PLUM TOMATOES: Southwest--Crop condition is fair to good. Planting remains steady.

WATERMELONS: Southwest--The crop is in fair to good condition.

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