WEATHER & CROP NEWS
Week ending January 6, 2002

WEATHER SUMMARY: A cold front dipping into central and southern Peninsula localities brought freezing to near freezing temperatures and significant rainfall during the week of December 30 through January 5. Hard freezes and light snow flurries occurred in the western Panhandle and some northern Peninsula areas. Temperatures at the major stations averaged four to twelve degrees below normal. Daytime highs were mostly in the 50s and 60s with Pensacola highs in the 40s and Miami highs in the 70s. Lows were in the 30s, 40s and 50s. Rainfall ranged from traces to over two and a half inches.

FIELD CROPS: The recent rainfall replenished soil moisture supplies in most areas. However, western Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities reported mostly short supplies while central and southern Peninsula areas reported mostly adequate supplies. Cooler temperatures prior to the hard freezes in the western Panhandle and northern Peninsula hardened some small grains although some freeze damage is expected. Sugarcane harvesting continues in the Everglades region.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Statewide, pasture condition was lower due to a couple nights of hard freeze in the Panhandle and down into the central Peninsula. In the Panhandle, winter forage condition is very poor due to drought and cold temperatures. In the northern counties, cattle condition is poor and pasture condition is fair due to drought. In the central areas, pasture condition is very poor to good. Mole cricket damage was bad this fall. In the southwest, cold and rainy weather was hard on cattle, however grass is greening up and growing. In the central areas, pasture condition is fair due to drought. Mole cricket damage was bad this fall. In the southwest, cold and rainy weather was hard on cattle, however grass is greening up and growing.

ANTE의 VEGETABLES: Producers reported no major damage to crops from the cold temperatures. Gusty winds accompanying the cold front blew sand across fields which reduced some quality. Oldest potato plants around Hastings were singed by the cold front, but will recover. Recent potato plantings escaped damage because most ground did not freeze. Cabbage harvesting is steady around Hastings with no significant cold damage. Cabbage harvesting is steady around Hastings with no significant cold damage. Growers are removing and burning dead trees. Few sprays are being applied to some of the late season fresh crops.

CITRUS: Cold temperatures on the morning of January 3rd were not cold enough long enough to cause any appreciable damage to Florida's citrus crop. There were some low recordings below 30 degrees, however damage to fruit and foliage occurs when temperatures fall below 28 degrees for more than 4 hours. Frost was a minor problem on Saturday morning, but temperatures rapidly warmed up and there was virtually no foliage burn. The cold weather was very beneficial to trees for the upcoming bloom period. There were a few scattered rains that helped ease the current dry conditions. Early and midseason harvest for processing continues to be very active in all areas. Fresh fruit packing houses are running early and mid oranges, grapefruit, tangerines and tangelos.

Calculators are moving, chopping and discing cover crops for fire protection and prior to harvest. Growers are removing and burning dead trees. Few sprays are being applied to some of the late season fresh crops.

FOLIAGE, FLORICULTURE AND OTHER NURSERY PRODUCTS: Growers fired up heaters and sprinkled plants as protection from the cold temperatures around Pierson with some foliage singed in unprotected areas. Most plants will recover from the freeze damage. Northern nurseries took measures to minimize cold damage. Producers in northern and central areas are currently evaluating actual freeze losses.

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

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FLORIDA AGRICULTURE

Florida Agricultural Statistics Service
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http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl

National Agricultural Statistics Service
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U.S. Department of Agriculture
Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
University of Florida
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

URFIDY FIRTTEG RLS RSN EWS
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Released 4:00 P.M. January 7, 2002

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