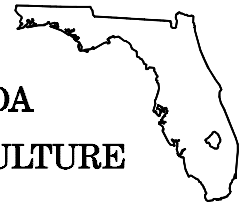




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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending May 19, 2002

Released 4:00 P.M.

May 20, 2002

WEATHER SUMMARY: Hot temperatures continued for the first part of the week of May 12 through 18. The weekend brought cooler weather and rain to some areas. Rainfall amounts varied greatly by areas from no rain in some areas to over two inches in Miami and Ft. Lauderdale. Pensacola, Tallahassee, Hastings, and Bradenton had over an inch. Temperatures at the major stations were mostly 1 to 4 degrees above normal. Pensacola was 2 degrees below average. Daytime highs were mostly in the 90s with a few in the upper 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 50s, 60s, and 70s. Alachua recorded a low in the 40s.

FIELD CROPS: Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies continue to dry out with most areas reporting very short to short supplies. Sixty-five percent of peanuts are planted compared to 53 percent last year and the five year average of 62 percent. Growers are irrigating some cotton and peanut acreage. Other producers continue to wait on rain to plant cotton and peanuts. Irrigated tobacco, soybeans, and corn acreage is in good condition while dryland acreage is suffering.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	44	51	69	23	25	44
Short	43	48	30	64	74	52
Adequate	13	1	1	13	1	4
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0	0

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Pastures in the Panhandle are in poor to fair condition. Dry weather is causing critical condition in dryland forage. Pastures are not growing due to dry conditions. In the northern and central counties, pasture is very poor to poor. Cattle not being fed supplemental hay are losing weight. In the southeast, pastures are poor and cattle are in fair condition due to drought. Statewide, cattle are mostly in fair condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	5	5	5	0
Poor	40	40	10	5
Fair	50	50	75	85
Good	5	5	10	10
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: Virtually all of Florida's citrus belt received soaking rains Saturday night and part of Sunday. The first of the week there were scattered showers and a few thunderstorms, most of which fell on the lower east coast and the southern part of the State. Many growers and caretakers have shut down their irrigation systems for repair and maintenance following nearly two straight months of constant use. There continues to be an abundance of new growth in all well-cared-for groves. New crop fruits are all doing well as most trees have discarded any of the little green fruit they cannot carry next fruit season. Harvest of Valencia oranges is going strong in most areas. However, fruit supplies and available labor are both running short in many locations. Grapefruit movement is slowing as crops and demand are running out. Some processors have quit taking grapefruit and are running only Valencias. Temples and Honey tangerines are about through for the season.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops for fire protection and prior to harvesting crews arrival. Dead trees are being removed and burned with other tree limbs and cuttings. Second and third sprays are being applied to many of next year's fresh fruit crops. Hedging and topping of harvested groves is active in all areas.

Estimated boxes harvested week ended			
Crop	May 5	May 12	May 19
Valencia oranges	7,295,000	6,895,000	7,386,000
All grapefruit	1,309,000	1,083,000	656,000
Honey tangerines	6,000	1,000	0
Temples	2,000	1,000	0

VEGETABLES: Watermelon harvesting is active around Arcadia and Wildwood. Harvesting of leafy crops, cucumbers, eggplant, and cabbage is declining or virtually finished. Other vegetables, berries and melons available include tomatoes, peppers, blueberries, celery, cantaloupes, okra, potatoes, radishes, squash, snap beans, and sweet corn.

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