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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending July 21, 2002

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WEATHER SUMMARY: The clash of the east coast and west coast sea breezes brought heavy rains to many Peninsula localities during the week of July 14 through 20. A cold front dipping across southeastern states also caused scattered rains over the Panhandle and northern Peninsula during the week. Rainfall at the major stations ranged from less than a quarter inch at Daytona Beach to almost two inches at Orlando. Temperatures at the major stations average one to three degrees above normal. Daytime highs were in the 90s with Tallahassee recording at least one high of 101 degrees. Nighttime lows were in the 70s and 80s.

FIELD CROPS: Scattered recent rains left some areas with surplus soil moisture supplies while some localities are reporting very short to short supplies. Most Panhandle and northern Peninsula soil moisture supplies are rated short to adequate. Central and southern Peninsula soil moisture supplies range from very short in the driest areas to surplus in areas that received the heaviest rains. Peanuts are mostly in good condition with 87 percent of the crop pegged. Last year, 76 percent of peanuts were pegged by this date. The five-year average of peanuts pegged by this date is 81 percent. Extreme heat is hindering some peanut blooming. Peanut producers are irrigating in drier localities while water is standing in low areas of some fields located in wetter areas. The heat is also affecting the growth of some cotton and other field crops. Armyworms and grass looper infestations are increasing, especially in some hay fields. Tobacco harvesting continues.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	1	1	2	1	4
Short	12	4	15	13	14	29
Adequate	32	46	67	30	39	50
Surplus	55	49	17	55	46	17

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern counties, the condition of pasture and cattle is fair to good. There is standing water in some low areas. In the central area, cattle and pasture are in good condition. In the southwest,

the cattle are in fair to good condition. Due to excess rain, a lot of pastures are under water. Statewide, cattle are mostly in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	0	0	0
Fair	20	5	5	10
Good	80	85	95	80
Excellent	0	10	0	10

CITRUS: This was a very normal weather week in Florida's citrus belt. There were scattered rains and thunderstorms in virtually all areas. Some rains were heavy and some light. Caretakers shut down their irrigation systems due to the summer rains. Afternoon temperatures were generally in the mid to upper 90s with some indices over 100 degrees. There is an abundance of new growth on well-cared-for trees of all ages in all areas. New crop fruit continues to make very good progress. Normal droppage of new fruit is over and there is very little premature splitting due to the heavy and sometimes excessive rainfall during late June. Picking and scrapping of some smaller blocks have been reported in all areas where the fruit is going to the fresh-squeeze juice operations.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops that are making aggressive growth with the help of the heavy rains. Hedging and topping continues in all areas. Dead trees are being removed and burned now that permits are available from the Forest Service. Growers are applying their mid summer sprays and fertilizations. Young trees and resets are being herbicided. New plantings continue in larger groves.

VEGETABLES: Most southern Peninsula growers are planning planting schedules for fall crops with activity to begin in August. Quincy tomato producers expect to start planting in late July or early August. Okra harvesting remains active in Miami-Dade County. Northern Peninsula and Panhandle growers are still picking very light supplies of watermelons.

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