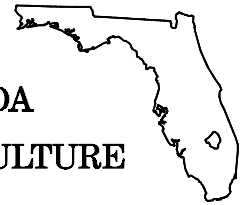




Florida Agricultural Statistics Service
 1222 Woodward Street
 Orlando, Florida 32803
 407 / 648-6013

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



WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending September 1, 2002

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WEATHER SUMMARY: The formation of Tropical Storm Edouard off the eastern coast in the Atlantic caused some sporadic showers along the coast but kept some inland areas dry during the week of August 25 through 31. The east and west coast sea breezes brought heavy rain to a few inland areas. Rainfall for the week ranged from traces at Dover to over seven inches at Bradenton. Temperatures in the major cities averaged normal to two degrees below. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were mostly in the 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Soil moisture supplies vary from very short in some western Panhandle localities to surplus along the east coast and in some southern Peninsula areas. Peanuts are in fair to mostly good condition with digging slowly gaining momentum. Cotton picking is expected to begin in seven to fourteen days. Producers are making hay between showers with growers combating heavy armyworm populations in some fields.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	2	1	4	3	2	2
Short	19	11	37	29	16	29
Adequate	61	62	56	53	57	66
Surplus	18	26	3	15	25	3

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pasture condition varies from poor to excellent with most in good condition. There is considerable damage to range and pasture from a high armyworm population. In the north, the pasture condition is mostly fair with lack of moisture and high populations of armyworms limiting grass growth. In the central and southern counties, there is excellent forage growth, and pasture and range is mostly in good condition. Statewide, cattle and calves are in mostly good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	5	0	0
Fair	15	15	10	10
Good	70	65	75	85
Excellent	15	15	15	5

CITRUS: Most areas in Florida's citrus belt were hit with heavy rains and thunderstorms this week. Some groves were too wet to work following a few of the torrential downpours. Many areas recorded 4 to 6 inches of rain in a few storm locations. There continues to be an abundance of new growth in all areas on most well-cared-for trees. New crop fruit is making very good progress with only a minimum of splitting on some early oranges and a few tangerines. There has been some harvesting of early bloom Fallglo tangerines. There are currently two or three fresh fruit packing houses that have fruit in the degreening rooms. Packing and shipping of these fruit will follow shortly.

Caretakers are mowing, chopping and discing cover crops that have made excellent growth with the recent rains. Growers are removing vines that are covering the tops of trees and shading the new fruit and the tree's foliage. Dead trees are continuing to be removed and burned. Multiple resets are being planted in most of the groves. Some fertilizing, spraying and herbiciding are being reported in all areas.

VEGETABLES: Dade County growers continue to market light supplies of okra. Planting of fall crops continues between showers with some producers delaying field work until the threat of Tropical Storm Edouard passes.

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