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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending June 8, 2003

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FLORIDA
AGRICULTURE



WEATHER SUMMARY: Scattered rains fell nearly everyday during the week of June 1 through 7. Rainfall ranged from a quarter inch at Ft. Pierce to nearly seven inches at Tallahassee. Four or more inches accumulated around Alachua, Jay and MacClenny. Temperatures in the major cities averaged normal to two degrees above. Daytime highs were mostly in the 80s with several sites reporting at least one daily high in the 90s. Most nighttime temperatures were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Standing water in some western Panhandle low spots, ditches and roadsides delayed some field work. The scattered nature of the rains left a few Panhandle, northern Peninsula and southeastern coast localities dry. Both topsoil and subsoil moisture is short to mostly adequate with scattered areas of surplus moisture reported mainly in southern Peninsula localities. Peanuts are in mostly good to excellent condition with a small acreage rated in fair condition. Peanuts are 99% planted compared with 93% last year and a 5-year average of 93% planted by this date. In most cases, only green peanut acreage remains to be planted. Timely rains aided emergence and plant growth of peanuts and cotton. Cotton is in mostly good to excellent condition. Older cotton plants are half a foot high. Most corn and soybean acreage is planted with both crops doing well.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	7	30	1	5	13
Short	19	25	55	14	14	68
Adequate	60	66	15	70	79	19
Surplus	20	2	0	15	2	0

VEGETABLES: Rains slowed some field work with most on schedule. Wet soils slowed watermelon harvesting in some Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas. Potato growers had difficulty getting into and out of wet fields for digging. Sweet corn, cabbage, celery, and snap bean picking is virtually done. Vegetables and non-citrus fruit available include cantaloupes, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, potatoes, squash, tomatoes, and watermelons.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern counties, condition of pasture is fair to good, depending on recent rainfall. In the central areas, cattle and calves are mostly in good condition. In the south, condition of range and pasture decreased.

Statewide, condition of cattle and calves was mostly good and slightly better than the previous week.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	5	5	0	0
Poor	10	5	0	0
Fair	20	25	15	25
Good	65	60	80	70
Excellent	0	5	5	5

CITRUS: There were heavy rains in all areas of Florida's citrus belt several days this week. It currently looks like the summer rains have officially started. Caretakers shut down their irrigation equipment for repairs during the rainy season. Trees are starting to show new flushes of growth as a result of hot temperatures, humid conditions and abundant moisture. New crop fruit continues to make very good progress with the help of ideal growing conditions. Some new crop oranges are golf ball size, the best grapefruit are baseball size and most of the Temples and tangelos are just about as large as the oranges. Tangerines are generally smaller than golf balls but larger than marbles. Harvest of the current Valencias is slowing dramatically as supplies are running low in all areas. Grapefruit and honey tangerine movement is very slow as most of the juice plants and virtually all of the fresh fruit packing houses closed for the season.

Caretakers are very busy mowing, chopping and discing cover crops that are making aggressive growth with the help of the recent rains. Growers are cutting out vines that started to top some trees and shade out the new crop fruit. Dead trees are being pushed out and burned. Resetting is on the increase now that the summer rains have arrived. Herbicides are being applied in all areas. Second, third and fourth sprays are being applied to fresh fruit crops. Summer fertilizations continue.

Crop	Estimated boxes harvested week ended		
	May 26	Jun 1	Jun 8
Valencia oranges	5,248,000	4,198,000	4,092,000
All grapefruit	46,000	31,000	23,000
Honey tangerines	4,000	5,000	9,000

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