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# WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 24, 2003

Released 4:00 P.M.

August 25, 2003

**WEATHER SUMMARY:** Daily showers dropped from traces to nearly eight inches of rain during the week of August 17 through 23. Most stations reported one to three inches of rain for the week. Temperatures in the major cities averaged one to two degrees below normal. Daytime high temperatures remained in the 80s and 90s while nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

**FIELD CROPS:** The abundant rains continue to hamper field work. Some peanuts have severe cases of leaf spot and white mold due to the inability of producers to spray pesticides because of frequent showers and the washing away of sprays already applied. Most peanuts are in good to excellent condition with digging getting underway in Santa Rosa County. A significant amount of cotton acreage, especially in Washington County, is short on nitrogen due to fertilizer leaching caused by abundant rainfall and the inability of growers to apply fertilizers due to muddy fields. Armyworms are causing serious problems in some Bermuda hay fields with afternoon rain showers continuing to interrupt hay harvesting. Most topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are adequate to surplus.

| Moisture Rating | Topsoil   |           |           | Subsoil   |           |           |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                 | This week | Last week | Last year | This week | Last week | Last Year |
|                 | Percent   |           |           |           |           |           |
| Very short      | 1         | 1         | 1         | 0         | 0         | 2         |
| Short           | 4         | 1         | 12        | 1         | 1         | 18        |
| Adequate        | 50        | 38        | 64        | 54        | 39        | 57        |
| Surplus         | 45        | 60        | 23        | 45        | 60        | 23        |

**VEGETABLES:** Rainfall continues to delay some fall crop planting in the central and southern Peninsula.

**LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES:** In the Panhandle and north, armyworms are causing serious damage to some pastures. Pastures

are overgrown and the quality of some hay will be marginal. Pasture condition is mostly good to excellent, but some areas are poor to fair because of excessive soil moisture from recent heavy rains. In the central and southwest areas, cattlemen indicate the abundance of rain has been excellent for pasture grasses. Due to moisture, forage quality continues to be reduced. However, in areas with flooded pasture, livestock continue to lose weight. Statewide, the cattle condition is mostly good.

| Condition | Range     |           | Cattle    |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|           | This week | Last week | This week | Last week |
|           | Percent   |           |           |           |
| Very poor | 1         | 1         | 0         | 0         |
| Poor      | 9         | 8         | 0         | 0         |
| Fair      | 25        | 15        | 15        | 22        |
| Good      | 45        | 61        | 60        | 68        |
| Excellent | 20        | 15        | 25        | 10        |

**CITRUS:** Hot and humid weather returned this week following the passage of a fast moving tropical wave that crossed the lower citrus areas of the state the previous week. There was more rainfall this week from heavy and severe downpours than from the wave the previous week. Coastal areas, both east and west received from three to five inches with some areas reporting more. Lower interior areas also received three to four inches and some areas reported local flooding with saturated soils. Some isolated groves with heavy soils in the western and central areas are experiencing soggy ground and where soil drainage is inadequate, tree stress is beginning to show. Growers are maintaining middles and lateral ditches to keep water moving away from tree roots. Summer spraying continues between rains with fresh fruit crops receiving more sprays than normal to keep insect populations from building up. Fruit growth is reported good and the majority of trees in sand hill locations are in excellent condition because of all the rainfall.

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