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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 31, 2003

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Daily rains continued during the week of August 24 through 30. Some drier conditions occurred mainly along the eastern third of the Peninsula as a high pressure system off the eastern seaboard kept tropical systems away from the State. Rainfall ranged from less than a quarter of an inch in scattered localities to over two and a half inches in Jay. Temperatures for the week averaged from one degree below to one degree above normal in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were mainly in the 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Digging of early maturing peanuts continues in Santa Rosa and Jackson counties with some yields averaging below normal, especially in areas that received abundant summer rains. Peanuts, statewide, are in fair to mostly good condition with a few fields located in wetter areas rated in very poor to poor condition and some acreage rated in excellent condition. Rains continue to hamper development of the peanut and cotton crops with peanut condition declining from last week. Cotton harvesting in Jackson County is expected to start in three to four weeks. Hay baling and the spraying of peanuts resumed during drier weather in Washington County and corn harvesting is about halfway done. Topsoil and subsoil moisture continues to be mostly adequate to surplus. A few localities in the extreme southeast and northern Peninsula report short to very short moisture supplies.

VEGETABLES: Fall crop planting continues between showers. Growers in the Hastings area are plowing under cover crops and preparing fields for the planting of broccoli and cabbage.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and north areas, the pastures are mostly in good condition. However, army worm pressure is very high in some locations. In the central area, the pasture condition ranges from very poor to good, with some pasture under water. Too much moisture continues to reduce forage quality. Also, pest problems are contributing to weight loss of livestock. Statewide, the cattle are mostly in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
Percent				
Very poor	0	1	0	0
Poor	10	9	0	0
Fair	15	25	10	15
Good	55	45	75	60
Excellent	20	20	15	25

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
Percent						
Very short	1	1	2	0	0	3
Short	4	4	18	2	1	27
Adequate	40	50	61	48	54	54
Surplus	55	45	19	50	45	16

CITRUS: Humid weather continued this week with rainfall widely scattered over the lower citrus areas. Coastal areas received heavy rainfall from severe, local storms with over two inches reported. Some isolated groves with heavy soils in the western and central areas continue to experience soggy ground. 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. Packing house crews are testing fruit for fresh shipments. Picking may begin next week for limited shipments.

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