



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 14, 2003

Released 4:00 P.M.

September 15, 2003

WEATHER SUMMARY: Drier conditions existed during the week of September 7 through 13 with many localities recording no measurable rain for the week. Areas receiving rain reported from traces to nearly two and a half inches in Bronson and Belle Glade. Temperatures for the week averaged from one degree above to five degrees below normal in the major cities. Daytime highs were mostly in the 80s. Nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s with Live Oak and Marianna recording at least one low in the 50s.

FIELD CROPS: The clearer conditions allowed peanut producers to rapidly advance harvesting with fifteen percent of the crop dug. Last year by this date four percent of peanuts were dug while the five-year average progress is 13 percent harvested by this date. Grades and yields are reportedly very good in Jackson County. Peanut condition is rated mostly fair to good with a small acreage rated very poor to poor (due to earlier wet conditions) and a somewhat larger acreage rated excellent. The drier weather is causing some stress to peanut plants located on sandy soils. Cooler temperatures are delaying the maturation of some peanuts in Columbia County. Disease is increasing in some Madison County peanuts with digging very active as the weather permits. Cotton picking is getting underway in Jackson County. Most Santa Rosa County cotton acreage is two to three weeks away from being defoliated. Hay making continues with quality improving during the drier weather. Topsoil and subsoil moisture is mostly adequate to surplus. A few localities in the extreme southeast, the eastern Panhandle and the northern Peninsula report short to very short moisture supplies.

VEGETABLES: Planting of fall crop acreage continues with the picking of cucumbers and peppers getting underway. Okra harvesting is active in Dade County. Growers in the Quincy area are preparing for tomato harvesting which is expected to get underway soon.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and north, the condition of pasture continues to decline seasonally. Some armyworm damage is apparent in pasture and hay with armyworms active in Bermuda grass pastures. In the northern areas, armyworms are hatching out on pastures and hay fields. The drier weather of the week is allowing farmers to get one good, non-rained-on cutting of hay this year. In the central and southwest, there is some low pastures flooded. Statewide, the condition of cattle is mostly good.

| Condition | Range | | Cattle | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | This week | Last week | This week | Last week |
| | Percent | | | |
| Very poor | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Poor | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Fair | 20 | 25 | 15 | 20 |
| Good | 60 | 55 | 75 | 65 |
| Excellent | 15 | 15 | 10 | 15 |

| Moisture Rating | Topsoil | | | Subsoil | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | This week | Last week | Last year | This week | Last week | Last Year |
| | Percent | | | | | |
| Very short | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Short | 9 | 4 | 14 | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| Adequate | 60 | 40 | 46 | 60 | 43 | 55 |
| Surplus | 30 | 55 | 39 | 30 | 55 | 30 |

CITRUS: Very little rain fell across the citrus belt and most of it was in the south and southwest. With the moderate temperatures, most areas are drying out from an abundance of rain in the previous weeks. Growers are maintaining middles and lateral ditches to keep water moving away from tree roots. Summer spraying continues as new growth appears on trees of all ages. Fruit growth is reportedly good although some fruit splitting has occurred in wetter areas. Shipments of Fallglo tangerines began last week and limited picking of colored grapefruit has begun.

To receive this report via e-mail, log onto <http://www.usda.gov/nass/sso-rpts.htm> Then click on "Subscribe" (upper right part of screen), then select "Florida Crop-Weather", enter your name and your e-mail address, then click on "Subscribe". The report will be sent automatically to your e-mail address each week.

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