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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending September 28, 2003

Released 4:00 P.M.

September 29, 2003

WEATHER SUMMARY: Producers welcomed wetter weather during the week of September 21 through 27 with the rains bringing relief to some crops stressed by dry conditions. Rainfall during the week totaled from about a half inch at Pierson to about three inches or more in Ona, Jacksonville and Citra. Most stations reported from one to one and a half inches or so accumulating during the week. Temperatures in the major cities averaged normal to two degrees above. Most daytime highs remained in the 80s with nearly all localities recording at least one high in the 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: The rains interrupted some hay baling in all areas and some digging of peanuts in most areas of the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Most peanut harvesting is on schedule with the crop rated in mostly good to excellent condition. Peanut acreage rated very poor to fair reflects the amount of moisture received during the year with the wettest fields in very poor condition. Peanut yields are good from well drained acreage but poor in those localities receiving abundant rains earlier in the season. Picking of the oldest cotton acreage is active with progress to rapidly increase by early to mid-October. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies improved with supplies rated mostly adequate to surplus. A few localities in the southwestern Peninsula reported surplus soil moisture while soil moisture is rated short to very short for a small area in the southeastern Peninsula and a few localities in the northern Peninsula and eastern Panhandle.

Week ending....	Peanuts Harvested
September 28, 2003	45
September 28, 2002	33
Average, September 28, 1998 - 2002	38

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	Percent					
Very short	1	1	1	0	0	5
Short	6	14	9	5	10	10
Adequate	76	60	56	75	65	56
Surplus	17	25	34	20	25	29

VEGETABLES: Planting of winter crops and okra harvesting are active in Dade County with recent rainfall delaying some progress. Cabbage and winter crop vegetable planting continues in St. John's County with growers cutting in cover crops and cleaning drainage ditches. Tomato picking is getting underway around Quincy. Planting remains active in the southern Peninsula with the rains interrupting some progress.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern counties, land preparation is underway for planting cool season forage production. Haying was active. Pasture in the Big Bend counties is in fair condition due to shortage of moisture. Pasture in the southwest is mostly in good condition. Statewide, most of the cattle are in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	Percent			
Very poor	0	1	0	0
Poor	5	5	0	0
Fair	25	15	15	10
Good	60	70	75	85
Excellent	10	9	10	5

CITRUS: Moderate to heavy rainfall and humid weather returned this week following two relatively dry weeks. Although scattered and light in some areas, most received over one inch with some interior areas receiving over four. Temperatures remain seasonal. Many low lying 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. Mowing and discing continues to control summer cover crop growth. 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. About 15 fresh fruit packing houses are open and packing early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, and Fallglo tangerines.

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