WEATHER & CROP NEWS
Week ending April 11, 2004
Released 4:00 P.M. April 13, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: Scattered rains missed many areas during the week of April 4 through 10. Rain totaled about an inch in Pensacola and MacClenny. Most localities receiving rain during the period reported a quarter to half inch falling. Temperatures for the week averaged from normal to two degrees below in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s with Palmdale and West Palm Beach recording at least one high in the 90s. Nighttime lows remained in the 40s, 50s and 60s with some northern Peninsula and Panhandle localities reporting at least one low in the 30s. However, Jay, in the extreme western Panhandle, recorded no lows below 50 during the week. Significant storms on Sunday, April 11 mostly crossed over the central Peninsula and a few southern Peninsula areas, but broadened to include both the northern and southern Peninsula on Monday, April 12. The thundershowers brought from traces to over two and a half inches of precipitation on Sunday. April 11 to many Peninsula localities with the Sunday storms missing most Panhandle and many northern Peninsula areas.

FIELD CROPS: Cotton planting started in Jackson County with low soil temperatures and hard soils causing most Panhandle and northern Peninsula producers to wait on warmer, wetter conditions. Spring crop planting is on schedule in Gadsden County with no known delays. Corn planting and land preparations for cotton and peanut planting is nearly finished in Washington County. Pecans are budding out in Jefferson County. Rain near mid-week in Baker County boosted tobacco growth. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are short to adequate in the Panhandle, very short to short in the northern Peninsula and short to mostly adequate in the central and southern Peninsula. Washington, Jackson, Madison, Taylor, Baker Union, Marion, Volusia, Brevard, St. Lucie, Charlotte, Broward and Dade counties reported areas with very short soil moisture. Okeechobee County reported a few localities with surplus soil moisture.

VEGETABLES: Strong winds in Madison County are tossing some irrigated vegetable plants about. Central and northern Peninsula producers are picking blueberries with very light supplies available. Harvesting of very light amounts of okra is underway in Dade County, and a few southern Peninsula producers are picking very small quantities of watermelons. Strawberry harvesting is nearly finished in the Plant City area. Other vegetables available include snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, potatoes, radishes, squash, and tomatoes. Very light supplies of endive, escarole and lettuce also remain available as harvesting nears the end.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Permanent pastures are starting to grow in localities receiving recent rains. However, most Panhandle and northern Peninsula pastures need rain. Most surface ponds in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula are low. Earlier rains in Madison County boosted the growth of winter grazing. Most pastures deteriorated due to the continued dry weather with most northern Peninsula grazing rated poor to fair. Most pasture in the Panhandle and in the central and southern Peninsula is rated fair to good. Cattle condition is mostly fair, Statewide.

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