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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending August 1, 2004

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August 2, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: Some spots in the southern Peninsula and the western Panhandle received four inches or more rain during the week of July 25 through 31 as tropical systems lingered on both sides of the Peninsula. Elsewhere, rainfall totaled from about a third inch to over three inches with a few localities recording no rain for the week. Temperatures in the major cities hovered near normal. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Cotton is in good condition. Peanut condition is rated 20 percent fair, 45 percent good and 35 percent excellent with 95 percent of the acreage pegged. Insects and armyworms are a problem in some Panhandle and northern Peninsula peanut, cotton and hay fields. Some hay baling was delayed by rainfall. Tobacco harvesting remains active in northern Peninsula and Panhandle localities with the contract delivery centers to open August 3. Tobacco pulling is expected to continue through mid-to-late August. Soil moisture supplies are rated short to mostly adequate with surplus soil moisture reported for spots in Jackson, Madison, Union, Marion, Seminole, Manatee and Charlotte counties. Some areas remain with very short soil moisture along the southeastern coast.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, cattle and pasture are in fair to good condition. Some pastures are showing early signs of drought stress. Pastures in a couple counties are showing signs of armyworms. In the northern areas, cattle and pasture are in fair to good condition the first signs of armyworms noted. In the central counties, cattle and pasture look good to excellent. Statewide, the condition of cattle is fair to excellent.

PERCENTAGE OF PEANUTS PEGGED TO DATE

This year	95%
Last year	94%
5 - year average	90%

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	0	0	0
Fair	25	25	20	20
Good	50	50	55	70
Excellent	20	25	25	10

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
<i>Percent</i>						
Very short	5	1	1	5	1	0
Short	15	19	4	10	19	5
Adequate	75	60	66	80	70	69
Surplus	5	20	29	5	10	26

CITRUS: Wet weather over the citrus areas of the state was very welcome this week as two low pressure systems off the coasts provided unsettled conditions. High temperatures reached the low 90s on several days but were moderate most days. Thunderstorms developed over wide areas with some receiving heavy, violent storms and others only light rainfall. West coast areas received heavy rains on several days as a low pressure system moved into the Gulf. Even though reporting stations may report minimal amounts, areas nearby may receive more. East coast stations reported less than an inch but areas just a few miles inland received more. Tropical Storm Alex formed late in the week and moved north in the Atlantic bringing waves of rainfall to many upper and central growing areas. Growers in most areas report trees in good condition with a flush of new growth showing. Cultural practices continue including fertilizations, hedging, mechanical and chemical weed control, and resetting of young trees. Summer sprays are being applied to crops designated for fresh use as rainfall permits.

VEGETABLES: Producers delayed some fall crop field preparations and planting as Tropical Storm Alex developed off the Atlantic coast and another tropical system meandered off the southwestern Gulf coast. Tomato growers in the Quincy area are transplanting tomatoes for fall crop picking. Okra harvesting by producers in Miami-Dade County remains active.

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