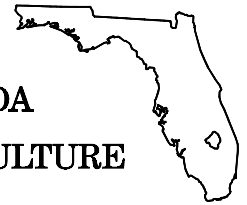




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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending September 26, 2004

Released 4:00 P.M.

September 27, 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY: The remnants of Hurricane Ivan passing over the southern Peninsula during the first part of the week of September 20 through 26, and Hurricane Jeanne passing over most of the State at the end of the week brought copious amounts of rain to some localities and strong winds to most areas. Rainfall totaled from none in Jay, Marianna and Quincy to nearly fourteen inches in Kenansville. Belle Glade reported about four inches from the remnants of Ivan and six inches from Hurricane Jeanne. Homestead received about a third inch of rain from the remnants of Ivan and three quarters of an inch from Jeanne while Immokalee got about three quarters of an inch from both, for a weekly total of about one and a half inches. Overcast skies kept most temperatures one to two degrees below normal in the major cities. Daytime highs were in the 80s while nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Drier weather in the Panhandle aided the recovery of cotton with losses from Hurricane Ivan ranging from 10 to 100 percent. Muddy fields are slowing cotton defoliation. Producers dug peanuts during the drier weather with harvest nearly a third done. Peanut condition is rated one percent poor, 19 percent fair and 80 percent good. The winds and rain from the recent tropical systems crossing the State shattered some soybeans in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula with losses currently being assessed. The recent tropical systems replenished soil moisture supplies in most areas.

PERCENTAGE OF PEANUTS HARVESTED TO DATE

This year	30%
Last year	41%
5 - year average	38%

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
<i>Percent</i>						
Very short	0	1	1	0	0	0
Short	0	1	8	0	1	6
Adequate	60	33	71	50	29	73
Surplus	40	65	20	50	70	21

VEGETABLES: Tomato picking is underway around Quincy with the area suffering some damage to quality and yield from the recent tropical storms. Tomato harvesting is expected to begin in two to three

weeks around Immokalee. Acreage in the Immokalee and Homestead areas escaped significant damage from Jeanne although disease incidence is expected to be above average due to pesticides washing away.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pasture conditions improved with warm dry weather. Pastures look good for this time of year. In the North and central counties there is considerable flooding in low-lying areas from Hurricane Jeanne. Preparation for cool season forage planting started earlier in the week before the storm. Armyworms are active in Bermuda grass. In the southwest, the condition of pasture and range before the hurricane was mostly good to excellent. Statewide, the condition of the cattle was mostly good. Most of the livestock auctions had an active week after being closed due to Hurricane Frances.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	5	0	0
Poor	5	5	0	0
Fair	15	50	5	45
Good	45	25	75	40
Excellent	35	15	20	15

CITRUS: For the third time this summer, a major hurricane affected citrus growing areas of the state. Hurricane Jeanne entered the east coast of Florida on the 26th at virtually the same location as Hurricane Frances three weeks earlier and moved across the State exiting north of Tampa. Winds were higher with a wider eye and hurricane force winds extended further than in the previous storms. Total rainfall amounts were generally more than in previous storms. The week started with the remnants of Hurricane Ivan circulating back and crossing the lower part of the state from east to west with heavy rains. Amounts were variable over the state with upper interior areas receiving lighter amounts. Lakes and rivers were at high levels before this latest week's rainfall and many areas are now experiencing flood conditions. Groves hard hit from earlier hurricanes continue to drop fruit as growers assess damage and move downed trees to provide access to groves. Growers are still moving excess water from groves in some areas. Summer sprays are being applied to crops designated for fresh use as rainfall permits. Some packing houses are testing grapefruit for maturity to begin limited harvest. Fallglo tangerines are beginning to show slight color break.

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