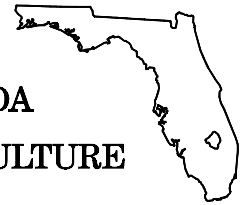




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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending February 13, 2005

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February 14, 2005

WEATHER SUMMARY: Mostly clear conditions prevailed during the week of February 7 through 11. Most rainfall across the State ranged from traces or less over the Peninsula to a half inch or more in some western Panhandle localities. Temperatures hovered around normal in some northern areas whereas other areas were one to four degrees below normal. Nighttime lows were mainly in the 40s and 50s. Many localities recorded at least one low in the 30s. Jay, Tallahassee and Alachua recorded at least one low in the 20s. Areas in the southern Peninsula as well as some northern and central Peninsula localities are at high risk for wild fire hazard.

FIELD CROPS: Rains in the western Panhandle interrupted some land preparation for spring crop planting. However, mostly mild, clear conditions elsewhere allowed field work to stay on schedule. Sugarcane harvesting continued in the Everglades area. Dry weather over most eastern Panhandle localities and throughout most of the Peninsula caused soil moisture levels to decrease and increased the danger of wildfire, especially in a few northern and central Peninsula areas, and over most of the southern Peninsula. Citrus, Brevard, St. Lucie, Broward and Dade counties reported spots of very short soil moisture supplies. Holmes, Jackson and Union counties reported some areas having surplus soil moisture. Elsewhere, soil moisture supplies are short to adequate.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	10	2	1	10	1	1
Short	50	48	14	40	38	17
Adequate	31	44	80	48	60	80
Surplus	9	6	5	2	1	2

VEGETABLES: Planting and harvesting continued at a normal pace for most of the week. Growers continue to harvest snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries and tomatoes. Light harvesting of potatoes is active around Hastings.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern areas, pastures and winter grazing are starting to look somewhat bleak due to the drought and cold. Some pasture burning began for insect and weed control. Pasture in the central areas is poor to good, normal for this time of year. Hay feeding is active. In the southwest, range condition varies from very poor to good. Statewide, cattle condition varies from poor to good.

Condition	Range			Cattle		
	This week	Last week	Two weeks ago	This week	Last week	Two weeks ago
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very poor	5	5	5	0	0	0
Poor	45	40	45	5	5	15
Fair	15	30	25	45	45	50
Good	35	24	25	45	50	35
Excellent	0	1	0	5	0	0

CITRUS: Temperatures in citrus producing areas were in the mid 40s at night, and upper 70s for most of the week. On the weekend, temperatures dipped into the mid to low 30s on the east and west coast and in the northern areas. Rainfall was limited to less than one tenth of an inch in all areas. The warm weather along with moist soils from irrigation and some rains produced feathery new growth on most varieties. No bloom is being reported as of yet. Growers are continuing fertilization and irrigation practices in anticipation of abundant springtime new growth now emerging. Caretakers are mowing, hedging, topping and continuing to remove hurricane damaged trees. Late oranges are in the beginning stages of picking with the harvesting of early and mid oranges still going strong and the large majority going to processing. Small quantities of Sunburst tangerines and tangelos are still being picked for processing. Fresh fruit packing houses are still running oranges (decreasing amounts of Navels and mid-seasons, and increasing amounts of Valencias), white and colored grapefruit, small amounts of Tangelos, and increasing amounts of Temples and Honey tangerines.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	Jan 30	Feb 06	Feb 13
	In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes		
Early & Mid oranges	5,783	5,759	6,335
Navel oranges	68	47	27
Late oranges	9	24	42
Grapefruit	591	512	715
Tangelos	115	72	76
Sunburst tangerines	5	7	9
Honey tangerines	99	90	106
Temples	27	35	71

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