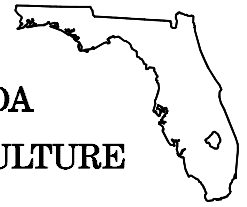




Florida Agricultural Statistics Service
 1222 Woodward Street
 Orlando, Florida 32803
 407 / 648-6013

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>



WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending May 8, 2005

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Significant rains eased dry soil conditions over the southern Peninsula during the week of May 2 through 8. Rainfall for the week ranged from less than a quarter inch at Balm to over five inches at Ocklawaha. Daytona Beach, Miami, Belle Glade and Putnam Hall received three to four inches. Temperatures averaged normal to five degrees below in the major cities as overcast skies blocked the warming rays of the sun for most of the week. Daytime highs were in the 70s and 80s with West Palm Beach and Miami recording at least one high in the 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 50s and 60s with Tallahassee, Alachua, Brooksville, Pierson, Tavares and Umatilla reporting at least one low in the 40s.

FIELD CROPS: Scattered showers helped improve soil moisture levels in many localities but slowed most field work. Despite the recent rains over the southern Peninsula more substantial rains are needed to increase soil moisture supplies with most areas still reporting short supplies. Broward and Dade counties still report having very short moisture supplies while Lee and Indian River have adequate to short supplies. For areas in the northern and central Peninsula, soil moisture supplies were mostly adequate to surplus with a few localities reporting some short supplies. Topsoil moisture in the central Peninsula was mostly adequate with Marion County reporting short to surplus moisture supplies. Cool soil temperatures as well as wet fields slowed peanut plantings in some Panhandle areas. Twelve percent of peanuts are planted compared with nineteen percent last year and the five-year average of twenty-six percent. Fields are too wet in some Panhandle areas for peanut and cotton plantings. Also, wet fields reduced acreage planted to corn in Jackson County. Producers in Jefferson County reported that cool nighttime temperatures delayed some crop growth.

Percentage of Peanuts Planted to Date	
This year	12
Last year	19
Five year average	26

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
<i>Percent</i>						
Very short	2	2	11	1	1	11
Short	21	18	32	33	19	37
Adequate	67	60	56	56	65	51
Surplus	10	20	1	10	15	1

VEGETABLES: The rains curtailed some harvesting as growers try to meet the Memorial Day demand. Tomatoes in the Quincy area are in good condition with picking to get underway in late May or early June. Cantaloupe cutting got underway with light supplies available. Other vegetables and non citrus fruit harvested included snap beans, blueberries, cabbage, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers,

potatoes, radishes, squash, sweet corn, tomatoes and watermelons. Lighter amounts of endive, escarole and lettuce were also marketed with harvesting nearing the end as temperatures warm.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Rains and warmer temperatures promoted grass growth over most of the State with most pastures rated in good condition. Some flooding over the southern Peninsula, and in a few spots of the Panhandle, left some pastures in poor condition. Cattle condition is rated mostly good Statewide.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	5	5	0	0
Fair	15	25	15	20
Good	70	60	80	75
Excellent	10	10	5	5

CITRUS: All of the monitored citrus counties recorded rainfall with the most being on the east coast at over two and a half inches, and the least being on the west coast at under a quarter of an inch. The southern citrus producing areas experienced warm weather during the first part of the week, reaching a high of 89 degrees in Immokalee. All other citrus areas had maximum temperatures in the low to mid 80s. Cooler nighttime temperatures over the weekend ranged between the high 40s to mid 50s. New foliage continues to harden on trees of all ages in well-cared-for groves. Growers are still mowing, applying post harvest sprays, and irrigating where rainfall has been light. Harvest of Valencia oranges for processing continues to be strong. Grapefruit harvest for fresh and processing shipments has slowed as supplies are being depleted. The colored grapefruit currently being picked is going slightly more to fresh than processing, while the majority of white grapefruit is going to the juice plants. Honey tangerine harvest continues to slow, but is still being picked, primarily for the fresh market.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Apr 24	May 1	May 8
In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes			
Early & Mid oranges	6,263	5,694	5,102
Late oranges	265	97	102
Grapefruit	67	46	19
Honey tangerines	6,595	5,837	5,223

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