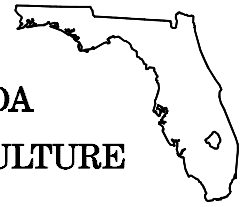




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WEATHER & CROP NEWS

Week ending May 22, 2005

Released 4:00 P.M.

May 23, 2005

WEATHER SUMMARY: The daily high temperature reached into the 90s in several localities during the week of May 16 through 22. In the major cities, temperatures hovered near normal as daytime highs averaged in the 80s and nighttime lows averaged in the 60s and 70s. Several areas reported at least one low in the 50s during the week. Scattered rains brought nearly two inches of precipitation to a few localities with several areas recording no measurable rain for the week.

FIELD CROPS: Spotty rains skipped some Panhandle and northern Peninsula areas with some of the oldest peanut fields in need of moisture to ensure adequate germination and development. Peanut planting is 55 percent finished compared with last year's progress of 57 percent planted by this date, and the five year average progress of 63 percent. Cotton planting over the Panhandle and northern Peninsula was active. Cotton emergence is slow in Jackson County with some fields having a hard crust on top that hinders emergence. Some Jackson County cotton may need replanting if emergence fails. Corn growers in Jackson County applied fertilizer where heavy rains leached earlier applications. Some corn in Jefferson County is wilted due to a lack of rain. Some producers irrigated crops as needed. Pecan trees in Jefferson County are fully leafed and show an excellent bloom with the first scab control spraying completed. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies are rated short to adequate over the Panhandle with some spots having surplus supplies due to recent heavier rainfall. Most Peninsula soil moisture supplies are adequate while very short to short supplies are reported for the southeastern coast. Spots of surplus soil moisture were reported in Union, Santa Rosa and Jackson counties.

Percentage of Peanuts Planted to Date

This year	55
Last year	57
Five year average	63

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	5	2	12	1	1	9
Short	55	28	48	29	19	48
Adequate	39	69	39	69	79	42
Surplus	1	1	1	1	1	1

VEGETABLES: Warm and mostly clear weather permitted harvesting to continue on schedule with producers supplying the Memorial Day demand. Radish digging is virtually finished while the celery harvest is nearing completion. Tomato picking is slowing seasonally over the southern Peninsula with the harvest around Quincy expected to start in about two weeks. The Quincy area tomato crop is in good condition

with warmer temperatures boosting growth and development. Other vegetables and non citrus fruit available included snap beans, blueberries, cantaloupes, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, okra, peppers, potatoes, radishes, squash and watermelons.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Warm temperatures continued to aid grass growth. Dry conditions in some areas, especially spots in the Big Bend and northern Peninsula areas, left most pastures in only fair condition. Panhandle pastures were rated in good to excellent condition. Pasture condition over the southern Peninsula was rated fair to good while central Peninsula pastures were rated mostly good. Cattle are rated in mostly good condition, Statewide. Panhandle producers reported cattle in good to excellent condition while Big Bend and southern Peninsula cattle are in fair to good condition. Northern Peninsula cattle are in good condition.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	0	0	0	0
Poor	0	5	0	0
Fair	45	35	35	25
Good	50	55	60	70
Excellent	5	5	5	5

CITRUS: Weather in the past week has been relatively warm and dry. There were a few isolated, light scattered showers in the western coastal, southern and extreme northern citrus producing areas. With daytime temperatures reaching almost 90 in all areas, warm nights have been the norm dropping only to the mid 60s in nearly all monitored citrus counties. Growers are still hedging, irrigating, and are beginning more aggressive spray programs. Harvest of Valencia oranges dropped below five million boxes a week. Grapefruit harvest for the past three weeks has been below one hundred thousand boxes per week, with colored grapefruit continuing to go primarily to the fresh market, and whites continuing to go to processing plants. Honey tangerine harvest slowed and should be done in the next couple weeks.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED WEEK ENDED

Crop	May 8	May 15	May 22
	In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes		
Late oranges	5,305	5,987	4,696
Grapefruit	88	73	43
Honey tangerines	22	17	1

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