

Weather Crop Report

Week ending December 11, 2005

VEGETABLE GROWERS PROVIDING HOLIDAY MARKET NEEDS

Released:

December 12, 2005
4:00 pmAccess our reports
Via the internet at
www.nass.usda.gov/fl

WEATHER SUMMARY: Rains helped increase depleted soil moisture supplies in most of the Big Bend area, some other northern Peninsula, a few central Peninsula and some southeastern coastal localities during the week of December 5 through 11. Rainfall ranged from less than a tenth inch in Immokalee to over four and a half inches in Alachua. Temperatures in the major cities averaged normal to three degrees above. Daytime highs averaged in the 70s and 80s while nighttime lows averaged in the 40s, 50s and 60s. Several localities recorded at least one low in the 30s. Jay reported a maximum daily high of 68 degrees and a minimum daily low of 29 degrees. Frost occurred in several Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities during the week.

FIELD CROPS: Mostly mild conditions kept sugarcane harvesting active around Lake Okeechobee. Pine tree planting was active in Taylor County. Recent cool, moist weather boosted growth of small grains in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Soil moisture supplies improved during the week as needed rains fell over southeastern, central, northern and Panhandle areas. Most southern Peninsula localities reported short to adequate supplies while, elsewhere, soil moisture is mostly adequate. Columbia, Holmes, Jackson, Washington, Osceola, and Brevard counties reported some spots with surplus soil moisture.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	0	1	8	0	1	8
Short	10	18	22	17	25	10
Adequate	65	64	66	58	60	73
Surplus	25	17	4	25	14	9

VEGETABLES: Mostly clear weather around the Palmetto-Ruskin, Immokalee and Homestead areas allowed planting and harvesting to proceed at a normal pace with growers shipping crops for the holiday market. Rain over the Plant City and Dover areas slowed some strawberry field work with picking slowly gaining momentum. Vegetables available included snap beans, cucumbers, eggplant, peppers, radishes, squash and tomatoes with very light amounts of cabbage, sweet corn, endive, escarole and okra also marketed.

United States
Department
Of AgricultureNational
Agricultural
Statistics
ServiceFlorida
Field
OfficeBenjamin F. Klugh, Jr.
Director
407/648-6013Florida Department
of Agriculture and
Consumer Services,
Division of Marketing
and Development

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pasture condition is poor to excellent, with most in fair condition. Recent rains have greatly improved growing conditions for rye and ryegrass pasture. Winter pasture planting and growth is generally behind because of earlier dry soils. Most cattlemen began feeding much earlier this year because of the drought effects on late grazing in permanent pastures and poor growth of earlier planted temporary forage. Hay feeding of livestock is active. Pasture in the northern areas is poor to good, with most in good condition. Frost has damaged some pasture. In the central areas, cattle and pasture are in fair condition. The pasture condition is lower due to cold and frost. In the southwest, range condition is mostly fair with soil moisture short to adequate. Statewide, the cattle condition is mostly good.

Condition	Range		Cattle	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	5	5	0	0
Poor	35	20	0	5
Fair	45	35	35	35
Good	15	40	60	55
Excellent	0	0	5	5

CITRUS: Continued rainfall in the northern citrus producing area totaled over three and a half inches, and on the east coast just less than three inches. Other areas had about an inch or less for the week. Daytime temperatures, at two to three degrees above normal, reached the high 70s to low 80s in all citrus areas. Horticultural practices include limited fertilizing, mowing and spraying. The east coast has enough moisture to sustain without irrigation, while other areas are lightly irrigating to keep moisture in the soils. Harvesting of early and midseason oranges is beginning to pick up, but due to high acids and late maturity it is not at the level it was at this time last season. A larger percentage of grapefruit is being picked for processing this season compared to last season. Other varieties being picked are Sunburst tangerines, and Tangelos. Most of the major packing houses and twelve processing plants are open with two more processing plants expecting to open next week.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Nov 27	Dec 4	Dec 11
<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>			
Navel oranges	106	324	367
Early and Mid oranges	470	2,611	4,052
Grapefruit	265	519	488
EarlyTangerines	160	255	261
Tangelos	25	85	112

To receive this report via e-mail, log onto <http://www.usda.gov/nass/sso-rpts.htm> Then click on "Subscribe" (upper right part of screen), then select "Florida Crop-Weather", enter your name and your e-mail address, then click on "Subscribe". The report will be sent automatically to your e-mail address each week.

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