

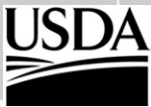
TROPICAL STORM ERNESTO BRINGS HEAVY RAINS

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Tropical Storm Ernesto brings heavy rains across some central and southern Peninsula areas as the storm hit mid-week during the period of August 28 through September 3. Most areas in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula localities escaped rains from Ernesto with most areas receiving traces of rainfall. Precipitation for the week ranged from none at Okahumpka to over seven inches at Palmdale with some areas receiving more than the "official" recorded amount. Arcadia and West Palm Beach received over three inches with Frostproof receiving nearly five inches of rain. Fort Lauderdale received over five and three quarters of precipitation while Miami recorded over six inches and Sebring over six and a half inches of rain. Elsewhere, rains ranged from one to two inches. Temperatures for week in major stations averaged from one degree below normal at West Palm Beach to three degrees above normal at Jacksonville. Daytime highs were in the 80s and 90s. Nighttime lows were in the 60s and 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Rains from Tropical Storm Ernesto increased soil moisture supplies in the central and southern Peninsula localities. Soil moisture supplies continue to diminish in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula with field crops suffering from lack of precipitation. Topsoil and subsoil moisture is rated mostly very short to short in the Panhandle as well as northern Peninsula. Soil moisture supplies are rated adequate to surplus in the central and southern Peninsula localities. Mostly all field crops are suffering in the Panhandle and northern Peninsula with yields down significantly. Some harvesting of early peanuts has begun in the Panhandle with yields very low and quality is poor. Statewide, peanut condition is 25 percent very poor, 30 percent poor, 26 percent fair, 15 percent good and 4 percent excellent. Growers in Jackson County need more rains for hay cuttings and have lost about 50 percent of the crop due to lack of rainfall. Some cotton growers in Escambia County reported bolls are falling off because it has been too dry. Peanut fields are also suffering from the lack of precipitation in Escambia County with yields down significantly with peanuts not setting nuts.



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Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	15	6	1	25	31	0
Short	25	32	15	35	44	11
Adequate	45	60	65	25	22	70
Surplus	15	2	18	15	3	19

VEGETABLES: Field work was curtailed due to wet fields from Tropical Storm Ernesto with no damage reported. Okra harvesting was interrupted in Dade County mid-week from heavy rains.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pasture condition is poor to excellent, depending on rain received in the past couple weeks. The livestock condition is mostly fair. In the northern areas, pasture and cattle condition are mostly fair. In the central areas, pasture is mostly fair and the cattle are in fair to good condition. In the southwest, pasture condition is mostly fair. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from fair to excellent, with most in good condition.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	0	0	0	5
Poor	0	5	5	10
Fair	35	35	55	40
Good	60	55	35	40
Excellent	5	5	5	5

CITRUS: The week of August 28 to September 3 was highlighted by Ernesto passing through the State on Wednesday. After entering the lower portion of the State as a tropical storm, it was downgraded to a tropical depression as it passed over most of the citrus belt. For most citrus producing areas, it was like a typical rainy summer day, bringing between one and three inches of precipitation to six inches at the monitored stations. With rainfall totals below average, groves needed some rain, so the weather only helped the crops. Sebring recorded the heaviest amount of rainfall at six and a half inches for the week. Winds from the storm were nominal, causing no damage to the fruit or trees. Daytime highs ranged from the low to mid 90s in all areas for the week. Fruit sizes are still being reported as variable. Early and mid oranges are as large as baseballs and grapefruit as large as softballs. Fruit quality is overall good on all varieties. Growers are mowing and applying summer oils and fertilizers. Scouting for canker and greening by growers and caretakers continues. With the shortage of available resets, grove owners are resetting to the extent they can purchase new trees to put in the ground.

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