

Weather Crop Report

Week Ending October 8, 2006

DRY CONDITIONS ALLOW FIELD WORK TO PROGRESS

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WEATHER SUMMARY: Drier conditions over most of the Peninsula and Panhandle allowed field work to progress on schedule during the week of October 2 through 8. Most reports indicated no precipitation to only minimal traces of rain for the week. Orlando received over one and a half inches of rainfall and West Palm Beach received one and a quarter inch of rain. Temperatures for the major cities averaged from normal to three degrees above normal, with Pensacola five degrees above normal. Pleasant daytime highs were in the upper 80s and lower 90s. Cooler evening temperatures were in the 50s and 60s with some areas recording at least one nighttime low in the 40s.

FIELD CROPS: Peanut harvesting is experiencing a slow start due to drought and with hard soils predicted to cause problems with digging in some Panhandle areas. In Jackson County, some peanut growers had to irrigate in order to dig due to hardened soils with yields ranging from poor to excellent. Rains are desperately needed to help finish the maturity of many late planted peanuts as well as late maturing varieties. Growers harvested 29 percent of peanuts compared with 45 percent a year ago and the five year average of 61 percent harvested by this date. Peanut condition was rated 4 percent very poor, 36 percent poor, 29 percent fair, 30 percent good and 1 percent excellent. In Leon County, peanut and cotton harvest is underway with some yields better than anticipated, considering the drought conditions. However, in Washington County, drought conditions coupled with cool evening temperatures are significantly affecting the yields, as well as grades, of cotton and peanuts. A shortage of hay supply has been reported in Washington County. Soil moisture supplies in the Panhandle were rated mostly very short to short. Santa Rosa County reported short to adequate supplies and Washington County reported very short to adequate supplies. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies across the Peninsula ranged from very short to adequate.



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Percentage of peanuts harvested to date:		
This year	Last year	5-year average.
29	45	61

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	30	10	1	31	15	0
Short	35	34	16	49	44	17
Adequate	35	55	58	20	40	59
Surplus	0	1	25	0	1	24

VEGETABLES: Favorable weather conditions allowed field work to progress on schedule. Fall crop harvesting in central and southern Peninsula areas continued to increase slowly. Tomato picking remained active around the Quincy area. Dade County growers continued to cut okra. In Washington County, irrigated fall vegetables are in good condition. Harvesting of snap beans, eggplant, and peppers may begin within 2 weeks. Growers marketed light supplies of sweet corn, cucumbers, squash, tomatoes and watermelons.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle, pasture condition is very poor to good, with most in fair condition. Lack of rain has severely affected pasture and forage growth. Pasture grass is ‘crunchy’ and there is no new growth. Ponds are all dry, and pasture is not coming back. Hay supplies are short. The cattle are mostly in fair condition. In the central areas, pasture condition is very poor to good, with most poor to fair. The cattle condition is mostly fair. Prolonged drought this summer has reduced hay crops. Hay supplies are very low. In the southwest, pasture is in poor to good condition, with most in good condition. Grass is growing very slow, in part due to lack of moisture and part because of reduced day length. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from poor 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	10	0
Poor	5	5	25	10
Fair	40	20	35	35
Good	50	70	30	50
Excellent	5	5	0	5

CITRUS: The citrus belt experienced primarily warm weather all week with little to no rain. Citrus producing counties are lacking in rainfall, and growers are running irrigation on a regular basis. Daytime highs were in the upper 80s most of the week, cooling down slightly over the weekend. Fruit quality is overall good, with early and midseason oranges running about baseball size, and grapefruit about softball size. Color break is being observed on grapefruit and some earlier varieties of oranges. Twelve packing houses have opened and are running Fallglo tangerines, Ambersweet and Navel oranges and grapefruit. Two processing plants have also opened. Grove maintenance includes pre-harvest mowing, herbiciding, and late supplemental sulfur spraying. Scouting for canker and greening by growers and caretakers continues.

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