



WEATHER CROP

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
1222 Woodward St., Orlando, FL 32803
(407) 648-6013 · (407) 648-6029 FAX · www.nass.usda.gov/fl

Week ending February 18, 2007

FROSTS, FREEZES HIT MOST AREAS

WEATHER SUMMARY: Most areas experienced freezing or near freezing temperatures during the week of February 12 through 18. Nearly all localities reported at least one daily low in the 20s or 30s. Tallahassee reported at least one daily low at 18 degrees while Alachua recorded at least one daily low at 19 degrees. Miami's lowest daily low was in the 40s. The cold temperatures caused hard freezes and frosts across the Panhandle and northern Peninsula, and in many central and southern Peninsula areas. In the major cities, daily temperatures averaged from two to eight degrees below normal. Daytime highs were in the 60s, 70s, and 80s. Rainfall totaled from traces in most of Big Bend, northern Peninsula and southern Peninsula localities to nearly one and a half inches in Pensacola.

FIELD CROPS: The cold temperatures nipped the leaves of some sugarcane, especially in the Belleglade area. Most damage was scattered and hit both mature cane and recent plantings. Producers are expected to process the mature cane to limit damage. Expected milder weather should allow recent plantings to outgrow the damage. Sugarcane harvesting continued during the week in the Lake Okeechobee region. In the Quincy area, no significant damage to woody ornamentals was caused by the recent freezing temperatures. Foliage growers in the central and southern Peninsula areas provided heat and overhead irrigation to plants for cold protection. Topsoil and subsoil moisture supplies were rated mostly very short to short in the Big Bend and some northern Peninsula areas, and short to mostly adequate elsewhere. The danger of wildfire is high in most central and southern Peninsula localities.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	16	12	0	16	12	0
Short	26	42	19	29	44	21
Adequate	55	40	58	51	38	57
Surplus	3	6	23	4	6	22

VEGETABLES: Producers provided protection from the cold weather to most crops as the temperatures dipped to freezing. The recent cold temperatures caused significant damage to some corn, lettuce, endive, escarole, and snap bean acreage around Belleglade and Homestead, and caused frost burn on some lower leaves of tomatoes in the Immokalee area. Some older tomato plants at the fruit set stage could have up to a ten percent loss in yield due to misshapen fruit not meeting grade. Growers in the Immokalee area increased water levels to provide cold protection to crops; however, soil-borne diseases are expected to increase due to the wet environment lowering the effectiveness of pesticides. Tomato producers around Quincy continued to prepare land for transplanting with activities on schedule. Blueberry picking got underway with a very light amount marketed. Vegetables harvested during the week included snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, parsley, peppers, potatoes, radishes, squash, strawberries, and tomatoes.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle area, pasture condition is poor to excellent with most in fair condition. Extreme cold and frigid wind-chill conditions for the past few days have been bad on cattle. Cattle's nutrition was negatively affected due to poor pasture quality. Winter forage is not recovering due to the cold weather. Stock ponds are starting to show some water. In the northern and central areas, pasture condition is mostly fair. Grass is not growing much. A killing freeze on February 17 hurt forage quality. As a result cows are having calves ahead of term. In the southwest areas, pasture condition is very poor to excellent with most in fair condition. Grass has turned brown from cold and drought in some locations. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from very poor to excellent, but most are in fair condition.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This Week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	5	5	5	5
Poor	5	5	30	40
Fair	70	60	35	40
Good	15	29	25	10
Excellent	5	1	5	5

CITRUS: Temperatures quickly turned cold during the first part of the week. By Tuesday, highs were in mid 60s, with lows in much of the citrus-producing region close to freezing on one or two days. Cold pockets between 27 and 32 degrees were recorded in some areas, but the duration was not long enough to cause any severe damage. Freeze-burned "flush" has been reported in some southwest groves. The damage was mostly to the new bloom that pushed out early in the season, which could affect next year's crop. The most rainfall recorded for the week was about an inch on the west coast and in the southwestern citrus-producing area, which delayed harvest on early and midseason oranges. Navel orange continued to decrease, as harvest for the primarily fresh variety is coming to an end. Grapefruit harvest continued at about a million boxes a week, with roughly half of the crop remaining. Grove activity includes irrigation equipment repair, maintenance topping and hedging, fertilizing, and harvesting.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Feb 04	Feb 11	Feb 19
<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>			
Navel oranges	12	8	6
Early and Mid oranges	4,607	4,273	2,584
Valencia	4	10	47
Grapefruit	1,061	1,426	954
Sunburst Tangerines	2	0	1
Tangelos	65	33	26
Honey Tangerines	89	114	123
Temples	30	41	43

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