



WEATHER CROP

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending April 15, 2007

FROST SINGED NORTHERN VEGETABLES

WEATHER SUMMARY: Temperatures dipped to freezing in some northern Peninsula and Panhandle localities early in the week of April 9 through 15. The cold temperatures caused frosts in the affected areas. Welcomed rains also fell in several areas during the week. However, lighter amounts over most of the northern and some southern Peninsula localities and over the Big Bend area kept the danger of wild fire high. Water management districts cut back the water used for agriculture in some of the driest areas. Rainfall amounts totaled from less than a tenth inch in Alachua to nearly seven inches in Miami. Most areas recorded from about one to over two inches. Balm reported nearly four inches for the week. Strong winds at the end of the week dried topsoil and battered crops, Statewide.

FIELD CROPS: Cool temperatures slowed crop development over the Panhandle and northern Peninsula. Frosty temperatures nipped the edges of some early plantings with no significant damage reported. Most early plantings were too short to be affected by the strong winds crossing the State at the end of the week. Soil moisture supplies in the Panhandle were rated mostly very short to short. In the Big Bend area, soil moisture was rated very short; in the central Peninsula area, short to adequate; and in the southern Peninsula, very short to short. Surplus soil moisture was reported for some spots of Miami-Dade County; however, this represented less than one percent of the ratings. All areas, except the Big Bend, reported some spots with adequate soil moisture.

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	40	70	52	46	67	45
Short	45	26	22	42	27	45
Adequate	15	4	26	12	6	10
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0	0

VEGETABLES: In the Suwannee Valley area, organic cherry tomatoes suffered up to an 80% burn in low lying areas due to the frost early in the week; however, plants are expected to recover. The remaining organic vegetables in the area suffered less than 1% burn; non organic vegetables sustained 10% or less burn with all expected to recover. Vegetables in the Quincy area suffered no significant damage from the cold temperatures. Strong winds at the end of the week damaged leaves of taller crops with wind-borne sand bruising some fruit. The continued dry conditions over most of the central and southern Peninsula caused blossom end rot in susceptible crops and salt intrusion into some fields. Blueberry producers expect high losses from Cedar Wax Wings in Hernando County. Planting is finished in the Quincy area. Potato digging got underway in the Palatka area. Okra cutting started around Homestead with very light amounts available. Growers in the Plant City area kept several strawberry fields open to U-Pic. Around Immokalee, watermelon picking continued to slowly increase with very light amounts available. Other non citrus fruits and vegetables available included snap beans, blueberries, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, lettuce, parsley, peppers, radishes, squash, and tomatoes.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In the Panhandle and northern areas, the condition of the pasture is very poor to good with most in fair condition. There was some frost on Easter weekend, but the poor condition is due to short soil moisture conditions. Pastures have greened up from recent rains but real growth will take more time and more moisture. In the central and southwest areas, pasture condition is very poor to fair with most in fair condition. Statewide, cattle condition ranges from very poor to excellent with most cattle in fair condition.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
<i>Percent</i>				
Very poor	3	5	10	15
Poor	15	25	30	45
Fair	60	55	55	35
Good	20	15	5	5
Excellent	2	0	0	0

CITRUS: Two storm fronts pushed across the State during the week, dumping much needed rain and bringing cooler temperatures to citrus producing areas. Central and eastern areas received two to three inches of rainfall for the week. The west coast had the most rainfall at over three and a half inches. High winds on Sunday, with gust up to 60 mph on the west coast and 55 mph in the central citrus producing area, spawned isolated tornado activity but did not cause any widespread, severe damage to citrus groves. Average temperatures were at or below normal levels in all areas with morning temperatures in the 50s to 60s on several days. The bloom period is coming to an end with groves at about three quarters petal drop. Valencia harvest has been running over four million boxes a week with maturity levels hovering around acceptable levels. Grapefruit utilization has been mostly to processing as harvest for export of fresh fruit declines seasonally. Honey tangerine is slowing down with a large majority of the crop already harvested, primarily for the fresh market. Caretakers are hedging, topping, and beginning to apply post bloom nutritional sprays. In addition to the normal maintenance programs, growers are scouting for greening and removing diseased trees.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	Apr 01	Apr 08	Apr 15
<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>			
Navel oranges	3	3	2
Early and Mid oranges	71	6	8
Valencia	4,514	4,610	4,862
Grapefruit	1,314	1,026	999
Honey Tangerines	95	93	98
Temples	6	4	1

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