



WEATHER CROP

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending May 27, 2007

DRY CONDITIONS CONTINUED

WEATHER SUMMARY: A few localities received welcomed rain during the week of May 21 through 27, but several reported no measurable rainfall. Homestead reported over two inches of rain for the week, and Hastings, Jay and Umatilla reported a half inch. Most other areas getting showers recorded from traces to about a quarter inch. Lake Okeechobee is expected to reach a record low level this week if no significant rain falls. Temperatures for the week averaged normal to five degrees below in the major cities. Most daytime highs were in the 80s with Marianna, Tallahassee and Tampa recording at least one high in the 90s. Lows were in the 50s, 60s and 70s with Jacksonville and Alachua reporting at least one low in the 40s. As of May 28, the Florida Department of Agriculture's Division of Forestry reported 195 active fires affecting 194,693 acres.

FIELD CROPS: In Jackson County, wheat and oat yields are in good condition. In Washington County, all crops are suffering from the drought; ponds and some wells dropped to critically low levels; most ground preparations for planting stopped; some farmers planted to meet crop insurance deadlines, hoping for rain to aid germination; hay fields are not growing; the few cattle producers that have some hay, but are not willing to sell it because they are afraid that they might run out with no rain in sight. In Jefferson County, soil moisture is critically short; there is no hay within hundreds of miles; most corn, peanut, and cotton planting is delayed; growers will not be able to plant corn. In Santa Rosa County, corn is showing burn due to the dry weather. In Dade County, nursery crops are growing well due to rising humidity; locusts are eating some palm leaves. Soil moisture was rated mostly very short in all areas except the extreme southern Peninsula where soil moisture was rated adequate to surplus.

Percentage of peanuts planted to date:		
This year	Last year	5-year average.
50	55	70

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	78	50	55	55	49	49
Short	11	48	34	34	32	30
Adequate	11	2	11	11	19	21
Surplus	0	0	0	0	0	0

VEGETABLES: In Gadsden County, producers harvested crookneck, zucchini, and straight neck squash, and cucumbers. The Quincy area tomato harvest is expected to begin within the next five to seven days. In the Palatka area, potato chip stock growers expect about two more weeks of harvesting while table stock growers expect about another four to five weeks of harvesting. In the Plant City area, the continued drought slowed the production of some peppers; the local blueberry harvest is beginning to wind down with a few u-pick farms now open to the public. In Washington County, some irrigated vegetables were harvested but yields are below normal; deer and other wildlife predation in watermelon fields are very serious. Recent cool temperatures also slowed the maturation of watermelons in some northern areas. In the Trenton region, watermelon cutting is expected to become quite active within the next seven to ten days. Other vegetables and non citrus fruit harvested during the week included snap beans, cantaloupes, celery, sweet corn, eggplant, okra, radishes, and tomatoes. Extremely light supplies of cabbage were also marketed during the week.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: In Washington County, pasture is not coming back as it should; many cattlemen are being forced to sell some or all their cattle because they have no hay or pasture. In Jefferson County, livestock producers are feeding hay which is getting very expensive; some cattlemen are selling off stock; there is no hay for sale or pasture within hundreds of miles; the drought has caused permanent damage to established pastures. In Leon County, rain is needed by all producers; livestock producers are finding it difficult to locate hay; pasture is almost nonexistent. In Santa Rosa County, pasture is in poor condition; some farmers are selling off cattle rather than buy feed. In Polk County, cattlemen are selling off stock due to the lack of pasture. In Hillsborough County, some cattle producers are feeding hay to stock. Statewide, cattle condition was rated mostly poor and pastures were rated very poor to mostly poor.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	5	15	30	45
Poor	65	30	50	20
Fair	15	45	10	25
Good	15	10	10	10
Excellent	0	0	0	0

CITRUS: Temperatures in citrus producing areas have been in the mid to high 80s most days with nights in the high 50s to low 60s. No measurable rainfall was recorded. Consistently windy weather across the citrus belt has been prevalent, accelerating the dehydration of the already dry trees. Rainfall is needed to assist the trees in maintaining moisture for the next year's crop. Water restrictions are in place in southwest areas and areas along the east coast are under a "burn ban". Valencia estimated utilization dropped below four million boxes per week. About three plants plan to run until the middle to the end of June. Grapefruit harvesting is almost complete for the season. A small amount of colored grapefruit is still being picked for both fresh and processing. Packing houses that are still open are mostly for later variety oranges that will be utilized for storage fruit. Because of the dry weather, citrus growers in the entire citrus region have increased irrigation. Other activities being observed are fertilizing, herbiciding, mowing, removing of dead trees, and hedging and topping.

ESTIMATED BOXES HARVESTED - WEEK ENDED			
Crop	May 13	May 20	May 27
	<i>In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes</i>		
Navel oranges	3	2	2
Early and Mid oranges	11	9	8
Valencia	4,676	4,480	3,680
Grapefruit	298	259	101
Honey Tangerines	24	3	1
Temples	3	6	0

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