



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 October 5, 2008

HARVESTING FIELD CROPS, PLANTING VEGETABLES

WEATHER SUMMARY: Last week the southern Peninsula again received the most precipitation. Dade and Broward counties reported over 4 inches each, while most other southern counties received between 1.5 and 2.5 inches. All central and northern areas reported less than 1 inch of rain. High temperatures for the State were mostly in the 80s and low 90s. Nightly lows ranged from the upper 40s to low 70s.

FIELD CROPS: Peanut condition was rated 27% fair, 62% good, and 11% excellent. Peanut digging was 56% complete, compared with 36% last year, and a five-year average progress of 44%. Some peanut fields were too dry to harvest. Cotton and soybean harvesting began in a few counties, with most growers expecting good crops. A few Jefferson County growers reported early leaf loss due to Asian soybean rust. The harvesting of field corn was finishing. Some east coast counties in the central Peninsula were still recovering from excess moisture. Hay baling continued. Jefferson County reported that early pecans were dropping and trees were holding their foliage. Soil moisture was short to adequate in the northern areas and adequate to surplus in most central and southern locations.

Peanut Progress – Week Ending October 5, 2008			
Stage	2008	2007	5-yr Average
	<i>Percent</i>		
Harvested	56	36	44

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	This week	Last week	Last year	This week	Last week	Last Year
	<i>Percent</i>					
Very short	7	3	13	6	3	12
Short	34	18	27	23	9	30
Adequate	48	64	52	60	72	57
Surplus	11	15	8	11	16	1

VEGETABLES: Planting of vegetables continued despite earlier delays from surplus moisture. Several counties reported that the crops already in the ground looked good. This past week okra, cucumbers, avocados, and tomatoes were marketed.

LIVESTOCK AND PASTURES: Forage conditions have decreased due to cooler weather and drought. In the Panhandle and northern areas, pasture condition ranged from poor to good with most in fair condition. Preparation of fields for winter small grain forage was underway, but was generally delayed by dry soil conditions. Forage growth was hampered by drought with rainfall in September several inches short of normal. However, some pastures along the St. Johns river remained flooded. Summer grass growth has slowed due to nighttime temperatures below 50 degrees. However, shorter days and cooler temperatures have reduced drought stress. Cattle were being fed supplemental hay where pastures were poor or very poor. The cattle condition was fair to excellent with most in good condition. In the central and southwest areas, pasture was very poor to excellent with most fair to good. Some pastures were in very poor condition due to standing water. The condition of the pastures varies in part by how intense the grazing has been, a management issue. The cattle condition was very poor to excellent with most in good condition. Statewide, cattle condition was very poor to excellent with most in good condition.

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	This week	Last week	This week	Last week
	<i>Percent</i>			
Very poor	1	0	5	5
Poor	1	2	10	5
Fair	35	35	45	40
Good	55	55	35	45
Excellent	8	8	5	5

CITRUS: Ideal weather for this time of year came to citrus-producing areas across the State. Mild days had lows in the 60s and highs in the upper 80s. Mid-afternoon showers in Immokalee on several days brought nearly two inches of rainfall for the week. Sebring and Ft. Pierce had almost an inch and a half of rainfall. All other monitored areas across the State had one-half inch or less. Trees were generally in good condition in well-cared-for groves. Fruit sizes on oranges were as large as baseballs. Grapefruit were slightly larger. Maturity levels were being reported as good on all varieties. Grove owners were busy irrigating, mowing middles, pulling vines, cleaning groves, and getting ready for harvesting. Most owners were having workers scout for greening and spraying affected areas to reduce the psyllid population. About one-half of the packinghouses have opened and have begun shipping fruit. Only two processing plants have begun running fruit in small quantities. Varieties being packed included early oranges (Navels, Ambersweet, and Hamlins), white and colored grapefruit, and Fallglo tangerines.

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