



WEATHER CROP

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending December 20, 2009

Beneficial Rain in the Southern Peninsula

Weather Summary: High temperatures reached the 70s and 80s last week. Lows were mostly in the 30s and 40s. Below freezing night time temperatures were common across the Panhandle. The heaviest rainfall totals were collected in the southern Peninsula. Miami-Dade, St. Lucie, and Broward counties reported 4.16, 3.71, and 3.02 inches respectively. Average highs across the State were 6-8 degrees above normal, the exception being Pensacola which was 2 degrees above average.

Field Crops: Wet conditions across the Panhandle continue to hinder fieldwork and harvest of cotton and soybeans. A significant amount of cotton and soybeans were still in the field and some will be abandoned. Winter wheat plantings were delayed due to wet conditions and several fields were yet to be planted. Cool season winter forages benefitted from moist conditions, but cool evenings slowed growth and most fields will not be available for grazing for a few weeks. Some growers reported that peanuts were dug, but not harvested because wet conditions did not allow heavy machinery onto fields. Harvesting of caladium bulbs (corms) were reported in Highlands County. Sugarcane harvest remains active with good yields reported.

Soil Moisture Ratings

Moisture Rating	Topsoil			Subsoil		
	Previous week	Previous year	Current week	Previous week	Previous year	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very short.....	2	13	1	2	14	1
Short	6	28	15	16	24	20
Adequate.....	79	56	70	70	58	67
Surplus.....	13	3	14	12	5	12

Vegetables: Fall tomato harvest in Manatee County ended. Growers planted tomatoes for late winter and spring harvest. In Collier, Charlotte, Hendry, and Lee counties recent rains caused quality issues in vegetables. Growers reported splitting and cracking of tomatoes, and bruising in bell peppers. Volumes of most items remained light and growers struggled to meet holiday demand. Harvest of greens remained active in northern counties. Growers in Highlands County rushed the harvest of sweet corn and herbs ahead of approaching cold weather. Snap beans, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive-escarole, peppers, radishes, squash, strawberries, and light volumes of cabbage were marketed.

Livestock and Pastures: Pasture in the Panhandle area was poor to fair due to cold and standing water from recent heavy rain. Night time temperatures below freezing have limited small grain forage growth. Small grain winter forage acreage was less than intended due to wet weather in Calhoun County. In Jefferson County, winter pasture growth was good. Cattlemen were feeding hay and supplements in Holmes County. The cattle condition in the Panhandle ranged from poor to excellent, with most in good condition. Supplemental hay was being fed. Pasture in the north area was mostly good. Grazing of few cool season pastures started. Most winter forage was a week or two from being mature enough to graze. In the central area, pasture was very poor to excellent, with most in fair condition. Cool season pasture planting continued in Pasco County. The cattle condition was mostly fair to good. In the Southwest, the pasture condition was poor to good, with most pasture in good condition. Statewide, the condition of the cattle was poor to excellent, with most in good condition.

Cattle and Pasture Condition

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	Previous week	Current week	Previous week	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very poor.....	0	0	1	1
Poor	5	10	7	9
Fair.....	40	30	45	45
Good	50	55	45	45
Excellent	5	5	2	0

Citrus: High temperatures for the week were in the 80s, while lows reached the 40s and upper 30s over the weekend. Rainfall returned to more normal levels, with most stations receiving less than an inch. Fort Pierce and Immokalee were the biggest exceptions to this, at 3.71 and 2.22 inches, respectively. Most of the packinghouses have opened, with only 3 remaining that have yet to ship. Varieties being packed include early oranges (Navel and Hamlin), white and colored grapefruit, and tangerines (predominately Sunburst, with a few Honey and Dancy varieties). Seventeen processors have opened and were accepting fruit. Early and midseason oranges and grapefruit comprise the majority of fruit going to the processing plants.

Citrus Estimated Boxes Harvested

[In thousands of 1-3/5 bushel boxes]

Crop	December 6, 2009	December 13 2009	December 20, 2009
	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)
Early and mid oranges.....	2,859	5,274	5,442
Navel oranges	260	279	214
Grapefruit	395	388	485
Tangelos	89	85	64
Tangerines	164	204	230

This report is available, at no cost, on the NASS web site: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Florida/Subscribe_to_FL_Reports/index.asp. To set-up this free subscription, select Florida Crop-Weather; enter your name and your email address, click on Subscribe. This report will be sent automatically each week; or call us at 800/344-6277 and we will enter the subscription for you. The precipitation and temperature data used in this report originates from the Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN). Data for individual reporting stations is available at: <http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu> maintained by UF/IFAS Information Technologies.