



WEATHER CROP



Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
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Week ending December 26, 2010

Long Winter in Florida

Weather Summary: Cold and dry freezing temperatures and modest rainfall characterized the week. Average temperatures were four to nine degrees below normal for the reference week. Highs were in the 70s and lows were in 20s, 30s, and 40s. According to the U.S. Drought monitor as of December 21, 2010, drought conditions were present throughout Florida with extreme drought conditions along the northeast coastline. Eighty percent of the Florida Automated Weather Network Stations reported less than half an inch of rain.

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	19	0	25	14	0	20
Short	40	24	35	39	26	32
Adequate	40	67	38	45	65	45
Surplus	1	9	2	2	9	3

Field Crops: Freeze damage to newly-planted sugarcane was still being assessed. With mature cane plants, the cold could potentially inhibit sugar from developing.

Vegetables: The effect of low temperatures on fruit and vegetable supplies is undetermined. Cold weather slowed growth of vegetables that would normally be coming into season. Temporary suspension of trucking restrictions will continue until December 31st to mitigate crop loss. Some producers protected vegetables with freeze clothes. In Ruskin, remaining tomato crops in fields from the previous week were lost to the cold. Tomatoes in Naples, Homestead, and Immokalee sustained significant damage. In the south, growers reported damage to snap beans, sweet corn, squash, and tomatoes. Damage was more prominent in fields without adequate watering. In the south, growers reported problems with pepper bruising. Market movement consisted of snap beans, cabbage, sweet corn, bell peppers, radishes, squash, tomatoes, and strawberries.

Floriculture and Nursery: Growers continued to protect plants with cloths, blankets, sprinkling systems, and heaters. Some nurseries were running heaters in greenhouses non-stop to keep plants warm.

Livestock and Pastures: The pasture condition decreased slightly from the previous week due to cold temperatures and continued dry conditions. Most pasture in the Panhandle and northern areas ranged from poor to fair condition. The cattle condition ranged from very poor to excellent with most in good condition. Hay and supplements were being fed to cover the lack of forage. In the central areas, the pasture condition ranged from very poor to fair. There was limited small grains and ryegrass planted for grazing this year and those acres were struggling due to dry soil conditions. The condition of cattle ranged from very poor to good with most fair to good. Ranchers were feeding hay. In the southwestern areas, the pasture condition ranged from very poor to good with most poor to fair. Pasture grass was thinning. The cattle condition was mostly fair. Statewide, the condition of the cattle ranged from very poor to excellent with most in fair to good condition. The livestock auctions were closed for the holidays.

Cattle and Pasture Condition

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	Previous week	Current week	Previous week	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very poor.....	5	5	15	20
Poor.....	5	10	55	50
Fair.....	40	45	20	25
Good.....	45	39	9	5
Excellent.....	5	1	1	0

Citrus: Highs during the early part of the week were in the 60s and 70s, with early morning lows in the 40s and 50s, dropping to lows in the 20s and 30s as a cold front hit the area on Sunday. All 25 stations recorded some precipitation this week. Citra reported the most precipitation with 0.84 inch of rainfall. Indian River, Brevard, and St Lucie counties experienced extreme drought conditions, while surrounding counties experienced severe conditions. Moderate to extreme drought conditions extend over most of the citrus area. Forty-four packinghouses and fourteen processors have opened with a few more scheduled to open. Cultural practices included harvesting, application of lime, and irrigation.

Citrus Estimated Boxes Harvested

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

Crop	December 12, 2010	December 19, 2010	December 26, 2010
	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)
Early and mid oranges.....	3,856	4,561	(NA)
Ambersweet.....	8	5	(NA)
Navel oranges.....	301	222	(NA)
Grapefruit.....	431	509	(NA)
Tangelos.....	96	81	(NA)
Tangerines.....	269	263	(NA)
Total.....	4,961	5,641	(NA)

NA Not available.

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.