



# WEATHER CROP

Cooperating with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
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Week ending April 17, 2011

## Low Water Tables Affects Vegetables, Planting of Field Crops

**Weather Summary:** Low soil moisture was reported by county agents across the State in addition to windy, unseasonably warm weather. Only one Florida Automated Weather Network (FAWN) station, located in Broward County, reported cumulative rain levels of over an inch, with all other stations reporting lesser to zero amounts. Temperatures averaged one to three degrees above normal. Lows were in the 40s, 50s, and 60s, while highs were in the 80s and 90s. Drought conditions were slightly improving from the previous week; however, areas showing extreme drought are increasing in the south according to the U.S. Drought Monitor updated April 12.

### 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	5	4	1	0	4
Short .....	31	15	45	32	14	33
Adequate .....	63	75	49	64	76	60
Surplus .....	4	5	2	3	10	3

**Field Crops:** In the north, dry conditions could delay peanut planting. In Walton, Lafayette, Madison, and Suwannee counties, peanut growers prepared and planted peanut fields. In Madison, Suwannee, Escambia, and Washington counties, the majority of field corn was planted but in need of rain. Cotton field preparation took place in Suwannee County. In Walton County, oats for grain harvesting will begin within the next few weeks. In the Hastings area, potato harvest was underway with good yields reported in Putnam County. Movement of potatoes for processing is expected to increase as the harvest progresses from southern to northern Florida.

**Vegetables:** Hot and dry conditions decreased soil moisture and lowered water tables for vegetable producers in the Belle Glades region. Within the same region, watermelon harvest was picking up. In Glades County, blueberry harvest increased. A few blueberry growers experienced some minor hail damage early last week. Tomato movement was expected to decrease in south Florida. Strawberry movement was expected to decrease for Florida as most shippers had finished for the season. Light harvesting of cantaloupe began. Watermelon movement was expected to increase but remain light for the next week. In Washington County, sweet onion harvest took place. Market movement included: snap beans, cabbage, celery, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplant, endive, escarole, bell peppers, radishes, squash, tomatoes, cantaloupes, blueberries, and watermelons.

**Livestock and Pastures:** The pasture and cattle conditions **Statewide** ranged from very poor to excellent with most in fair condition. Both the pasture and cattle conditions improved slightly from the previous week. In the **Panhandle** area, the pasture ranged from very poor to excellent condition with most in good condition. Cool night time temperatures and drought limited grass growth. Feeding of hay and supplements continued, because cumulative growth so far was insufficient to maintain the livestock. Cool season forage declined while warm season perennial pastures began to grow. Cattle were doing well and most cattle were in good condition. In the **central** and **southwestern** areas, the pasture condition ranged from very poor to excellent with most in fair condition. Most of the cattle were in fair to good condition.

**Cattle and Pasture Condition**

Condition	Cattle		Pasture	
	Previous week	Current week	Previous week	Current week
	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)	(percent)
Very poor.....	0	1	1	1
Poor.....	15	9	17	10
Fair.....	50	50	55	60
Good.....	30	35	25	27
Excellent.....	5	5	2	2

**Citrus:** Lows were in the 50s with highs in the 80s and 90s across most of the citrus area. This week, thirteen of the 25 FAWN stations recorded some precipitation; only two of them recorded more than half an inch. Fort Pierce reported the most with 0.74 inch of rainfall recorded. Drought conditions in the citrus producing area ranged from none in the west to extreme in the southeast, according to the U.S. drought monitor, last updated on April 12. St Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, and parts of Collier, Hendry, Glades, Indian River, and Okeechobee counties experienced extreme drought conditions. Thirty-eight packinghouses and 19 processors have opened. Harvest of Valencia oranges and grapefruit continued, with the open processing plants running grapefruit and Valencia. Grove activity included young tree care, applying herbicides, hedging and topping, brush removal, and fertilizer application.

**Citrus Estimated Boxes Harvested**

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

Crop	April 3, 2011	April 10, 2011	April 17, 2011
	(boxes)	(boxes)	(boxes)
Early and mid oranges.....	10	0	0
Navel oranges.....	1	4	5
Valencia.....	3,492	5,234	5,220
Grapefruit.....	874	1,028	853
Temples.....	24	43	1
Tangelos.....	1	0	0
Honey tangerines.....	67	94	117
Total.....	4,469	6,403	6,196

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](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.