

January 2, 2019

GEORGIA: Total rainfall for the month ranged from 2.0 inches in Bartow County to 11.9 inches in Richmond County. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, December began with 23 percent of the state in a moderate to severe drought. By the month's end, the state was drought free. Temperatures averaged 3 to 7 degrees above normal for the month. The mild temperatures, paired with adequate rainfall, allowed pastures to improve from the summer and fall drought. Due to the late-season drought conditions, some small grain and winter grazing plantings were delayed or prevented. Grazing potential statewide was a concern, based on the decreased planting and slow recovery of fields. Small grains and winter grazing were generally in good condition by the month's end, but winter grazing was not yet developed enough to offset hay feeding. In the northern portion of the state, the drought resulted in insufficient hay production, so many farmers were searching for hay to purchase. Most farmers in the southern portion of the state who produced sufficient hay stocks had already sold their surplus, so they only had enough left to feed their livestock through the winter. Ample rain during the last two weeks of the month caused fields to saturate, limiting fieldwork and making livestock feeding difficult. Some cotton and pecans had yet to be harvested. Overall livestock condition was good.